

## DISCOURSES OF THE BASIC COLOR TERMS FOR WHITE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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### ДИСКУРСИ НА ОСНОВНИТЕ ЦВЕТОВИ ТЕРМИНИ ЗА БЯЛО В СТАРИЯ ЗАВЕТ

**Abstract.** The paper is focused on Hebrew and Greek Basic Color Terms (BCT) for white in the Bible. They are part of the Verbal color language that includes Prototype Terms (PT – *light, milk, and snow*), Rivals Terms of prototypes (RT – *linen*), and Terms for Basic Features of the Prototypes (TBFP – *pure, clean*). The aggregation of all words is called mega-white, mega-black, etc. The verbal and the visual colors differ. Verbal and visual Colors are treated as the Cultural Unit Color, e.g. Cultural unit White. The words’ inner form and words derivation are essential methodological tools. The method includes translation as a criterion and semiotic value, cultural and linguistic context, and Norm of Free Word-Associations as sources of non-color (secondary) meanings of verbal colors. Secondary cultural meanings of BCTs are specified.

**Keywords:** Hebrew, white, inner form, derivation, culture

**Резюме.** Статията се фокусира върху ивритските основни термини за цвят (BCT) за бялото в Библията. Те са част от езика на вербалните цветове, който включва термини за прототипи (PT – *светлина, мляко и сняг*), термини конкуренти на прототипи (RT – *лен*) и термини за основни характеристики на прототипите (TBFP – *чист*). Съвкупността от всички думи се нарича мегабяло, мегахерно и т.н. Вербалните и визуалните цветове се различават. Вербалните и визуалните цветове се третират като културна единица, например културната единица Бяло. Вътрешната форма на думите и словообразуването са основни методологични инструменти. Методът включва превода като критерий и семиотична стойност, културен и езиков контекст и Норма за свободни словесни асоциации като източници на вторични значения на словесните цветове. Извеждат се вторичните културни значения на основните термини за бяло в Библията.

**Ключови думи:** иврит, бяло, вътрешна форма, словообразуване, култура

## 1. Introduction

In the last 50 years, prevailed the fallacy of only Basic Color Term (BCT) signifies color. This is due to the authority of the structural methodology of Berlin and Kay (1969), Kay and Maffi (1999). Other words can signify color with the help of the context – Prototype Terms (PT – *light, milk, and snow*), Rivals Terms of prototypes (RT – *linen*), and Terms for Basic Features of the Prototypes (TBFP – *pure, clean*). A newer fallacy is that verbal and visual color are the same thing. Both a visual and a verbal sign. All scholars, to one degree or another, have mixed color words with visual perception and sensation of colors. Humans have each a biological antenna (acoustic apparatus) to broadcast verbal tokens and a biological antenna (auditory perception) for receiving audio signals. For the visual signs, each human has a biological antenna only for receiving visual signs (perception and sensation) but no biological antenna to broadcast (speech apparatus) any visual color characters. A human’s “speech apparatus” is a technology for coloring, painting objects, but it is not a natural, biological one.

Visual colors are color speech rather than color language. That is because humans do not have a biological speech apparatus for colors as they have for speech sounds. For this reason, visual colors are an incomplete sign system. Therefore, all attempts (Kress & van Leeuwen 2002) to attribute Michael Halliday’s (Halliday, Matthiessen 2004) Systemic-Functional linguistics and the structural approach to distinctive features in phonology to the visual color seems untenable. Kress & van Leeuwen 2002 accept visual qualities of color - hue, saturation, purity, modulation, differentiation – as semantic distinguishing features, which appear within ideational, interpersonal and textual functions (: 355). Thus, we consider physical properties of color first, in the territory of natural language, and second, in social and individual cultures and tastes. This means that we can hardly find a specific color grammar for an entire society. I consider essential in the semiotics of color the possibility that colors may indicate ideas and feelings

The number of characters-tokens in verbal and visual color languages is different. The total number of words is up to 200 000 in natural language, while visual colors are up to 30 shades of primary colors. The number of visual colors used as signs is insufficient for complete communication.

The interface between the verbal and visual languages of colors is the prototype. Prototypes are universal and become cultural units (Eco 1985) in all cultures and languages.

The focus here is on the BCTs. The rest of the white biblical presences (PT, RT, and TBFP) will be discussed in another article.

## 2. White 1 – *Lamed-Bet-Nun*<sup>1</sup> לבן

There are several roots in Biblical Hebrew, which form the BCTs for white. The root of Lamed-Bet-Nun forms adjectives and verbs and is the most frequent, just as in the Modern Hebrew. Although the most commonly used is the BCT for *white* לבן [lavàn], “its theological significance is relatively limited” (TWOT in BibleWorks). From my point of view, it is this term precisely that gives rise for hypotheses (as follow further) that intertwine structural, semiotic and theological issues.

It is unanimous that the root Lamed-Bet-Nun is used in all Semitic languages with root’s meanings *white*, clear and bright objects: Gesenius 1996 [1857]: 510; Brenner 1982: 186–187; Bulakh 2006: 186–187; Carretero 2017: 42–44; Hartley 2010: 95–97; Clines 1993-2011, vol. 4: 513–518). According to TWOT:

The Semitic root LVN referred to a range of light colors including: the white of snow, the light brown or creamy color of fresh wood and manna, the grey of the moon, the white of yogurt (Lebanese Arabic), and, finally, either the white snow caps of the Lebanon mountains or their light colored limestone. Arabic meaning ‘milk’ gives reason to Gradwohl (4: 34) to suggest it is natural to a nation of nomads and shepherds would see the color of milk as ‘white’ par excellence.

Like in Ancient Greek language, the references of Biblical white לבן [lavàn] vary at different nuances of white: from brilliant white, shining white, dominant white or prototypical white “as snow” to grayish-white, yellowish white (See Carretero 2017: 64).

This availability of the root in all Semitic languages gives grounds for Gradwohl (1963) to propose a linguistic-cultural link between Arabic milk and BCT for white in Hebrew: “Later, [lavàn] had fallen out of use as ‘milk’ and its original reference came to be signified by [halàv]. In order to substantiate his argument further, he cites Arabic, where lexemes from both roots LVN and HLV denote various types of milk.” (Brenner 1982: 81)

Brenner proves that this hypothesis is irrelevant and concludes: “There is no reason to believe – with Gradwohl – that לבן [lavàn], originally referred to ‘milk’. Neither the text nor the evidence of cognate languages support this assumption.” (1982: 93)

What is interesting in the hypothesis of Gradwohl, is that ten years before the Theory for prototypes appeared (Rosch 1973), he derives the BCT for white in

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<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew letter *Bet* has two phonetical values namely, the voiced bilabial stop [b] or voiced labiodental fricative [v]. When there is no dot, *dagesh* in the middle, the letter ב is pronounced [v], and with the dot, *dagesh*, בּ [b]. When we pronounce the letters of the alphabet, we usually say Aleph, Beth, Gimel, etc., although Bet may be the sound [v]. Therefore, no matter what sound we have in a root derivative, we will write Bet, just as it is in The name of the root – LAMED, BET, NUN. Similarly, we always say Vav, although this letter has phonetic values [v], [o], [u], [a].

Hebrew from one of the prototypes, the *milk*. Linguistic and cultural processes in Jewish society deny Gradwohl's hypothesis, but as a culturization of the prototype, it seems reasonable.

In Biblical Hebrew, there are few nouns, derived from the root, motivated by their white color:

– Plants: *poplar* לְבִנָּה [livnè] (Gen 30:37)

– A poetic term for *moon* לְבָנָה [levanà] (Isa 24:23, 30:26; Sol 6:10), alongside routine word for moon יָרֵחַ [airèah] (Gen 37:9; Deut 4:19; 17:3; Job 25: 5; 31:26, etc.)

– Two artifacts: *frankincense* לְבִנְיָה [levonà] and *brick* לְבִנְיָה [levenà]

– The verbs *make bricks* לָבַן [lavàn] and *be white* לָבַן [lavèn]. *Make bricks* לָבַן [lavàn] will be left for further analysis because, although it contains the white color as inner form, it does not mean a BCT for white, see the translations. The frequency of BCTs *white*, *be white*, *become white* in the Hebrew Bible is an important issue.

Carretero (2017: 64) points at the number of 38 (“29x as an adjective, 5x as a verb and 4x as a substantive of the significant presence of לָבַן in the Masoretic Text (MT)”). It remains unclear why the four substantives are included in the “significant presence of לָבַן in the MT”, in case that these four nouns are “not linked with color, apparently” (: 64). Especially that Carretero describes thoroughly the use of nouns, derived from the root: “*poplar* לְבִנָּה [livnè], *moon* לְבָנָה [levanà] (3 times, p. 62), *frankincense* לְבִנְיָה [levonà] (19 times p. 43) and *brick* לְבִנְיָה [levenà] (10 times, p. 43)”. In terms of Carretero, “the significant presence of לָבַן in the MT’ should be 34 plus 3 for *moon* plus 19 for *frankincense* plus 10 for *brick* plus all uses of *poplar*. Total 66 plus all uses of *poplar* are ‘the significant presence of לָבַן in the MT’”.

The article of Carretero (2017) is written in an accessible language, with knowledge of most of the sources. It is positive fact the author uses the terms *prototype white*, *prototypical color*, *prototypical white* three times (pages 59; 60; 61) for comparisons “white as snow” or snowy white. Beyond my research (Almalech 2010; 2011; 2012b) this is the first another author who makes the link between color terms and a “prototype color”. Unfortunately, he does not explain anything and anywhere what a prototype of color means, and what the Prototype theory is. Quite the opposite, he introduces snowy white as a prototypical white according to Lyons (1999: 43), but Lyons presented quite an aristocratic reference to Wierzbicka 1990; 1992: 218–222 not mentioning Rosch's research and idea. As Kay formulates it: “Lyons makes some general theoretical and methodological comments, which invite clarification.” (Kay 1999: 78). The problem is that Wierzbicka denies the claim of B&K tradition that basic color terms name neural response, and BCTs have universal sequence. Instead, she offers her theory of Semantic Primes and the universals (1992; 1996) with claim for universality of a Natural Semantic Metalanguage. MacLaury (1997) points out a crucial element of Wierzbicka's Semantic Primes and universals: “Curiously, she finds no primes among color terms, not even

a “light” versus “dark”, color-term universals notwithstanding. So why does she venture her untenable account? Surely she cannot, in this trivial case, object to a semantics that includes neurally grounded and primal nonpropositional imagery.” (MacLaury 1997: 630)

Lyons’ point of view is to mix the prototypes (grass, sky, blood) with the BCTs and RTs (lemons, blond, etc.):

What I mean by prototypicality in the present context can be explained by example, as follows: if asked what is the color of grass, of lemons, of the sky, of the blood (of human beings), etc., we might reply, unhesitatingly, that grass is green, that lemons are yellow, that the sky is blue, that blood is red, and so on. In saying this, we do not mean that this is their color in all instances, under all conditions and in all seasons: we mean that this is their color prototypically or, to use the philosopher’s term, paradigmatically. Lexicographers commonly rely on this notion of prototypicality in their definition of what they take to be the more basic color terms in particular languages. So to do advocates of the (so-called) prototype theory of color-vocabulary, cf. Wierzbicka 1990, 1992: 218-225. (Lyons 1999: 42)

Kay responded to this mixture of Lyons: “The B&K tradition of research is not about second order color words. It is about ordinary color adjectives (or verbs), which signify properties of familiar material objects.” (Kay 1999: 81).

Thus, in Carretero’s article (2017) *snowy white* is really a prototypical color, but the reference to Lyons is not a satisfactory one, as the mixture of the four nouns with the adjectives and verbs.

I count the BCTs in the current canon of Hebrew Bible formed at first century AD by the Council of Jamnia (Yavne in Hebrew). The Council of Jamnia excluded from the canon very popular Jewish books like Sirach, Esdras, Tobit, Judit, Maccabees, and Letter of Jeremiah, included in Septuagint (third century BC) and commented in the Talmud (fifth century AD). In Christianity, these books are known as Deuterocanonical. Clines (1993–2011) counts at Sirach 43:18 the noun *whiteness* (vol. 4: 515), he also accepts that the white of the horses described by Zechariah (6:3; 6) should be treated as nouns (vol. 4: 514) which is not my point of view.

Finally, it seems strange that Carretero does not use Scholem’s (1979–1980) material *Colors and Their Symbolism in Jewish Tradition and Mysticism*.

There are good reasons for Hartley and Clines to include Sirach in their works. It is because their goals differ from single description of Hebrew Bible.

Clines includes the Hebrew Bible (excluding the Aramaic portions) and a wide range of Hebrew Texts: Ben Sirach; the Dead Sea Scrolls and related texts; inscriptions and other occasional texts.

Hartley (2010) also includes Ben Sirach; the Dead Sea Scrolls and related texts, but he adds the corresponding translations in all Semitic languages, Targum in Aramaic, Peshitta Talmudic developments, Septuagint, Vulgate, and others.

Now then, the number of appearance of BCTs for white in the Hebrew Bible according to different authors who have compiled Biblical Hebrew dictionaries or monographs and articles about the colors are:

Brenner (1982: 81) counted, in the late 1970s and without the help of computer programs and concordances such as TWOT in BibleWorks, 29 uses (24 adjectives and 5 verbs).

In Clines' (1993-2011 vol. 4: 513–514) dictionary, the exact number of adjectives, verbs, and nouns is not clear.

Hartley (2010) points out 34 uses (5 verbs: p. 91; 29 adjectives: p. 97).

Carretero (2017: 64) points out 34 uses – 5 verbs; 29 adjectives: “I exclude the four nouns not linked with color, apparently” pointed at the same page as not relevant to BCT requirements.

In the 1990s, without the help of computer programs and concordances, I counted 32 appearances (Almalech 2006: 287). In the twenty-first century, using the assistance of BibleWorks<sup>2</sup>, I counted 29 uses of the adjective *white* לבן [lavàn], and five uses of the denominative verb *be white, become white* לבן [lavèn]. The adjective appears 19 times in Leviticus<sup>3</sup> at a medicine context – for skin diseases; three times for horses (Zech 1:8; 6:3; 6); twice for goats (Gen 30:35; 37); once for teeth (Gen 49:12); once for manna (Exo 16:31); once for clothes (Eccl 9:8), and once for moral cleansing in king's David prayer (Psa 51:9). The verb is used five times in Psa 51:7 [H 9]; Isa 1:18; Dan 11:35; 12:10; Joel 1:7.

Total – 34 uses of BCTs for white in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible.

Carretero (2017) claims that “[...] if we compare לבן with the rest of “color terms” in the Bible, it will reveal itself as the most common of them all.” (: 41). Brenner (1982) also pretends that “לבן [lavàn] is the most frequent color term in the OT.” (: 81). But this is not true.

The most frequent Basic Color Term in the OT is *blue* תהלת [tehèlet] used independently (e.g. Exodus 26:4; 28:28; 31; 36:11; 39:21; 22; 31, etc.), in a group of

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<sup>2</sup> BibleWorks4 databases include the Copyrights for TWOT; WTM JDP – Groves-Wheeler Westminster Morphology and Lemma Database (WTM), Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Abridged BDB-Gesenius Lexicon) by Francis Brown, D.D., D.Litt., S. R. Driver, D.D., D.Litt., and Charles A. Briggs, D.D., D. Litt., finished in 1906 and based upon Wilhelm Gesenius Lexicon Manuale Hebraicum et Chaldaicum in V. T. Libros, 1833 as translated into English from Latin and expanded by Edward Robinson, 1833-1854; LXX/OG Morphology and Lemma Database (BLM), 1999-2001; BDB-GESENIUS Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Complete and unabridged by Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles Briggs (all D.D., D.Litt.), finished in 1906 and based upon several works of Wilhelm Gesenius and editors, dated 1833 1858 and 1895; HALOT – The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament by Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner subsequently revised by Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm with assistance from Benedikt Hartmann, Ze'ev Ben-Hayyim Eduard Yechezkel Kutscher, Philippe Reymond under the supervision Of M.E.J. Richardson © 1994-2000 Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, Netherlands.

<sup>3</sup> 13:3; 4; 10 twice; 16;17; 19 twice; 20; 21; 24 twice; 25; 26; 38; 39; 42; 43.

three (e.g. Exodus 39:1), and of four colors at the color tetrad: *blue* תְּכֵלֶת [tehèlet], *purple* אֶרְגָּמָן [argamàn], *scarlet* שְׁנֵי תְּלַעַת [tolàat shani], *fine linen* שֵׁשׁ [shesh]. Because the colors appear in a constant group, they work in a *sacral color synergism*. The tetrad is used in a version of *blue* תְּכֵלֶת [tehèlet], *purple* אֶרְגָּמָן [argamàn], *crimson* כְּרִמְלִיל [harmil], *fine linen* בִּרְזִי [argamàn] (2Chronicles 2:6 [H7]; 14 [H13]; 3:14). According to BibleWorks, the total uses of תְּכֵלֶת [tehèlet] are 50, and Hartley points out 49 uses. Such a frequency deserves special attention that should be discussed separately, especially in most cases, where the sacral four-color synergism is in the sacred space of the Temple or mark wealth and aristocracy.

It is hard to understand how skilled scholars like Brenner and Carretero claim the supreme frequency of לָבָן [lavàn]. Maybe the explanation is the vast amount of the use of Prototype Terms (circa 1000 uses of *Light, Milk, Snow*) in the Hebrew Bible, which caused such impression and influenced the subconscious of experienced researchers. The situation with black is similar – only nine uses of BCT for black and circa 1000 uses of PT for black.

In any case, the terms for color leave no doubt that they imply a white color, regardless of the fluctuations caused by the context. Almost the same is the effectiveness of all listed substituents as a suggestion for white color but with addition associations. The collective suggestion of whiteness on the linguistic consciousness and subconscious of the reader makes the picture of the messages of the text reliable in its complexity of suggestions of an ideological type. The suggestions based on the white are large and versatile and not simply inherited in the text of the OT vision for 1000 years on the 34 BCT for white referring the message for the Sephiroth system and the pre-creation's white fire of Torah encoded in the text.

It is hard to believe that books so important to biblical narrations are excluded from the Jewish canon for the sole purpose of encrypting in the text the presence of 34 BCT for white expressing the idea that before the creation the written Torah is a white fire. The reasons are more complex, e.g. the end prophetic era at about 250 years BC for which there is no clear explanation, except that at that time there are no more people of high moral to bear the burden of prophetic qualities and lifestyle. In addition, this encryption has been done in Jamnia Council with BCT in contexts that do not have an important theological value.

## 2.1. Hypotheses

Any hypothesis on BCTs for white is irrelevant if we are not familiar with Jewish mentality, and history or carriers thereof. This happened already with the greatest researcher on Jewish mysticism, Gershom Scholem. Scholem claims “existence of an esoteric mystical tradition within the heart of early rabbinic Judaism” (Swartz 2007: 204), because he treated facts of written documents after decades of reading Jewish manuscripts in Hebrew and Aramaic, possessing close knowledge on Jewish mentality, history, and practices. Swartz counts the scholars who did not

agree with Scholem's interpretation of facts from the Talmudic and pre-Talmudic era. From my point of view, these academic researchers stay far from the Jewish mentality and treatment of historical realities.

Scholem is a pioneer in the academic study of *Helakhot* literature<sup>4</sup> related to Ezekiel's vision on God's Chariot (Eze 1; 10).

Swartz commented:

Also, Scholem draws attention to the inevitable connections and relations with the Hellenistic culture and the mutual influence and resemblance of the mysticism of *Maasei Merkabah* and Gnosticism. In fact, the contact between Judaism and the Hellenistic culture, in the face of the Neo-Platonists, affects all spheres which materialized in the first translation of the Pentateuch into another language (the Septuagint) and led to the emergence of the Alexandrian Judaism, which differed in some interpretations by Jerusalem's Judaism, and by the understandings and interpretations of the Qumran essence sect. (Swartz 2007: 217)

Arbel (2003: 11) marks the richness of Jewish tradition in mysticism alongside with Hellenistic links and mutual influences.

I accept Scholem's view of the guided significant place of the Jewish mysticism in the Jewish history, mentality and textual Jewish heritage (Talmud, commentaries on *Maasei Beresit* and *Maasei Merkabah*, ritual poetry etc.), and large portion of Jewish mystical visions and practices remain out of written documents because of the nature of mysticism as forbidden for writing down visions, but sharing only speaking "from mouth to ear".

Scholem reported a mystical saying for the written and oral Tora, starting with the third-century AD saying of the Palestinian teacher Simon ben Lakish pretending that "before the creation of the world the Torah was written on God's arm in black fire on white fire":

The white fire clearly means the parchment on which is written the Torah destined for ritual use in the synagogue. According to Isaac, the Blind's new interpretation of this thought the white fire which means the primeval form of the written Torah and the black one the primeval form of the oral one; this last, given on Mount Sinai, continues

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<sup>4</sup> The *Hekhalot* literature is part of *Maasei Merkabah* theme, It is connected to Ezekiel's chariot (Eze 1) "ascent to heaven," and "vision of divine palaces." It is a written form of practitioners of *Hekhalot*. "Hekhalot and *Merkavah* literature consists of several anonymous and enigmatic manuscripts, each of which includes various literary genres and diverse traditions. [...] *Hekhalot* and *Merkavah* material have been preserved as well in the work of early Jewish philosophers from the tenth century and in polemic Karaite literature. Additional fragments, the authorship of which is attributed to the ninth century, have been found in the Cairo Genizah. Short segments of the *Hekhalot* and *Merkavah* texts were also included in various *Midrashim* and in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds." (Arbel 2003: 8)



to develop throughout generations and represents the application of the Torah to them all. (Scholem 1979–1980: 65)

The whiteness of the written Torah could be implanted in the whole Hebrew Bible accepting the exclusion of quite popular Hebrew/Jewish books, called today Deuterocanonical. Also, the pure mystical and the most popular in Dead Sea Scrolls findings Book of Enoch<sup>5</sup> regarded as canonical by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church but not canonized by other Christian churches, as well as by the Jewish canon.

Of course, this is guided by the Jewish understanding, as it is both mystical and officially recorded in Gen 1:1 that God's instrument of Creation is the God's Word and the first created objects were made of light. Apostle John reveals this doctrine:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. (John 1:5 NAU)

Scholars usually accept the Creation (Gen 1) as a myth because God's instruments of Creation are the verbs *say* (Gen 1:3; 5; 8; 9; 10; 11; 14; 20; 24; 26; 28; 29), *call* (Gen 1:5; 8; 10), *make* (Gen 1:7; 16; 25; 31), *create* (Gen 1:1; 21; 27), see (Gen 1:4; 10; 12; 18; 20; 21; 25; 31), but in the light of John 1:1-5 it becomes clear that it is a basic and Old Jewish mystical doctrine.

Usually, when we use the term Oral Tora, we mean the priests' interpretations of the day-to-day application of the 613 commandments from the Pentateuch, collected and published in the Talmud.

I agree with Scholem that Sefer Yetzirah ("Book of Creation") is an element of the big theme of Maasei Bereshit (The Work of Creation). Sefer Yetzirah is a linguistic hypothesis for the Creation, see *The name of God and the linguistic theory of the Kabbala* (Scholem 1972). It seems reasonable to accept also the infiltration

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<sup>5</sup> The Book of Enoch, the great-grandfather of Noah, describes the fallen angels, and their descent to earth. The oldest copies of the Book of Enoch, date from the third century BC in Qumran scrolls. The whole book is found only in Ethiopic, but parts of it have been discovered in Greek and Aramaic in Qumran. Slavonic Enoch (2Enoch) is a proof that monotheistic people are interested in the ascent to paradise and angelic level, as well as the deeds of fallen angels. Slavonic Enoch is a Jewish pseudepigraphon preserved only in the Slavonic language. The central theme of the text is the celestial ascent of the seventh antediluvian patriarch Enoch through the heavens, his luminous metamorphosis near the Throne of Glory, and his initiation into the heavenly mysteries. The Ethiopic Book of Enoch is one of the most important pieces of apocalyptic literature; it furnishes extensive contributions to our knowledge of Jewish folklore in the last pre-Christian centuries; it shows apocalyptic literature in its beginnings, and above all it is a source of information upon the religious ideas of Judaism, see Jewish Encyclopedia, Enoch books of (Ethiopic and Slavonic).

of Platonic and Pythagorean influence. The system of the first created subjects, the ten Sephiroth, 22 letters of Hebrew alphabet, and the total 32 Paths of Wisdom that organized the cosmos, is known from the text of Sefer Yetzirah (Book of Creation or the Book of Formation). Some scholars placed it in the first century BCE (Reitzenstein 1904: 291).

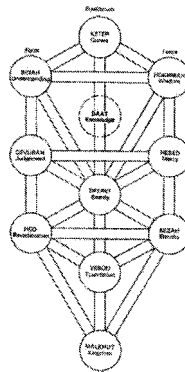
The theme of the Creation of the world is marked by the doctrine of the ten Sephiroth, which are the first ideal essences created by God. Their substance is light and their level is cosmic, not earthly. Each of them has a basic name, which sometimes varies with two or even three variants. The first Sephirah is the closest to constant the unveiled God before the Creation started *Ein Sof* (literally, “Endless”). In the XIII<sup>th</sup>– V<sup>th</sup> centuries it was conceived as an adverb (“Endless”), and after, for every-day simplicity, as a noun – infinity. Sephiroth doctrine is influenced by Neoplatonism, although it is also traditionally Jewish.

The links between the ten Sephiroth are 22 channels, symbolizing the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. This means that Sephiroth and their relationships are postulated in the terms of the letters. The letters are not the letters we see but are the ideas for the letters made of light, and in some interpretations, the channels between the Sephiroth are also made of light. The last tenth Sephirah is called the Kingdom (Malkut) which unites everything before it, that is, 9 Sephiroth plus 22 letters, total 32. This first created ideal world of Sephiroth is named in different names, one of which is 32 Paths of Wisdom. Each Sephirah has one predominant color and a wrong side, marked by the red color. The first Sephirah is perfectly white and the last one is the perfect black. Black is understood as light, not the black one we see with our eyes. The last Sephirah is understood as a symbol of the Sea of Wisdom (Sophia) in which the 31 rivers flow into the Sea of Wisdom, and it as blue. The idea of the synthesis of the tenth Sephirah containing everything before it – the nine Sephiroth and the 22 ideas for the letters – is reflected in another symbolism of the tenth Sephirah – an apple garden with red, green and white colors, conceived as the active female principle. The ten Sephiroth are also the cosmic First Man Adam. (See Scholem 1979–1980; Matt 1983.)

If we accept that at the end of the first century AD, after the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans, Sefer Yetzirah has been known, remains the contradiction of figures of 32 Paths of Wisdom and 34 BCT for white. We know from medieval Kabbala a version with 11 Sephiroth. The eleventh Sephirah is hidden, and its name is Daat, “Knowledge”. We do not know what the wise men from the Council of Jamnia have been in the preference of 34 as a collection of Sephiroth and the 22 channels that connect them. We know for certain, that in the Middle Ages there are versions with 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Sephirah<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, in the field of mysticism, the differences are not excluded.

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.kosmic-kabbalah.com/13-sefirot-2>



Through the 34 uses of Basic Color Terms for white in the text of the Hebrew Bible, it is encoded the mystic point of view that “before the creation of the world the Torah was written on God’s arm in black fire on white fire” (Simon ben Lak-ish); the white fire means the primeval form of the written Torah and the black one the primeval form of the oral one” (Isaac the Blind, 1160-1235, Provence, France) (According Scholem 1979-1980: 65).

Another hypothesis is that the number of basic terms for white is a code for the level of the Sefirot.

## 2.2. The proper name Laban is not just a pun

The proper name of Jacob’s father-in-law, Lavan (Laban) לָבָן [lavàn], means *white*. The proper name *Laban* לָבָן [lavàn], is used 21 times (Gen 24:29; 30; 32; 25:20; 27:43; 28: 2; 28: 5; 29: 5; 29:10; 29:13; 29:14; 29:15; 20:19; 29:21; 29:22; 29:24; 29:25; 29:26; 29:29; 30:25; 30:27; 30:34) before the first appearance of the Basic color term *white* לָבָן [lavàn] in Genesis 30:35. The use of the Laban begins as early as 24 chapter of Genesis, i.e. six chapters before the BCT *white* appears in Chapter 30. The name is used 21 times before the first use of the *white*. This name appears also tens of times after Gen 30.

Even for high-educated commentators, it could be challenged. Driver, Plummer, Briggs (1895) are very careful in the interpretation of the name Laban: “Lavan’s motive in removing: the variegated animals to a distance of three days’ journey is obvious; he wished to reduce to a minimum the chance that any such animals should henceforth be born amongst those now entrusted to Jacob – [white] Heb. *laban*, perhaps a play on Laban’s name.” (Driver, Plummer, Briggs 1895: 392)

Very often, the Bible presents skillful, sophisticated and delicate ways to inform us. What is the semiotic value of the 21 uses of the proper name Laban preceding the first appearance of BCT white in Genesis 30:35?

Jacob was caused by Laban to serve as a shepherd 14 years for his wives. Chapter 30 of Genesis presents the answer of Jacob-Israel to the Laban’s selfish

greed. The chapter's narration presents the first artificial insemination conducted by Yakov-Israel to avoid the Laban's conditions whose goal Jacob to remain a poor and dependent person.

The fact that a proper name, related to the English Mr. White, appears before the use of the BCT *white*, indicates that the color term is well known to the bearers of the language and BCT is available for a long time in the tongue. In order to be able to form a proper name derived from the term for *white*. A proof for this process is the 21 uses the proper name Laban before the appearance of the BCT for white for the first time. This is an anomaly with regard to B & K tradition for BCTs. The OT text categorically and systematically violates the theory of Berlin and Kay (1969), if we assume OT as a document of the historical development of Hebrew. Another example of such a violation of the B & K tradition is the fact that the first BCT term used in the text is neither white nor black, nor red, but green. This is in the first lines of the OT – *green* קִרְיָ [ièrek] (Genesis 1:30).

Carretero (2017: 41) accepts the opinion of Brenner (1982: 81) that BCT white קִרְיָ [lavàn] and the derivative verb to *become white* origin goes back to the age of Kings tenth century BC). From my point of view, the massive use of the proper name Lavan (Lavan) prior to the BCT is a sign of the much long-standing presence of the BCT for white in Hebrew.

On the one hand, diachronic availabilities in the OT cannot be denied; on the other hand, the fierce selectivity of the linguistic expressions represented by the intent of the authors of the OT do not allow an entirely diachronic look at the OT as document of the historical development of Hebrew.

### **2.3. The normative word-associations of BCT *white*, the visual *white*, and theological meanings of white color**

The use of white clothes and fine linen from kings and priests in monotheistic and polytheistic societies and cultures can be explained by the common understanding of the ritual and spiritual values and meanings of white garments. It is striking that ordinary people who are not familiar with ritual strategies and doctrines indicate the same meanings of white color by the test of free word-associations (Kent and Rossanof 1910) at the end of the twentieth century. The Bulgarian Norm of word-association (Almalech 2001) is a result of the responses of people lived in Bulgaria in the period of 1979-1996, and this fact points to universal, culturalized meanings of whiteness over the centuries.

Bulgarian Normative meanings of white, as associations of the BCT (Almalech 2001: 171–174; 2011: 160–184), produced by the test are: cleaned; pureness; clean/pure/immaculate *adv.*; clean/pure/immaculate, *noun*; purity/immaculacy; freedom; free; tender/delicate/fragile *adj./adv.*; beauty; beautiful; good/nice/kind; goodness/kindness; innocent; peace; peacefully; peaceableness; like snow; milk; perfect; calmness; calm; joy/gladness/delight/glad/joyful/joyous; the eternity/the

perpetuity; eternal/everlasting/perpetual/immortal; angel; spiritual/mental/intellectual; severe/strict; severity/strictness; optimism; wise/prudent/reasonable; independent; magnificent/splendid; pleasant/agreeable/nice/enjoyable; sparkling; shining/shiny; healthy; ill; love/affection; whiteness; disinfected; basic; snow; like snow.

In the area of visual color language white becomes a cultural unit following the meanings explicated in the Norm for Free Verbal Associations. Daubuz (1842) pointed out accurately the meanings of the biblical white but in our terms, these values are not of the BCT but relate to the concepts RT: symbol of beauty, comeliness, joy, and riches (: 56). For garments, namely fine linen (an RT for white), Daubuz (1842: 78–79) postulates the motivation or the doctrine for the use of white clothes. The extract of the text of Daubuz can be represented as separate meanings as follows. To be clothed in white signifies:

[...] the holiness of their lives, the purity of their conscience, being free from pollution, 'eing in God's favour (Ps 51:7; Is 1:18; Eccl 9:7-8); tokens of joy and pleasure (Eccl 9:8; Is 52:1; 61:10; Rev 3:4); not spotted with any uncleanness; honour, glory, purity, holiness (Ex 28: 2; 40; Lev 16:4); in the prophetic style to be prosperous and successful, victorious, to be holy, happy, honoured, and rewarded; priestly garments, in particular, are the symbols, [...] of honour, power, and dominion; [...] to put on clean garments after washing signifies freedom from oppression, care, and evil, together with honour and joy, in proportion to the nature of the washing, and the splendor of the clothes put on. (: 74–75)

Daubuz (1842) bode pagan kings and priests worn white garment by the same logic and motivation: "The same custom of wearing white garments upon festival days was also amongst the pagans. Kings and nobles were also arrayed in white [...] garments. [...]" (Daubuz 1842: 78-79). If it is true for the priests, white is not the most preferred color for kings and rich members of society. "[...] not to defile ones garments signifies, in the highest sense, not to pollute one's self with idolatry and consequently to abstain from all inferior kinds of pollution Rev 3:4." (Daubuz 1842: 78–79) As revealed by the archaeological finding, e.g. the tomb of Tutankhamun, purple, red, scarlet, violet, blue, gold, precious and semiprecious stones of different color, pearls, fine purple linen, violet linen or linen which is embroidered are typical of those in power and rich people. Biblical facts point exactly to the same trend, See Esther 1:6; 8:15; Eze 23:6; 27:16; Jer 10:9; Rev 18:12.

Especially for linen ritual clothes, Daubuz points out: "Bysse is a plant of which was made the finest and most shining white linen. It grew chiefly in Egypt and Palestine: and the linen garments of the Jewish priests were made of it. Bysse garments were also worn by the Egyptian priests. And hence a white bysse garment, as being the most valuable, denotes, symbolically, the highest and most perfect holiness and prosperity." (Daubuz 1842: 78–79)

Plutarch (46-119 AD) was not privy to any secret religious knowledge, and one could, perhaps, suppose that this secret, mystic-religious knowledge has its origins very far back, even before Plutarch's time. He informs us on Ancient Greek doctrine, way of thinking, and ritual practice such as the funeral on Ancient Greek visual color language at the burial ritual (Rose's translation):

Why do the women, when in mourning, wear white dresses and white kerchiefs? Do they, as the Magi are said to do, take sides against Death and darkness by this action, and assimilate themselves to light and brightness? Or do they consider that as the body of the dead is dressed in white, so the relatives should be? They adorn the body in this manner because they cannot do so to the soul, which they desire to dismiss bright and clean, as one that has now come victorious from a great and complex struggle, Or is frugal simplicity most becoming on such occasions, while dyed garments are some of them expensive, some, mere vanities? For we may say of black, just as truly as of purple, 'These be cheating garments and cheating colors.' Naturally black (wool) is really dyed, not by art but by nature, being mixed with a preponderance of dusty matter. Only natural white therefore is pure and unmixed, neither stained nor imitable by dyes; it is therefore peculiarly fitting to the dead at burial. For a dead man is become simple, unmixed, pure, in short freed from the ingrained dye of the body. In Argos, Socrates records, they wore white garments, washed in water, when in mourning. (Plutarch 1936. Roman questions, No 26: 131).

Goodenough (1964) comments this passage in Plutarch and the degree of whiteness in technology and cultural perspectives among different cultures:

The undyed sheep's wool would certainly not be white in our sense, but by its lightness it represented life as against the darkness of death; the lightness of a soul that had finished the agony of this life, about which we have had such frequent occasions to speak; the purity of one free from contamination with the body – that is – moral purity as it was considered in all Platonic tradition. The newly clothed priests and those who worshipped at the shrine of Asclepius at Pergamum, those who worshipped at Priene and Andania, all wore 'white' garments, as did mourners in the procession of Aratus and mourners of the third century before Christ at Gambreion and of Iulis in Keos of the fifth century. The reader should not misunderstand what I have said about the meaning of *leukos*: the Egyptian portraits so commonly show really white dress that apparently the Egyptians wanted a costume as near as possible to what we would call white. The Pompeian paintings give the same impression. But any light colour would do for contrast with dark clothing. We have seen that the white of Lucius' costume of initiation was *candore puro luminosi*, which seemed to make of his dress an adaptation of the 'robe of light' of earlier Egypt. (Goodenough 1964: 165–167)

The same point of view for the meanings of white "robe of light" for Egypt, Greece, and Judaism, is expressed in Goodenough 1969 with a rich material on ritual white garments based on large amount of archaeological findings and scholar information and debates.

A question arises: How is it possible that the respondents who have nothing to do with theology give the same or similar meanings of white color in the second half of the twentieth century? The answer is simple: it is possible because these meanings are universal for white color. They are in the linguistic consciousness and subconsciousness, and they are members of the Cultural Unit White.

#### **2.4. White horses in the Bible**

As stated above, there is a predominant opinion that white expressed in Basic Color Terms has no theological significance in the Hebrew Bible. This is not the case, if we consider that three of the total uses in the Hebrew Bible are for white horses from the mystical visions of Zechariah 1:8; 6:3; 6. Then actually, these three uses remain undecoded because of their highly mystical reference.

The evaluation of Apocalyptic, Messianic, Maaseh Bereshit (“Works of Creation”), and Maaseh Merkabah (“Works of Chariot”) literature leads to the conclusion that all of them are mysticism, despite some differences. See Charlesworth ed. 1983: 235. The System of Sephiroth is an element of Maasei Bereshit. Yauri comments on the Platonic and Pythagorean influence in the number 10 and the number of channels-letters 22: “It is also very interesting to observe the use of the numbers and the primordial elements in the Sepher Yetzirah’s cosmogony. This document can be seen as a syncretic cosmogony of the Hebrew and Greek thought, because Platonic and Pythagorean Thought, as well as the Ionic School, can be recognized in it.” (Yauri 2017: 70) Along with this, the mathematical cosmogony of Pythagoras is treated “as an atheist one”. Stenudd (2011: 61–63) states “Then the mathematical cosmogony of Pythagoras would rightly be categorized as an atheist one”. Orlov (2017: 103) points out the mystic link between Apocalyptic, Messianic, Maaseh Bereshit, and Maaseh Merkabah literature.

Boustan & McCullough (2014) are among a number of critics of Scholem’s opinion. From my point of view, their criticism serves the division between Christianity and Judaism as a doctrine. Their critic suffers from a chronic ignorance of the Jewish way of thinking reflected in the Bible as well as the enormous erudition and personal knowledge of Aramaic and Hebrew texts. The last few decades demonstrated that without linguistic expertise biblical studies suffer from patriotic extremes, but “Scholem was the epitome of the working historian, of the philological perfectionist” (Wasserstrom 1999: 244). An instance of what is being a giant researcher is the friendship between Scholem and Corbin (Wasserstrom 1999: 53).

### 2.4.1. White horses in the Old Testament

The colors in Ezekiel 6 are attributed to the horse's symbol. In ancient Jewish culture, the horse is a sign of warfare and the Lord's superiority. Ryken et al. (1998) note quite correctly the symbolism of the horse (Ryken et al. 1998: 1371). The horses of the eighth vision of Zechariah are the divine army that brings moral to different lands. Daubuz (1842: 104) indicated two very interesting points on horse symbolism. The first is the "noble description of the horse in the book of Job" (Job 39:18-25), and the second is "therefore, when the prophet Zechariah 10:3, said, "that God hath made Judah as his goodly horse in the battle", the meaning is, that he will make them conquerors over his enemies, glorious and successful. (*ibid.*)". The noble description of the horse serves to present God's mightiness in the creation of such a marvelous creature as the horse is.

If King David has chosen the donkey as the royal animal (2Samuel 13:29; 18:9; 1Kings 1:33), and prophets predict that the Messiah will come riding "son of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9), royalty should be removed from the symbolism of the horse with regard to the Jewish community and symbolism. Usually, kings adopt the horse as a royal symbol. "Israelite kings were not to accumulate horses (Deut 17:16), nor were Israel's armies to fear horses and chariots (Deut 20:1)." (Ryken et al. 1998: 1372).

As for the chariots, "in nearly 150 references to chariots in the Bible, three categories of references dominate: chariots as royal vehicles, chariots as battle vehicles and the divine chariot" (Ryken et al. 1998: 503). In the vision of Zechariah, the chariots are used for battles and as divine vehicles. Together with the warfare symbolism of the horses, it makes an apocalyptic picture of God's engagement to fight evil on the earth.

The horses and the chariots are a compound symbol of an angelic nature. They "are going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world" and they are "spirits of heaven". The term *angel* means *messenger* [malàh] derived from the Hebrew word [halàh] meaning "go" or "walk".

Zechariah 6:1-8

[..] looked up again – and there before me were four chariots coming out from between two mountains – mountains of bronze! The first chariot had red horses, the second black, the third white, and the fourth dappled – all of them powerful. I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these, my lord?" The angel answered me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world. The one with the black horses is going toward the north country, the one with the white horses toward the west, and the one with the dappled horses toward the south. (NIV)

Red, black and white horses are named in Hebrew with Basic Color Terms (BCTs): red אַדְמוֹמִים [adumim], black שְׁחֹרִים [shehorim], white לְבָנִים [levanim]. The



horses in the fourth chariot are named with the term בְּרָדִים [berudim], which are not BCT according to the criteria of B&K tradition. The Hebrew term is a derivate of hail בָּרָד [baràd]. The inner form of the term בָּרָד [baràd] is a Rival Term (RT) for color – hail. Thus, the categorization is based on an RT. Middle East hail very often is a mixture of sand and ice, thus the color of hail in the Holy Land is not the whiteness of European hail but yellow-whitish, or gray, or could be dappled, grizzled, or spotted. For Hebrew בְּרָדִים [berudim], few translations prefer *dappled* (NIV, NIB, NAS, NAU, RSV, NRS, etc.), others use *grizzled* (KJV, ASV, WEB), and RWB – *spotted*.

The structure chosen by Prophet Zechariah to name the colors of the horses in the four chariots is three BCT + one RT.

Being exiled, in the sixth century BC in Babylon, prophet Ezekiel revokes the color tetrad of the Tabernacle and the First Temple (*blue* תְּלֵבֶת [tehèlet], *purple* אֲרָגָמָן [argamàn], *scarlet* תְּעֹלוֹת יָתֵב [tolàat shani], *fine linen* שֵׁשׁ [shesh] Gen 35) for the clothing of the Levites (44:17) in the temple. This happens in the vision of the prophet on the occasion of the restoration of the Jerusalem temple, known as the Second Temple. Several decades after Ezekiel, Zechariah presented a new divine expression of colorful sinergion – the four colors of the horses that are “four spirits of heaven” (6:5) sent into three different geographical directions to fight for God and his laws. These “four spirits of heaven” have the ability of “standing in the presence of the Lord” (6:5), which gives them the status of angelic beings because they do not die in the presence of God.

There is a significant difference between the temple’s color tetrad and the four-color of Zechariah: the temple four-colors are sacred multicolored synergism, and the four-color horses are multicolored synergism of the Divine level. This is because of the popular understanding that the sacred level is a mediator (transformer) between the celestial divine and the earthly human level. Figuratively speaking, the sacred level is in the middle – between the earth and heaven, bringing communication between man and God, as well as to bringing down God’s commandments. That is why in the temple, each object has a symbolic significance representing the divine to people in the form of symbols.

In Zechariah 6:1-6, “the chariot with black horses is going toward the north, the one with the white horses toward the west, and the one with the dappled horses toward the south.” Geographic directions, which are sent chariots with horses, did not bring any information. It is well known that different cultures attribute color differently to the world’s directions. For example, for the ancient Greeks, the north is black and the south is white, while in the Chinese tradition the west is white and the north is black. In Maya culture, white represents north, red – the east, black is connected to the west, and yellow – to the south, etc. For Ryken et al. (1998: 1373) “colors correspond to the four points of the compass” but it is insufficient. There is nothing universal about colors and geographical directions because different cultures assign different colors to the four points of the compass. In fact,

the colors of the horses indicate different kinds of war to different kinds of sinful behavior.

What is really interesting is that the chariot with the red horses did not go anywhere. Keeping in mind that Zechariah prophesied to Jewish people after the return from exile in Babylon in the sixth century BC it seems that the chariot with the red horses remained at the Holy Land.

Another interesting and fixed fact in the biblical text is the effect of horses' work. The chariot and horses were sent to "patrol the world" (verse 7), but God has been satisfied only by black horses' work: of "those who are going to the land of the north have appeased my wrath in the land of the north." (v. 8). Ergo, white, red, and dappled horses and their chariots still work to please God in the vision of the prophet.

There are colorful horses also in Chapter 1 of Zechariah:

Zechariah 1:8-11

During the night I had a vision – and there before me was a man riding a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were red, brown and white horses. I asked, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who was talking with me answered, "I will show you what they are." Then the man standing among the myrtle trees explained, "They are the ones the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth." And they reported to the angel of the LORD, who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have gone throughout the earth and found the whole world at rest and in peace."

The chapters one and six are distant context.

In the first appearance of the colored horses (Zechariah 1), the important thing is that the black horse is excluded. Another important point is that one of the red horses has a rider, just as it is in the Revelation in the New Testament. A third major difference is that in Zechariah 6, the horses do not have riders, but they do have chariots. The term chariot is basic in Judaism and marks one of two big themes in Jewish mysticism, God's Chariot = the Throne of the Lord (Maaseh Merkabah).

Another critical difference between both chapters is the Hebrew terms for *dappled*, *grizzled*, and *spotted* horses. Hebrew term is not a BCT but RT. In Chapter Six, the Hebrew term is בְּרֻדִים [berudim], a derivative of הַבָּרָד [barad], while שְׂרוּקִים [srukim] in Chapter One. For Chapter One, the translation of this horse is *dappled* (NIV, NIB, NAS, NAU, RSV, NRS, etc.), *grizzled* (KJV, ASV, WEB), and RWB – *spotted*. For Chapter Six, the translations also vary: *speckled* (KJV, WEB, RWB); *sorrel* (ASV, NAS, NAU, RSV, NRS); *brown* (NIV, NIB).

The term שְׂרוּקִים [serukim] is plural from the adjective שָׂרוֹק [sarok], which means *a horse that has a red-brown hair* but also *wood sorrel*. Such ambiguity allows understanding why the horse named with RT.

All attempts to understand completely the semantics of black, white, red and gray/pale/green/dappled, grizzled/spotted in the biblical symbol of the four horses

are in vain. Part of their semantics, however, became clearer. They are “heavenly spirits” sent to bring God’s justice and order, combat units that fight against the iniquities and immorality of the people. They are combat units that fight not only humans but also the mystical symbols of evil. Different colors can be conceived as different typical capabilities and qualities of the “heavenly spirits”.

#### 2.4.2. The white horses in the New Testament

Apostle John in his Revelation deliberately replaced the RT from OT with a BCT bearing a stylistic and semiotic coloring. The new term is related to the root of green. The oldest manuscript of the New Testament that came to us is in Greek, and the horse is defined as *χλωρός* (*green, pale*). This is a linguistic interpretation of an intangible character of both the complex symbol and of the particular horse, whose horseman is the Death itself leading the Hell. This same Death and Hell, later in Rev 20: 13–14, are thrown into the lake of fire. Death and hell are thrown into the lake of fire, but what about the gray / pale / green / gray-green (*χλωρός*) horse? Not specified. Should we accept that, as one of God's spirits standing face to face with the Throne of God, the horse does not share the destiny of his rider? The horse symbol as a weapon of war is an unchanging semantic segment, regardless of the color of the particular horse.

Revelation 6:1-8

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living beings saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given to him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living being say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat on him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given to him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living being say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living beings say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living being say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given to them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. When the powerful horses went out, they were straining to go throughout the earth. And he said, “Go throughout the earth!” So they went throughout the earth. Then he called to me, “Look, those going toward the north country have given my Spirit rest in the land of the north.” (NIV)

In Rev 6:8, Zechariah’s controversial terms *שֵׁרָקִים* [serukim] and *בְּרָדִים* [berudim] are replaced by ambiguous Greek BCT *χλωρός* (“green”) translated usually

as *pale* (KJV) but also *pale green horse* (NRS), *ashen* (NAS). The ambiguity *a horse that has a red-brown hair* שֵׁרָקִים [serukim] allows of understanding why the horse named with RT in Rev 6:8 is *green* χλωρός translated usually as *pale* (KJV) but also *pale green horse* (NRS), *ashen* (NAS). The Greek word χλωρός is the most appropriate to inherit both Hebrew terms with all shades of reference. This is a complete correspondence between Revelation 6 and Zechariah 6 horses. The white, red, black, and “grey” horses are synergistic. On the other hand, the structure of the four-colors synergism changes: the New Testament contains four Basic Color Terms. The Old Testament four-color stamp of Moses (3BCT’s + 1RT) does not exist in the New Testament multicolor synergism.

While Revelation 6:4-8 is unreservedly an apocalyptic text, Zechariah 6:4–8 is a mixture between apocalyptic, Maaseh Merkabah, and Maaseh Bereshit text, as far as the angel level is involved. The prophet ascends to an angelic level or an apocalyptic act of four chariots, “spirits of heaven going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world.” The horses from Zechariah (1:8; 6:3; 6) and Revelation of John (6:2; 8) are apocalyptic and mystical simultaneously.

The symbol of the four colored horses of Revelation (6:2–8) is an example of the genetic bonding of the New with the Old Testament, i.e. the Jewishness of the New Testament. Revelation (6:2-8) preserves and develops the idea of the four chariots with colored horses from the Prophet Zechariah. Here the horses are single, the chariots were replaced with riders and are accompanied by breaking the seals. The horses and their riders remain a tool for judgment and punishment over people.

The horses and riders are in synergy with the symbol of the seal: “When its seven seals are opened, the ensuing events reveal God’s control over all nature and history (Rev 6:1-12; 8:1).” (Ryken et al. 1998: 2575)

Apostle John in his Revelation deliberately replaced the RT from OT color synergism with a BCT bearing a stylistic and semiotic coloring. The new term is related to the root of green. The oldest manuscript of the New Testament that came to us is in Greek, and the horse is defined as χλωρός (*green, pale*). This is a linguistic interpretation of an intangible character of both the complex symbol and of the particular horse, whose horseman is the Death itself leading the Hell. This same Death and Hell, later in Rev 20: 13-14, are thrown into the lake of fire. Death and hell are thrown into the lake of fire, but what about the gray / pale / green / gray-green (χλωρός) horse? Not specified. Should we accept that, as one of God’s spirits standing face to face with the Throne of God, the horse does not share the destiny of his rider? The horse symbol as a weapon of war is an unchanging semantic segment, regardless of the color of the particular horse.

While the divine level of color synergism in Zechariah and Revelation causes enigma, an inability to decode the color, the level of the temple sacred synergism allows hypotheses about the symbolism of the colors.

There is one independent use of the symbol white horse beyond the four-colored heavenly horses. It appears in chapter 19 of the Revelation, i.e. two chapters

before the last verse of the Bible. Chapter 19 of the Book of Revelation is notable for the marriage of the Lamb with His wife (the church), and the "fine linen, bright and clean" of Lamb's clothes. In the same chapter begins the final phase of the war of the Lamb with the beast. The beast and his false prophet are caught. They both "were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur" (19:20). Armies of heaven are also dressed in "fine linen, white and clean", and they follow the white horse rider. The symbol of the white horse is combined with the presence of three other symbols, containing red color: eyes are like blazing fire; the red color of blood on the clothes of the rider, the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God.

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11-16)

One gets the impression that having a white horse is the most difficult task because it is the tip of the ritual and mystical purity. Here the whiteness of the horse comes with the universal meanings 'purity', 'immaculate'. The sense of 'victory' should be added here. It seems that a universal habit of humanity is to use ritual white garments of the priest and white sacrificial animals that have been devoted to heavenly deities:

All these instances prove that among the Romans white was sacred to the heavenly deities. In the realm of magic and medicine there appears to be great confusion of ideas, whereas in the religious ritual the lines are much more sharply drawn. Fehrle thinks the religious wearing of white among the most different peoples is prophylactic. Wachter makes the same suggestion, but considers it probable that white, on which every stain is easily perceptible, was recognized as the cleanest color, hence was the purest and best suited for worship. (Armstrong 1917: 37)

The universal meanings of 'purity', 'immaculate', 'clean' are the reason why Ancient Greeks to consider white as the most appropriate color to present the deceased to gods, as testifies Plutarch: "Only natural white therefore is pure and unmixed, neither stained nor imitable by dyes; it is therefore peculiarly fitting to the dead at burial. For a dead man becomes simple, unmixed, pure, in short, freed from the ingrained dye of the body." (Goodenough 1964: 166).

'Pure' and 'clean' are the most frequent word associations to the BCT *white* in the Norm of word-associations (Almalech 2001).

On the other hand, the lack of the other three horses seems to indicate that the white horse is the highest and scariest weapon involved in catching the beast and its false prophet. Therefore, the conclusion of Chapter 19 of the Revelation is that in the final battle with the beast red, pale and black horses are not appropriate and cannot be useful here. From this, it seems, that the white horse is the highest heavenly spirit / God's spirit namely under the color that symbolizes the fighting force in the fight with the beast, the false prophet, and sinfulness.

Revelation 19:11-16 contains a massive presence of white, expressed in different terms and semanticizings. Besides the universal (clean, pure) meanings of white, labeled with BCT, receives additional meanings, coming from the definitions of the rider: 'faithful', 'true', 'justice', 'to judge', and 'makes war'. The rider of the white horse is supported by "armies of heaven", "riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean". Thus, BCT for white is used three times. The horse of rider, the horses of the armies of heaven, and the fine linen are described with the Greek word λευκός. The *fine linen* is RT for white, and *clean* is Term for the basic features of the prototypes (TBFP).

In Chapter 6, where horses appear the forces of evil are not described in color. In the book of Revelation, the powers of evil are in red. In Rev 12:3, "sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads." Red appears in Rev 17:3 for "woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was covered with blasphemous names that had seven heads and ten horns". The same woman "dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries" (Rev 17:4). The dying luxury Babylon is in "purple and scarlet" (Rev 18:12).

This is one of the main semanticizing of the red color, which follows the opposition from Isaiah 1:18: "sins are scarlet, and red as crimson but righteousness is white as snow, and like wool." Brenner (1999a: 203) pointed out the ambiguity of the red: "The color "blood red does not exclusively represent evil; like many great symbols, it is ambivalent; it sustains its own antithesis."

In the book of Revelation, the opposition 'white – red' is used by Apostle John, next to the other meaning of the red associated with the universal culturizations: wrath, anger, punishment, death of weak sinners; a robe dipped in blood; eyes are like blazing fire; winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. This second main semanticization of the red color inherits the imagery and symbolism of Isaiah 63:1-3:

Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood splattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing." (Isa 63:1-3)

The red color is presented by BCTs (*red, crimson*), and PTs (*blood and fire*) and by meanings of wrath, anger, punishment, and death, both in Isaiah and in Rev 19:11-16.

The word for *press* used in the Hebrew translations of the New Testament is פִּירָה [purà], *wine-press* יַי פִּירָה [purà iàin]. In the Old Testament, [purà] is used only once in that meaning, in Isaiah, 63:3. Total, in the Old Testament there are ten verses with ten appearances of the wine-press through which the Lord punishes the nations. Of these ten, nine are the normative words for wine-press: גַּת [gat] (2 times) and יַקֵּב [iekèv] (7 times). In the New Testament, the wine-press is referred to 5 times in four verses Matt 21: 3; Rev 14:19; 14:20 (2 times), and Rev 19:15.

The symbol of “treading of the wine-press” is recognized as emblematic of ‘divine judgment’ (Isa 63:1; Lam 1:15; Rev 14:19-20). The symbol is understood in the context of the blood of the people who are compared to a vine, explicitly shown in Rev 14:19-20: “And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast [it] into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand [and] six hundred furlongs.”

Thus, when the symbol of “treading of the wine-press” is used with blood, it is a part of the red semanticization with meanings ‘divine judgment’ and ‘divine wrath’.

Reminding the opposition of red-white to show that the method includes all verbal terms that signify color (BCT, PT, RT, and TBFP) gives the whole color presence. However, as we know (Eco 1984: 3-46) the role of the reader is decisive and depends on the encyclopedia of the reader, his/her possible world, free interpretation, and cooperative activity – every reader has his/her own level of recognizing color symbolism and meanings. Thus, the color facts constitute “a flexible type object” that “can be legitimately realized” (Eco 1984: 3). The fact of reading the same text and the existence of different interpretations led to different denominations in Christianity and Judaism.

We should remember that red is an ambiguous symbol, and it does not always mean evil, sin, e.g. red-white syntagma is the usual way to describe beauty (Song of Solomon 5:10; Lamentations 4:7-8). The cultural unit Red in Hebrew should include the problem with proper and common names אָדָם [adàm] and their connection with *red* אָדָם [adòm], *blood* דָּם [dam], and *earth, ground* אֲדָמָה [adamà].

When our object is the Bible, the problem with the role of the reader and the author is completely different from the twentieth century structuralist era (Barthes 1967). The problems with the role of the author and the reader have place regarding the Bible. Prior to Gutenberg’s innovation (1436), each Bible was written by hand. There are two major problems in the history of Judaism and Christianity: the vernacular interference and handwritten errors. Even in Qumran, on Isaiah’s Great Scroll there are corrections from an experienced handwriting on the manuscript. In the fourteenth century in Bulgaria, was carried out tremendous work of collecting

erroneous manuscripts and manuscripts influenced by local dialects. The work is channeled by Patriarch Evtimii and is called Normalization of the texts of the Bible by scholars studying the Middle Ages. The Council of Trent also forbids manuscripts with errors and influenced by dialects. Another problem is the translation, knowing that every translation is a kind of interpretation. The very first translation of the Pentateuch, known as the Septuagint, clearly illustrates this problem. Differences in the Greek text and the original Hebrew are well known and this leads to the formation of Jerusalem and Alexandria Judaism.

Together with the different worldview of Greek and Hebrew languages, translators, traditionally considered Jewish priests, changed what we now know as the canonical Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible.

Septuagint translated as *hyacinth skin* [or tahash] wherever (illuminated badger or dolphin skin) occur. Current English translations use *badgers' skins* (KJV), *sealskin* (ASV) or *hides of sea cows* (NIV), while Orthodox translations (Greek, Bulgarian, Russian) adhere to *blue skin* Basic Color Term blue, following the Septuagint. St. Jerome plays with the potential of Latin language in Vulgate and it is possible to translate *ianthinarum pellium* as *skin of a badger* but also as *violet skins*: “et operient rursum velamine ianthinarum pellium extendentque desuper pallium totum hyacinthinum et inducent vectes” (Num 4:6 VUL)

This changes the text, i.e. what happens to the author here. Religious figures accept that the Bible is written through the hand of prophets and apostles to whom the Holy Spirit dictates. These little changes do they not change the author's intention?

Another problem in the history of the Bible is the illiteracy of laymen or not knowing the language of the text. In Judaism, in the time of Jesus Christ, the laymen did not know Hebrew, so translations of Aramaic (Targum) appear, which also made changes.

Next factor is the lack of education and the effort of the uneducated to explain by themselves both the Old and the New Testament. This is how the Gnostic texts are born, which also influenced by Middle Eastern religious systems such as Zoroastrianism, Egypt or Greek culture.

Excluding different books from the canonical text also leads to differences with the author – some people read the Bible along with the Deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament and others without them.

Among the causes of non-canonical teachings are poverty, mounting of social pressures, the unity of church and state, that is why they rejected not merely external alignments but the entire structure of the temporal state. A typical example is the dualistic Bogomil movement in Bulgaria in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (see Crampton 2005 [1997]: 19; Obolensky 1948), which was expelled from medieval kingdom of Bulgaria but expanded in Western Europe under the name of Albigensians or the Cathars, leaving topographic names in Italy such as *Bulgari* and *di Bulgari*. Albigensians gave rise to reformist movement or pressures and



Catholic church produced creative intellectual revolution, alongside Albigensian Crusade 1209–1229.

Historically, the average Medieval man did not have time for narcissism because he was busy with the problems of his social existence as a peasant and trying to perceive monotheism by stained glass windows and art to tell the Bible story and as a state practice.

On the other hand, at present-day, in the Era of the Bible could be subject of the process of the Dead of the reader, a process that had different reasons and dimensions in historical periods. For instance, the price of accepting Christianity as a state religion in the fourth century became a simplification of monotheism, accompanied by illiteracy of Europe's population or attachment to polytheistic attitudes. A specific process of the Dead of the reader caused by fondness to power take place in many religions or even at atheistic ideologies like communism or Hitlerism.

Thus, a complicated language structure of 'white – red' color opposition is visible to the consciousness of dedicated minds of priests, artists, scholars, and people interested in Bible but not all priests, artists, scholars, and people. However, with the color phenomenon, there is an important detail – due to the binding of colors to prototypes and their universal culturizations, the colors in the Bible remain in the subconscious of all kind of readers or viewers of masterful images in churches and books. Thereby, the transmission of meanings stemmed in the prototypes becomes part of the culture.

The text of the Bible could be analyzed as a literature, as it happens in the humanitarian area. The prophets and the apostles rarely mention facts of their biography, and they are doing this in a mathematical way. The other side of the coin is the lack of dedicated readers of the Bible. If there is no interest in the text by itself then the authors would die with their texts.

An important feature of the Old and the New Testament wine-press is that who "treads the wine-press" becomes dirty with the blood of the nations. That is why, in Revelation, next to the whiteness of the horse, with the whiteness of the heavenly army dressed in pure linen, and with the whiteness of the Lamb's wife, also clothed in pure linen, is his own clothing, which is "stained with blood". The image of the press worker is constant in his dirtiness with the blood of the peoples – both in the Old and New Testaments. The presence of the opposition "white-red" means 'life for pure – death for impure' where the exact meaning is 'white purity and sinlessness kill the sin'. The relationship of the Old and New Testaments is indicated by this bloody dress, meaning the earlier war with the peoples. We saw that even with Isaiah, the "coming with a red garment" had already become stained with the blood of the nations, even more, so that in Isaiah 63:3-6 it was stated that he was alone in this struggle for purity. The relationship of the various strata and epochs within the Old Testament is given in Isaiah 63:1, where the one who "has trodden the winepress" comes from Edom, and he was there to punish. The name of the brother of Jacob-Israel – Edom (literally Red) is a symbol of

sinfulness and impurity. In Isaiah 63, the expression “coming from Edom” does not symbolize the geographic concept of Edom only, which existed historically around the Red Sea and today’s city of Eilat, and is a symbol of the places we can compare to Sodom and Gomorrah. Red dress of penalties people are symbol other than the blood that is “tainted” garment. The red dress here is a sign of regency. Evidence of this is Isaiah’s assessment of this red garment: Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (Isaiah 63:1)

The verb “to save” in Isaiah is the same root as the name Saviour, which makes the connection between both Testaments. The difference is that in Revelation there is a strong white presence, next to the wine-press and the blood of the nations.

### 2.4.3. Several objects that have something to do with white in Hebrew

Scholars agree that the root *Lamed-Bet-Nun* is a mutual root for the Semitic languages. In Biblical Hebrew, few words refer to few objects via nouns and they do not signify white but they are derivatives of the root *Lamed-Bet-Nun*. The Hebrew worldview had found the logical feature ‘white’ for these objects and that is why they are derivatives of the root. These are the poetic terms for *moon* לְבָנָה [levanà], *poplar* לִבְנֶה [livnè], *brick* לֵבֶנָה [levenà], and *frankincense* לֵבֶנָה [levonà].

The usual word for *moon* in the Biblical Hebrew is יָרֵחַ [iarèah] but for poetic purposes Isaiah (24:23; 30:26) and Songs of Solomon (6:10) use for *moon* לְבָנָה [levanà], the feminine singular form of *white* לָבָן [lavàn]. The clearest logic to make a noun from the adjective *white* is the “whitey” color of the night luminary. The moon is connected with the metal silver in symbolism. “Gold corresponds to the mystic aspect of the sun; silver to that of the moon.” (Ciriot 2001: 53)

For the *poplar*, it seems that it is *white poplar* (*Populus alba*), or *storax tree* (*Styrax officinale*). Zohary (1982: 118) gives an important and reliable information:

In Hosea it is definitely styrax (*Styrax officinalis*). [...] The *livneh* of Genesis 30:37, however, should be rendered *Populus alba* (white poplar); an example of the assigning of a single name to two or more plants which is not uncommon in the Bible (see ‘White Poplar’). *Styrax* should not be equated with storax, for it yields no gum, and the disputes about extracting storax from it are due to misunderstanding. *Styrax* is, therefore, a misnomer.

The *bricks* could be produced from white clay or the ingredients of the brick’s substance.

The most interesting is the case with *frankincense*. It is one of the four ingredients of the sacred incense. The incense is a contribution of the priests to the Old Testament liturgy. Sometimes the incense is used as a symbol of prayer (Psa 141:2; Rev 8:3-4). The Biblical instruction is given at Exodus 30:34: “And Jehovah said

unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight”.

There is an important feature of the sacred incense – it is forbidden for personal use but only a contribution to God in the temple: “And the incense which thou shalt make, according to the composition thereof ye shall not make for yourselves: it shall be unto thee holy for Jehovah. Whoever makes any like it to enjoy its fragrance must be cut off from his people.” (Ex 30:37-38)

It is not clear whether the aroma of sacred incense has had an annoying or social impact. The hint of the first meaning is that the word [samim] translated as *sweet spices* has developed in modern Hebrew the meaning of narcotic substances.

The first three ingredients are linked syntactically and semantically with the coordinating conjunction “and” which, according to grammar of Biblical Hebrew, form a meaningful whole, while *frankincense* לְבִנָּה [levonà] has the same conjunction but it is defined as *pure*, being accepted as the most white of all gum substances used for incense.

With regard to the colors of these ingredients, it is clear only for *frankincense* לְבִנָּה [levonà] that it has a connection with the white color due to the word-formation to adjective *white* לָבָן [lavàn]. That is, in the structure of the sacred incense there is “the seal of Moses” traces – 3 + 1. The difference between the structure of the four colors of the temple garments and curtains and the incense components is that for the incense, we do not know the exact color of the three ingredients. The similarity is that the single term associated with the white color is in synergy with the other three elements. Usually the element called *galbanum* הֶלְבֵנָה [helbenà] in Hebrew is a derivate from the root of *milk* הָלַבַּן [halàv]. If it is true, there are two linguistically submitted and traces left for the presence of white color, as far as milk is one of the prototypes of the white color. Zohary (1982: 201) points out that, Hebrew *helbenah*, its identification is not yet firmly established. Also, Zohary defines the color *galbanum* as “yellowish or brownish gum resin”, but not white.

Galbanum or galban, a gum resin mentioned twice in the Bible, is described in Exodus as an ingredient of the incense used in worship, and in Ecclesiasticus as a sweet spice, although it is actually a fetid gum. Despite the Greek, Aramaic and Syriac name halbane, cognate with the Hebrew helbenah, its identification is not yet firmly established. It was undoubtedly imported into ancient Israel, since neither here nor in any neighboring countries is there any plant which produces this resin. A yellowish or brownish gum resin, galbanum is obtained from a few species of *Ferula* growing in Iran and Afghanistan, but mainly from *Ferula gummosa* Boiss. [...] The gum exudes from the lower part of the stem and the rootstock, which can also be incised to release the milky fluid. Once exuded, it soon solidifies into lumps and takes on a waxy appearance and consistency. Used medicinally long ago as a carminative, expectorant and anti-spasmodic, it has become a rare commodity. It is exported by India (Zohary 1982: 201)

If galbanum is obtained from *Ferula gummosa Boiss*, as the professor of botany who knows fluently Hebrew supposed, the whiteness comes from the milky fluid substance extracted from the tree.

There are two more important elements of the incense instruction (Exo 30–34). The first one is that the *frankincense* is *pure* זָכָה [zakà], and the second one is that salt should be added to the incense. Behind *onycha* is the Hebrew נָטַף [natàf], a derivative of *to drop, dropping rain*, containing no color. The descriptions-instructions of sacral artifacts for the Tabernacle and the First Temple command that the gold should be pure in the Holy of Holies. In Biblical Hebrew, there are different roots to name *pure, clean*. For the *frankincense*, the term *pure* is זָכָה [zakà], and for the gold is טָהוֹר [tahòr]. Both terms indicate ritual purity, and *pure* is Term for the basic features of the prototypes (TBFP), included in the cultural unit White.

The salt is an additional white element for the incense. The salt has high symbolism in the Bible as a Covenant of salt [brit mèlah]:

As salt was regarded as a necessary ingredient of the daily food, and so of all sacrifices offered to Yahweh (Lev 2:13), it became an easy step to the very close connection between salt and covenant-making. When men ate together they became friends. Compare the Arabic expression, ‘There is salt between us’; ‘He has eaten of my salt’, which means partaking of hospitality which cemented friendship; compare ‘eat the salt of the palace’ (Ezra 4:14). Covenants were generally confirmed by sacrificial meals and salt was always present. Since, too, salt is a preservative, it would easily become symbolic of an enduring covenant. So offerings to Yahweh were to be by a statute forever, ‘a covenant of salt for ever before Yahweh’ (Num 18:19). David received his kingdom forever from Yahweh by a ‘covenant of salt’ (2Chr13:5). In the light of these conceptions the remark of our Lord becomes the more significant: ‘Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another’ (Mark 9:50). (ISBE)

The incense and its ingredients do not mean white but the instruction to Moses has two derivatives of terms for white. One (*frankincense*) is a derivative of BCT and the other (*galbanum*) is a derivative of a PT (*milk*). The recipe contains another white element – *salt* (RT). Next suggestion for white color is TBFP – *pure*. The final impact is that the recipe contains few different levels of the cultural unit White (a derivate of BCT, a derivative of a PT, one RT, and one TBFP) although *incense* itself is not a term for that white color.

### 3. White 2 – White with the root Het-Vav-Reish root הָוֵה [havàr]

The Jewish Encyclopedia (JE) states that the Aramaic term corresponding to the Hebrew *white* לָבָן [lavàn] is הָוֵה [havàr]. הָוֵה [havàr] is used in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament for a person who becomes pale of shame (Isaiah 29:22), “his face grow pale”. The same Aramaic root applies to a snowy garment “his clothing was white as snow” (Daniel 7:9).

It remains a mystery why one of the three major prophets, Isaiah, has decided to use the word חָוַר [havàr] in a chapter for a warning to Judah and Jerusalem. In any case, the place of the Aramaic as a sacred language is a very broad question, but far before Daniel and Christ, the Aramaic language finds place in the earthly domains of the sacred language, as a projection of the heavenly level of letters, language and speech. Another interesting solution is that of St. Jerome who appears to have reflected in his translation the opinion of the Jewish writers he contacted. He uses the word *erubescet*, means *to be red*, not to be pale.

The use of BCT for white in the translations of Daniel 7:9 is consecutive: VUL (*candidum*), BUL1, BUL2, BUL3, RST, BTP, KJV, NRS, etc.

Although the entire verse is in Aramaic, it is a wonderful illustration of the accumulation of a mega-white and mega-red united in mega-light image in the image of the Ancient One (Aram. an Ancient of Days), when it comes to the Throne of Lord and His garment. This is a traditional color representation of the distance between man and transcendental God. Here, again, as for Moses (Ex 19; 20; 40:35), Isaiah (6), Ezekiel 1; 10 is the Lord's garment. The whole picture, so concise, accurate and beautiful, is a kind of description of the Throne of the Lord/Chariot of the Lord, known from the earlier picture of the Throne in Ezekiel 1. With Daniel and Ezekiel the Throne of the Lord is described with a unique combination of mega-white and mega-red united in entire range of mega-light.

Daniel 7:9

As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. {(1) Aram [an Ancient of Days]}  
aspiciebam donec throni positi sunt et antiquus dierum sedit vestimentum eius quasi nix et capilli capitibus eius quasi lana munda thronus eius flammae ignis rotae eius ignis accensus (VUL)

The Aramaic words for refer white are BCT *white* חָוַר [havàr], PT *snow* תְּלַג [telàg], RT *wool* עֲמָר [amàr], TBFP *pure* נְקֵה [nekè], and for red are PT *fiery, flames, burning, fire*.

Ultimately, the semanticizing of the mega-red for is:

1. Isaiah (29:22), 'sin'.
2. Daniel (7:9) the standard biblical meaning of 'the color of Lord's Throne', 'attribute of God-Father'.

The semanticizing of mega-white in both prophets is 'behavior/garments not spotted with any uncleanness'.

In the Aramaic parts of the Bible, Daniel impresses the dual presence of both the BCT (white) and the PT (snow). Such a neighborhood and accumulation of whiteness exists only in Isaiah 1:18. In the Hebrew parts of the biblical text, there is usually no term for color, although in translations the BCT is in italics: *white* as

snow, *white* as leprosy. While in Isaiah 1:18 white and red are in opposition, here white and red are in additive relation.

In Isaiah 1:18, the expression, which unites BCT and PT in comparison, *white as snow* קַשְׁלֵג יַלְבִּינֹו [ka-shèleg ialbinù] is focused on human's sins, while in Daniel 7:9 the same expression in Aramaic *white as snow* is קְתֵלַג חוּר [ke-telàg hivàr] is for the clothing of God the Father.

This description of the Throne and the Lord's garment may have a cabalistic correspondence with the first of the ten sephiroth, *Keter* ("Crown"). *Keter* is uniquely defined as 'perfect white', 'the purest white', 'unmixed white', 'unpolluted white'. The garment, as an attribute, is an important element in the ritual and sacral space, and in mysticism, it can be referred to as the "veil", in the Islamic 99 veils, separating God from man. Ultimately, the prophetic term "white as snow" apparel also has a bearing on the understanding of the first sephirah as the first thing created by God that has come out of His Infinity (*Eyn Sof* "The Endless One" referring an adverb meaning), His transcendence and apophatism. Later, *Eyn Sof* has been understood as a noun because it is easier to mass culture.

The uses of the Aramaic term for white, regardless of the conversation about the holiness of this language alongside the Hebrew, are the textual presence of mega-white. Their presence obliges Bible users to know these lexemes and provoke the readers to meditate on the reasons for the presence of this set of tokens in the macro-light fabric of the Old Testament.

The word חור [hur] appears three times with the meaning *white* color of texture or linen in the book of Esther 1:6; 8:15.

According to TWOT in BibleWorks98 the root is *Het-Vav-Reish* חור. "From this root are the words חוּר [havàr] *be, grow white, pale* (Isa 29:22, only); *white linen/cloth* (Est 1:6; 8:15); חוּר [hur] *white linen/cloth* (Isa 19:9); חוּר [hori] *white bread or cake* (Gen 40:16)".

In Esther 1:6 it is used together with a single unique use of the word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] in noun phrase חור כַּרְפָּס [hur karpàs].

The word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] is mentioned by Gesenius as "a pieces of fine linen or flax, which is mentioned by classic writers as being produced in the East and in India, Sanscr. *karpâsa*, cotton; see Celsii Hierobot. t. ii. page 157." (Gesenius 1996: 416). Thus it appears that the single use of the word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] in the Old Testament is caused by its Indo-European, Sanscrit origin. Vulgate and Septuagint transliterate: καρπάσινος [karpàsinos], Lat. *carbasus* meaning *fine flax*.

The term חור כַּרְפָּס [hur karpàs] marks 'lavish king attire', 'expensive imports clothes'

There is one more problem that NRS give כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] meaning *cotton*. The meaning is uncertain and TWOT in BibleWorks confirms it: כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] *cotton or fine linen* (Est 1:6)' (TWOT in BibleWorks98). In Esther 1:6, the context is a king's attire: 'There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and marble pillars. There were couches of gold and

silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored stones.<sup>7</sup> (Est 1:6 NRS)

Gesenius information shows the symbolism of the root:

The root *Het-Vav-Reish* הור very often is connected to Aramaic and other Semitic languages. Generally, there are two directions of the semantic derivatives. The first one is *to be white, to become pale* (as the face) (Isa 29:22), figuratively *to be splendid, noble; white and fine linen*. The second one is an unused root הור, the meaning of which was that of hollowing, boring, as shown by the derivatives a *hole, a cavern* הור [hor], הור [hur]. Thus, the word הור [hur] means *white and fine linen* cloths of linen or byssus (Isaiah 19:9) as well as a *hole* as that of a viper (Isaiah 11:8) or *cavern* (Job 30:6; 1Samuel 14:11; a *den* of wild beasts (Nahum 2:13). (Gesenius 1996: 302)

#### 4. White 3 – White with the root Tzady-Het הצ and the obsolete root Tzady-Het-Het צחצ

The translation of a Hebrew TBFP (*pure, clean, bright, shine*) with an Indo-European BCT (*white*) is a regular practice (though not a hundred percent) in Indo-European translations. Due to the unique single use and insistence of translations that a word meaning *pure* will be translated as *whiter* indicated here.

In Lamentations 4:7, translators firmly translate צחצ [tzahù], root of Tzady-Het הצ (according to Gesenius 1996: 891) it is a version of the obsolete root Tzady-Het-Het צחצ) with a comparative degree of BCT white: *whiter than milk*. The whiteness in Hebrew is not expressed by a BCT, but by the word צחצ [tzahù], which is neither a BCT nor a PT, but a Term for the basic features of the prototypes (TBFP).

English translations of צחצ [tzahù] (Lam 4:7) follow the comparative degree of English BCT *whiter than milk*. All Bulgarian (protestant and orthodox), Russian, Polish BTP, and Czech BKR took the same solution to translate the Hebrew TBFP with BCT as a comparative degree of the BCT *white*.

There is one more Hebrew word for TBFP *pure, clean, bright* צָהַר [zahù] in the verse. It is difficult for translation, and English translators vary for צָהַר [zahù]. NAU, NAB, and NIV give for צָהַר [zahù] *brighter*, while much more often is used *purer than snow* (KJV, NAU, ASV, RSV, NRS, RWB). Actually, in the verse, there are three verb forms in past tense: צָהַר [zahù], צָהַר [zahù], and *were red/ruddy* אָדָּמָה [admù].

Lamentations 4:7

Her consecrated ones were purer than snow, They were whiter than milk; They were more ruddy *in* body than corals, Their polishing *was like* lapis lazuli. (NAU)

Their princes were brighter than snow and whiter than milk, their bodies more ruddy than rubies, their appearance like sapphires. (NIV)

Ἐκαθαρίωθησαν ναζιραῖοι αὐτῆς ὑπὲρ χιόνα, ἔλαμψαν ὑπὲρ γάλα, ἐπυρρώθησαν ὑπὲρ λίθου σαπφείρου τὸ ἀπόσπασμα αὐτῶν. (LXX)

ZAI candidiores nazarei eius nive nitidiores lacte rubicundiores ebore antiquo sapphyro pulchriores. (VUL)

Septuagint used the verb *to purify* ἐκαθαρίωθησαν [ékatharióthesan] and the verse sounds differently – “The Nazarites purified themselves in with snow [...]”. Thus, there is no comparison as it is available in Hebrew or English. LUO is closer to the Hebrew meanings: *reiner denn der Schnee* (“cleaner than the snow”), *klarer denn Milch* (“clearer than milk”). French LSG and TOB proceed as the English practice *blancs que le lait*, (“whiter than milk”). Spanish *blancos que la leche* (“whiter than milk”) is the choice in LBA and SRV. *Bianchi del latte* in Italian NRV, LND and *candidi del latte* for IEP (both meaning “whiter than milk”).

Apart from the problems of translation, the verse is a brilliant depiction of white gradation through two Terms for prototypes (*milk* and *snow*), through two Terms for the basic features of the prototypes, *purity*. This enormous and expressive presence of white, with no Basic color term is verification and delineation for two things. The first is the strategy and doctrine of the prophets how to express the presence of white – not through BCT but much more with PT (light, milk, snow), RT (*linen*), and even TBFP (pure, clean, immaculate, shin, bright). The second is the opposition between white and red, which is a standard universal relation in the cultures. This opposition is expressed in a variety of schemes. In this case, red is expressed with a BCT and two RT (corals and rubies). The Hebrew words and word-order parameters literary are ‘they are red among corals, a cut sapphire’.

## 5. White 4 – White with the roots Tzady-Het-Reish צהר and Tzady-He-Reish צהר

The root *Tzady-Het-Reish* צהר according to TWOT in BibleWoks has following meanings:

צהר [tzàhar] reddish-gray, tawny (Ezek 27:18).

צהר [tzahòr] tawny (Jud 5:10)

The word *white* designated by words formed from that root appears only twice in the entire Old Testament. The first time is in Judges 5:10 and the second – in the word-combination *white wool* in Ezekiel 27:18. Such a rare usage is significant in itself. In order to orient ourselves in regard to this meaning, we have to examine the full semantics of the root.

According to Gesenius (1996), the origin of צהר [tzahòr] derives from an unextended root in the language, meaning *bedazzle, knock, shine, blinded by bright light*. The paradigm of such a denotation of white in the Old Testament comprises only two cases – *white she-donkeys* צהרות צהרו [atonòt tzehoròt] (Jud 5:10) and *white wool* צמר צהר [tzèmer tzahàr] (Eze 27:18). A possible reading of the word *white* is צהר [tzòhar], but here I shall keep to צהר [tzàhar].



They are unique and important in view of the entire Bible, and therefore included in the BCT of white, although the basic meanings of the root are *reddish-gray, tawny*, the standard translation in both cases is *white*. The root relates to active transformations of the idea of light. The singular form of *white*, צְהֹרֹת [tzehoròt] is צָהָר [tzahòr] and the main signification of that word is *reddish-gray, tawny*. The tradition of translations, however, points to Judg 5:10 *white*. Such a meaning is bound with meanings of a close root צָהַר, *to shine, to glitter*. Consequently, these translations depend on the tradition and on the amalgamation of this root with *Tzady-He-Reish* צָהָר which is close to the root *Tzady-Het-Reish* צָהַר. The paradigm of *Tzady-He-Reish* צָהָר provides the *donkeys' color*:

צָהָר [tzòhar] I, noon, midday  
צָהָר [tzòhar] II, roof (Gen 6:16)  
צִזְהָר [itzhàr] fresh oil.  
צָהָר [tzàhar] press oil

(TWOT in BibleWords98)

### 5.1. *White she-donkeys, the root Tzady-Het-Reish צָהָר and the closely related root Tzady-He-Reish צָהָר*

Tell of it, you who ride on white donkeys, you who sit on rich carpets and you who walk by the way. (Judges 5:10 NRS)

It is important to check whether Bibles in other languages “insist” on the translation of צְהֹרֹת [tzehoròt] as *λευκός* (“white”), BUL1, since צָהָר [tzàhar] signifies *reddish-gray, tawny* and is not the standard Hebrew word for *white*, which is לָבָן [lavàn]. The white referred to צְהֹרֹת [tzehoròt] is spiritual and cannot be expressed by the regular BCT לָבָן [lavàn]. The whiteness of the she-donkeys and the wool signifies the shining, almost blinding whiteness of the light of the noon, the midday light in Middle East.

Indo-European translations give white for the word צְהֹרֹת [tzehoròt] which is the meaning of the paradigm of the word צָהָר [tzòhar]. Instead of the standard use of the term for white color (*λευκός* [leukòs]) or the standard word for *light*, Bul. *светлина*, Gr. *φῶς* [fos]. Septuagint indicates the word *μεσημβρίας* [mesembrias], meaning *noon* which is the closest way to the Hebrew meanings of the root *Tzady-He-Reish*. This is how the word צְהֹרֹת [tzehoròt] is transmitted to the Greek with *μεσημβρίας* (*noon*), i.e. bearing the meaning of the paradigm of צָהָר [tzàhar] and not the original root from the Hebrew text, *Tzady-Het-Reish* צָהָר [tzàhar]. Clearly, the seventy interpreters had something in mind and in order to understand what this might have been, we have to turn to the meaning of the root *Tzady-He-Reish* צָהָר. They certainly add it to the transformations of the idea of light. The upshot is that the entire paradigm of the root suggests ‘light’ and, in the case of the Window of

Noah's arc (Genesis 6:16), 'moral purity'. Obviously, the righteous Noah also is a bearer of these meanings.

The Vulgate uses the word *nitentes*, meaning *shiny* and not one of the standard words for *white* or *light*.

Slavonic (BUL1, BUL2, BUL3, BTP, BKR, RST, UKR) and English (KJV, NRS, NKJ, NAB, ASV, NIV, NIB, NAS, NAU, WEB, RWB) translations use the BCT for *white* – *бели*, *белых*, *białych*, *white*.

Italian LND, NRV (*bianche*), IEP beautiful (*splendide*). German LUO beautiful (*schönen*), as Italian IEP, while ELB and LUT *weißen* (*white*). In French LSG, TOB, BFC, and DRB the she-donkeys are white (*blanches*) as for Spanish LBA, RVA, SRV (*blancas*) and The Brazilian Portuguese ARA (*brancas*).

All translations maintain the whiteness, lightness and shininess of the she-donkeys. In this regard it is particularly significant that the legend of the Septuagint attributes a rabbinic authorship to the Greek translation, and the St. Jerome (347–420) spent much time in the Holy Land, studying Hebrew and advising local Judaic rabbis. The first occurs three centuries before the New era and the second – four centuries after the New era. In this way the tradition consistently confirms this translation.

Of the same order is the riddle why the kings David and Solomon choose foals which are “children of the she-donkey” as the royal animal and not the horse. Judges 5:10 shows that the use of donkeys or foals as animals for riding and expressing abundance, power, influence etc., is a tradition in the Near Eastern Israelite monotheistic culture. The word צָהָר [tzòhar] is used once as a term for the window of Noah's Ark (Genesis 6:16). That which allows the seventy translators to treat the two roots as synonyms, are the semes 'light', 'noon-light, as something positive' and 'ritual purity'. This is how the window of Noah's arc and the white donkeys from Judges 5:10 turn out to be in a common paradigm, suggesting 'light' and 'purity'.

This, the white/shining white she-donkeys צָהָרָה [atonòt tzechoròt] in Judges 5:10 is a highly significant symbol because it relates to the prophecy that the Messiah will enter Jerusalem on a white donkey.

The other, second throughout the Old Testament text use the root of Tzady-Het-Reaish צָהָר is in the term white wool צֶמֶר צָהָר [tzèmer-tzahàr] in Eze 27:18.

Ezekiel 27:18

Δαμασκός ἔμπορος σου ἐκ πλῆθους πάσης δυνάμεώς σου οἶνος ἐκ Χελβων καὶ ἔρια ἐκ Μιλήτου (LXX)

*The people of Damascus were thy merchants by reason of the abundance of all thy power; wine out of Chelbon, and wool from Miletus; (LXE)*

Damascenus negotiator tuus in multitudine operum tuorum in multitudine diversarum opum in vino pingui in lanis coloris optimi. (VUL)

English translations in their vast majority translate צֶמֶר צָהָר [tzèmer-tzahàr] with *white wool* (KJV, NKJ, WEB, RWB, ASV, NAS, NAU, RSV, NRS) while NIB

and NIV partly follow Septuagint with *wool from Zahar* treating צָהָר [tzahàr] as a proper name. The problem is that nobody knows where Zahar is. Most of the Slavic translations (BUL1, BUL2, BUL3, BUL4, BKR, RST, UKR), prefer *white wool* for the Hebrew noun phrase.

The Septuagint and the Vulgate, however, adhere to another approach. Septuagint inserted Alexandrian cultural habit – the white perfect wool in Alexandria had the name *wool from Miletus*, obviously pointing at the Ancient Greek city Miletus, located on the western coast of current Anatolia, near the mouth of the Meander river. In fact, today we use similar motivation in the term *Shetland wool*. Thus, the צָהָר [tzahàr] becomes Miletus, and the mystical meaning of *noon* from the *window of Noah's Ark* is reduced to a commercial notion.

Vulgate said it by cost of the wool – instead of color or geographic terms.

The Finnish language turns the shining whiteness into a proper name *Saharin* (FIN), as it happens in other Bibles: *Zahar* (LUT, ELB, NAB, BFC), *Sajar* (RVA), *Zacar* (IEP), *Zahar* (DAN), *Sachar* (BTP). Saar (ARA), *Çahar* (TOB). Many other translations work with white wool: *lana candida* (NRV, LND), *lana blanca* (SRV, LBA) *laine blanche* (DRB, LSG), (BFC), *witte wol* (SVV). Hungarian translation used BCT+PT “snowy white” *Hófehér Gyapjúval*.

Ezekiel 27:18

Damascus, because of your many products and great wealth of goods, did business with you in wine from Helbon and wool from Zahar. (NIV)

Damascus was your customer because of the abundance of your goods, because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth, because of the wine of Helbon and white wool. (NAS)

If the tradition replaced the usual meaning of the root Tzady-Het Reish צָהָר meaning *tawny* with the reference of the root Tzady-He-Reish meaning *noon*, midday in the translation of *white she-donkeys* אֲתוֹנוֹת צְהָרוֹת [atonòt tzehoròt] from Judg- es 5:10, we should try to decode such a remarkable replacement. There are few reasons for the acts of tradition. The first reason is why the Messiah, a key figure in Judaism and Christianity, will appear or enter Jerusalem riding a “son of a donkey”. No less important reason is to explain why the ritual animal of the Jewish king is a donkey, not a war horse, an elephant or other animal that symbolizes the combat power and glory.

Tracking the role and place of the donkey in the Bible, as well as the colors with which the donkey is presented in the text and in the tradition is important for the symbolism of that animal.

As far as the *white she-donkeys* אֲתוֹנוֹת צְהָרוֹת [atonòt tzehoròt] (Jud 5:10) are translated as white donkeys but צְהָרוֹת [tzehoròt] is not the regular BCT in Hebrew rather it is a term for shining light of the noon in the Middle East the important symbol of the donkey will be examined independently.

## 6. BCT White in the New Testament

The New Testament (NT) is five times smaller than the size of the Old Testament (OT). The number of basic color terms (BCT) in the Old and New Testaments is approximately the same – 34 in OT (depending on the criteria may become 38), and 35 in the NT (depending on the translation may become 40). Thus, the feeling that the reader creates on the basis of frequency throughout the text is that in the NT white-BCTs are used five times more often than in the OT.

The uses of BCT in the NT are highly symbolic in contrast to the descriptive uses of the disease. The essential moments in Christ's life are marked by white-BCT as well as many mystical descriptions in Revelation. The enigmatic mystical white horses of Zechariah 6:3; 6 correspond to the white horse in Revelation (6:2; 8).

- Transfiguration of Jesus at Mount Tabor at the presence of the apostles Peter, James, and John. The word λευκός is used in all gospels (Luke 9:29; Mark 9:3; Matthew 17:2) to describe the transfiguration of Jesus from son of man to son of God. Besides the white-BCT in Greek, λευκός, the descriptions are rich of Greek white-PTs *shine, gleam, flash, lightning* (Luke 9:29), *light, sun, glisten, dazzle, shine, bleach* (Mark 9:3) *light, give light, flash* (Matthew 17:2). PTs are involved in comparisons with the structure 'white as...' Extreme white became the face and the garments of Jesus:

Matthew 17:2

And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. (NAS)

και μετεμορφώθη έμπροσθεν αυτών, και έλαμψε το πρόσωπον αυτου ως ο ήλιος, τα δε ιμάτια αυτου έγιναν λευκά ως το φως. (GNT)

έλαμψε from shine, give light, flash

ήλιος sun λάμπω

λευκά ως το φως white as light

Mark 9:3

His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. (NIB)

and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. (NAS)

και τα ιμάτια αυτου έγινετο στίλβοντα λευκά λίαν, οια γραφεύς επί της γης ου δύναται ούτως λευκάναι. (BNT)

στίλβω glisten, dazzle, shine

λίαν adv. exceedingly, greatly, very much; very, quite

sti,lbonta leuka. li,an

γραφεύς one who bleaches (cloth)

λευκαίνω make whole; bleach; whiten

Luke 9:29

And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. (NAS)

And as he prayed, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white *and* shining. (RWB)

καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ προσεύχεσθαι αὐτὸν τὸ εἶδος τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἕτερον καὶ ὁ ἱματισμὸς αὐτοῦ λευκὸς ἕξαστράπτων. (GNT Luke 9:29)

ἕξαστράπτω flash like lightning, white *and* shining.

λευκὸς ἕξαστράπτων.

• The Resurrection. An angel who spoke to Mary Magdalene, Jacob's mother Mary, and Salome announcing them that Jesus was resurrected:

Matthew 28:1-3

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. (NIV)

ἦν δὲ ἡ εἰδέα αὐτοῦ ὡς ἀστραπή καὶ τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν.

ἀστραπή lightning; ray

λευκός white; shining, brilliant

χιῶν snow

John 20:12

and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. (NIV)

καὶ θεωρεῖ δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς καθεζομένους, ἕνα πρὸς τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἕνα πρὸς τοῖς ποσίν, ὅπου ἔκειτο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. (GNT)

λευκός white; shining, brilliant

Mark 16:5

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. (NIV)

καὶ εἰσελθοῦσαι εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον εἶδον νεανίσκον καθήμενον ἐν τοῖς δεξιοῖς περιβέβλημένον στολὴν λευκὴν, καὶ ἐξεθαμβήθησαν. (GNT)

λευκός white; shining, brilliant

The crucifixion has no white markers, while for the funeral ritual, there is only one white presence, used for the burial ritual of the Jews by RT, *linen cloth* σινδῶν, only in Mark's gospel (15:46): "And he bought a linen cloth, and taking him down, wound him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of a rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb."

The crucifixion is accompanied only by two uses of the red color. One is through BCT with purple (πορφύραν), and a symbol of royal power. Jesus is dressed in purple robe and then undressed by the cruel soldiers only in Mark 15:17; Matthew

27:28. The other red “testimony” of the crucifixion is by PT, *blood*, only in John 19:34: “but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water”. (NAS).

Thus, the transfiguration of Jesus at Mount Tabor and the His resurrection are accompanied by a white-BCT.

The resurrection of Jesus in Mark 16:4 testify for a young man dressed in a white robe: “As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.” In Matthew 28:3-4, an angel appears in “lightening, and his clothing white as snow” near the tomb. Luke (24:4) pointed at “two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them”. In John 20:1-7, Peter and disciples “saw the linen cloths lying there”. Thus, for resurrection in gospels white is the symbol expressed with BCT (twice), PT (four times), RT (linen, three times).

## 7. Conclusions

- The expectation that white is the most frequent BCT did not come to fruition.
- The secondary cultural meanings of white BCTs are not at the expected level. It repeats the phenomenon observed with the BCTs for black (Almalech 2018).
- The expectation of rich secondary semantics of white and black follows the statistics of the BCTs in fiction and the Berlin & Kay tradition.
- In the age of religious faith in Science, few people believe that the prophets and apostles held the same doctrine of using basic terms for white.
- The low degree of cultural meanings of white, denoted by a primary color term, is due to the prophetic and apostolic writing discipline. The same applies to the statistical aspect of the basic terms for white.
- These features are compensated by accessible and understandable semantic oppositions white-red, white-black where white signifies good, and red and/or black - evil.
- Another compensatory mechanism is the enormous number of White and Black Prototype Terms and their rich secondary semantics.
- The New Testament inherited and further developed the rich symbolism of the white color in combinations of different terms – BCT, PT, RT.

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- DDDB – *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. 1999 [1995]. Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter van der Horst. 2-nd ed. Leiden: Brill.
- ISBE – *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. 5 vol. set, 1939. [1915]. James Orr (general ed.) Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co; 1915. Chicago: Howard-Severance Co. Online: <https://www.internationalstandardbible.com/S/seraphim.html>
- JE – *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*. 1901 – 1906. 5 vol. set. Managing ed. Isidore Singe. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company. Available at: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/> Jewish Encyclopedia.com website contains the complete contents of the 12-volume Jewish Encyclopedia, which was originally published between 1901-1906.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### *General Abbreviations*

adj. – adjective  
An – Author’s note  
c. - circa  
chap. – chapter  
cf. – compare  
fem. – feminine  
ff. – and the following (pages, paragraphs)  
i.q. – the same as  
i.e. – that is  
i.e. – in other words  
i.q. – the same as  
lit. – literary  
masc. – masculine  
NT – New Testament  
obsol. – obsolete (root)  
OT – Old Testament  
pl. – plural  
v. – verse

### *Color*

B&K – Berlin, Brent & Paul Kay sequence/tradition

### *Bibles, Translations*

#### *Cyrillic*

BUL1 Bulgarian Protestant Version 1940, 1995, 2005  
BUL2 Bulgarian Orthodox Version 1925, 1991  
BUL3 Protestant “Veren” edition, 2000  
RST Russian Synodal Text of the Bible 1917 [1996]

#### *English*

ASV American Standard Version 1901  
KJV King James 1611/1769 [1988-1997]  
King James 2000 Bible  
NAB The New American Bible 2011 [1970; 1991]  
NAS (NASB) New American Standard Bible 1977  
NAU New American Standard Bible 1995  
NIB New International Version UK 1983  
NIV New International Version 1984 (US)  
NKJ New King James Version 1982  
NRS New Revised Standard Version 1989  
RSV Revised Standard Version 1952/1971  
RWB Revised Webster 1833/1995

WEB The Webster Bible 1833

*Greek*

LXX Septuagint. Retrieved from <http://biblehub.com/interlinear/>

*Hebrew*

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia 1990

*Latin*

VUL Latin Vulgate

*Polish*

BTP The Polish Millennium Bible 1984, 4th Ed.

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