

# Textual Animals Turned into Narrative Fantasies

## The Imaginative Middle Ages\*

### Abstract

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1. This problem defining the term known in Latin as 'mirabilis' was already discussed by Augustine in his *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* 970–80. Since then it was discussed not only by religious theologians but also by historians, literary critics, and folklorists. In Jewish literature the definition of the category is even more problematic, given the lack of a Hebrew term which is equivalent in its meaning to that of the Latin. See Brown; Le Goff; Daston and Park; Bynum; Dinzelbacher; Watkins; Bakhtin 196–277; Tolkien 9–73; Cohen, "Monster Culture" 3–25; Grimm; Dégh 1–22. For a critical summary of the discussion see Rotman 37–62.

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This article focuses on the concept 'reconstruction of the world' proposed by G. Zoran in his theoretical work on the representation of space in narrative. It makes special reference to the inter-medially transformative processes that narrators and audiences undergo, as materially concrete objects in space turn into representations in the verbal medium. Investigating the possible bodies of knowledge common to the participants in the communicative process, the article specifically discusses animals widely described in late antique and medieval Jewish folk tales and considers the possibilities for reconstructing the sources of shared imaginary worlds.

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This article is part of an ongoing discussion that I have been having with myself and with colleagues for the past years on fundamental issues raised by narratives – especially medieval ones – about encounters with marvelous phenomena and events. These narratives, in my opinion, raise the question of the relationship between such phenomena and events, their textual representations (especially in Jewish literature), and the real-life experiences of the narrating communities. The biblical creatures that are the focal point of this issue are, I believe, a manifestation of one aspect of the topic, albeit a very illustrative one.

One of the main challenges for anyone who deals with the subject is how to define and classify the marvelous as a concept, a category of human knowledge. This matter has been controversial at least since Late Antiquity.<sup>1</sup> To discuss this concept, I have developed in earlier works the following operational definition, which, for lack of any other alternative, is an analytic one, and is deliberately disconnected from terms used by the narrating societies. I crafted this definition because I could not find any other one that was both consensual and included the literary, religious, folkloristic, and philosoph-

2. I elaborate on this definition, its weaknesses and advantages, and why I prefer it in my book: see Rotman 62–65.

3. In this I differ from J.R.R. Tolkien's position about "Fairy Stories" who based his definition of the literary genre of Fantasy on the reader's ability of "suspension of the disbelief" and creating a temporary "secondary belief." One of the main impacts of the stories about marvelous phenomena and realms is based on the belief of the readers or listeners that they are all part of their mortal world. Compare: Tolkien 9–73.

4. On Jewish travelers in Late Antiquity and their literary representations, see Hezser 197–440.

ical meanings of the concept. The limitations of this definition, like any definition of an abstract term, were taken into consideration; however, to my mind we cannot analyze manifestations of the marvelous without first explaining what the marvelous is.<sup>2</sup>

I define the marvelous in narratives in terms of its position *vis-à-vis* the narrating consciousness. I suggest that to be considered marvelous, phenomena and events must be related to that consciousness in three ways. First, they must be alien to and exceptional in the narrating community's life experience and everyday reality. At the same time, the members of the narrating community must believe them to be possible in the real, extra-literary world. Third, they must be tangible: they must be described as perceivable by the senses (especially the sense of sight). This third feature reinforces the first two, in that the tangibility of the marvelous phenomenon stresses both its exceptionality and its real possibility. To count as marvelous, a phenomenon must meet all three conditions: it is not marvelous if it is familiar or mundane, if the narrating community considers it impossible in the real world, or if it is described as completely unperceivable.

I have found that this last element of the definition of the marvelous – that the phenomenon or event must be possible in the extra-literary world – requires the most attention in the context of textual representations, and particularly, narratives.<sup>3</sup> There is something elusive in the relationship between marvelous phenomena and events and real, extra-literary life. Despite the fact that the title of this article refers to narratives from the Middle Ages, in order to demonstrate how this matter is problematic I would like to start with older narratives: a few accounts by travelers included in the Babylonian Talmud, that is, from Late Antiquity. In these cases, the traveler-narrators were Babylonian Torah scholars who had returned from trips, usually to Eretz Israel (Palestine), and told their colleagues what they had seen and experienced.<sup>4</sup>

The first example is that of Rami b. Ezekiel:

Rami b. Ezekiel once paid a visit to Bene Berak, where he saw goats grazing under fig trees while honey was flowing from the figs. Milk ran from them, and these mingled with each other. 'This is indeed', he remarked, '[a land] flowing with milk and honey' [Exod. 33.3]. (BT Ketubbot 111b)

On the surface, nothing in this story would be regarded as supernatural, either today or in Late Antiquity. Honey flows from figs and

5. On this aspect see various sources in Kiperwasser 225–26, no. 42.

milk flows from goats. Even the abundance, while unusual, would not have prompted the traveler to spend much time describing the incident. What lends this event marvelous qualities is the combination of two aspects that are really one: the physical location of the event in Eretz Israel and its connection to the biblical text.<sup>5</sup> The event is exceptional in terms of life experience because it is the realization of a metaphor found in the Bible.

The traveler set out on his journey with the biblical text in his ‘baggage.’ He arrives at the place discussed by the Bible and sees the biblical text coming to life before his eyes. He then immediately recites the relevant verse, which turns an everyday natural phenomenon into something marvelous. But it does not remain so. The physical event taking place in space itself becomes a text as Rami b. Ezekiel relates it to his audience. The audience now has two texts corroborating each other: the familiar biblical text and the unfamiliar story of Rami b. Ezekiel’s encounter.

From this example, I believe we can already see how one of the anchors linking the marvelous in narratives to extra-literary reality is the spatial nature of the marvelous. The marvelous is part of space. It is born in space, takes place in space, affects it, and is affected by it. The dragon is a dragon because of its appearance and its actions; the same is true of the Fountain of Youth. In the example above, the marvelous is defined as such by virtue of the space in which it is located. Its spatial nature is what lends the marvelous its extra-textual dimension, that of ‘real life,’ which it requires in order to elicit wonder in the readers or listeners.

This relationship between the marvelous and space is particularly important in the context of textual representation. At least since the beginning of the famous ‘spatial turn’ in the humanities and the social studies, back in the late 1960’s, space is known to have a special status in fiction as one of the main elements connecting the text to extra-textual life.<sup>6</sup> Around forty years ago Gabriel Zoran, who sought to develop a theory of spatial organization in narrative texts, put it as follows (25–26):

If we understand the concept of fiction in its simple sense, i.e., as something [...] that does not exist in reality, as opposed to something that exists in a tangible way, we see that very often it is space that does not take part in the fabrication. Every reader of novels knows [...] that Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary are fictional characters [...] but it would not

6. Although it has been discussed for almost half a century, the ‘spatial turn’ in Jewish Studies, and specifically in the studies of pre-modern Jewish literature is a phenomenon of the last two decades. For a survey of the history of dealing with Jewish literary representations of spaces and places, see Brauch, Lipphardt and Alexandra. One should also notice some of the earlier pioneering works, like those of Bar-Itzhak and Bar-Levav who used some of the tools offered by Michel Foucault and others to study such representations in Jewish folklore and folk literature.

occur to them as a result to question the existence of St. Petersburg or Lyons. The locations of the action are perceived [...] as some coordinate connecting these characters to the real world.

In other words, the linguistic representations of space, according to Zoran, are essentially the closest factor in the story to the extra-narrative reality of the audience. This is true when the story is described as a complete fabrication, and all the more so when it is said to document events that actually occurred. However, this fact necessitates consideration of a broader problem, namely, the very representation of spaces, or spatial objects, in literary texts. In other words, we, as readers or listeners, can believe that an event or phenomenon described in the text is possible outside it as well, but to do so we have to overcome the limited capacity of language to represent spatial objects.

I will illustrate this with another story about a Talmudic traveler:

Said Rabbah [bar Bar Hannah]: I saw with my own eyes a one-day old *re'em* which was as big as Mount Tabor. And how big is Mount Tabor? Four parasangs.<sup>7</sup> The stretch of its neck was three parasangs and the expanse of its head one and a half parasangs. And it cast a ball of excrement which obstructed the Jordan. (BT *Baba Batra* 73b)

7. About 24 kilometers.

It seems that this traveler-narrator has a bigger problem than the narrator of the previous story. He is describing an encounter with a creature like nothing his audience has ever seen and he has to describe it in such a way that they can imagine it. Zoran refers to this process, in which the members of the audience create in their imagination the space described to them in words, as a “process of reconstructing the world:” the listeners, assuming that they understand the meaning of the words and language, use their knowledge of history, geography, physics, politics, and so on to link up the details of the text, thereby creating a framework in which the world described can be reconstructed in their imagination (Zoran 32–34). This framework serves as the armature for the ‘reconstructed world’, a space that exists only in the mind and the imagination. This world cannot be completely identical to the actual world described or to the world in which we live. But it is constructed on the basis of those worlds and makes it

possible to transmit the story from the narrator's mind to the listener's (or reader's) mind (*ibid.*).

This framework created by the audience is based on previous knowledge that they have brought with them to the encounter with the literary text. It must be constructed by them, whether because they are not given certain details of the description or because it is always conveyed in language. As every first-year student of comparative literature knows, descriptive language is always exclusively temporal, whereas the objects and events are generally spatial. To put it more simply: dealing with descriptions of spaces and objects that exist or occur in space requires a preliminary knowledge base shared by both sides participating in the narration process: the narrators and the audience. This is a critical matter that cannot be ignored when it comes to the genre of travelers' and pilgrims' narratives in the pre-modern period.<sup>8</sup>

Rabbah bar Bar Hannah's listeners have never seen a *re'em*. He has to describe its size to them by comparing it to objects that are familiar to them in order to make the reconstruction process possible. The first object to which he compares the creature he encountered is Mount Tabor. This is a surprising comparison because presumably his audience – Torah scholars in Babylonia – have never seen this mountain. Why, then, is this the object that the narrator chose for comparison with the size of the *re'em*, thereby presuming a shared knowledge base, even though he has been in Eretz Israel and they have not? The answer is that although the narrator and his audience do not share familiarity with the actual space, they are all thoroughly acquainted with the textual space of the Bible. The *re'em* is a biblical creature, so neither side has any doubt of its existence. According to one of its descriptions, it cannot be tamed except by God himself: "Will the wild ox (*re'em*) be willing to serve you? Will he be by your manger?" (Job 39.9).<sup>9</sup> Here the narrator says he has seen it and adds another trait: its size. To illustrate this trait, he first uses an object that his audience also knows of mainly from the textual space of the Bible. Mount Tabor, which is described as a lofty mountain: "As I live," says the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts, "Surely as Tabor is among the mountains." (Jeremiah 46.18). Again we see the role played by the Bible and its descriptions in the process of reconstructing the world. To the narrator, the Bible is as good a framework of knowledge, if not better, than even the extra-textual world.<sup>10</sup> The proof of this is that he does not bother to compare the *re'em* with an object familiar from Babylonia, for example, where some mountains

8. Ora Limor elaborates on these aspects of travelers' stories, mostly about Christian pilgrims in the Early and High Middle Ages. See for example Limor, "With their Own Eyes" and "Pilgrims and Authors."

9. As with many other biblical Hebrew terms, later readers had difficulties with understanding what exactly the *re'em* was. The Jewish mythology of late antiquity, for example, bridges this gap by describing it as a unique gigantic creature, and even as a unicorn. See Schaper.

10. Dina Stein suggests that this issue of the Bible being a source of knowledge which is more important than physical space is actually the theme of a cycle of Talmudic stories that this and the story discussed below are part of, and this is an example of a political and theological concept of space of the Babylonian rabbis of the Talmudic era. I fully agree with this suggestion but think it should be added to the more general issue of the limitations of literary representation of spaces discussed here. Compare Stein 58–83.

there are certainly higher than Mount Tabor. But despite the importance of the Bible as a source of knowledge, it is ultimately a text, not a spatial object, and that is what underlies the question of the altitude of Mount Tabor. The narrator has to switch from a purely textual comparison object to universal units of length before returning to a comparison with textual spaces. The only action in the story is the obstruction of the Jordan by the *re'em's* excrement. Here again we see the importance of knowledge based on the Biblical text in creating the marvelous effect: If the audience didn't know that the last time the Jordan had been obstructed, as related in Joshua, chapter 3, it had required divine intervention, they most likely would not have been impressed that it had been blocked again.

In the next story, which appears shortly afterwards and is related to the same narrator, the role of the Bible as a text that explains space becomes almost official:

Said Rabbah bar Bar Hannah: Once, as we sailed on a ship, we saw a bird in the sea up to its ankles, while its head reached the sky. Thinking that the water was shallow, we desired to go in and cool ourselves. But a *bat-kol*<sup>11</sup> called out: Do not attempt to go in, for a carpenter dropped his axe here seven years ago and it has not yet reached the bottom. [...] R. Ashi identified the bird as the *ziz sadai* [a roaming creature of the field that is included among the fowl of the mountains] (Ps. 50.11). (BT Baba Batra 73b)

11. In this case: a representation of the divine voice.

12. For example, in the next story in this cycle, he identifies a certain kind of fish. See BT *Baba Batra* 73b.

R. Ashi is cited in several stories as an expert in zoology.<sup>12</sup> Here we see how his theoretical knowledge combines with the sensory experiences of the traveler-narrator to form a textual object, in this case: a huge bird, whose extra-textual existence is beyond doubt.

These aspects of the Bible and later the Talmud as texts used in reconstructing the world of travelogues became more important in the Middle Ages and supported the frequent appearances of the marvelous in such narratives. The historian Aaron Gurevich noted the relatively narrow horizons of Europeans in the High Middle Ages as one of the factors that facilitated the prevalence of literary manifestations of the marvelous. To put this in our terms, Gurevich maintains that the knowledge with which medieval audiences came to travelers' accounts and the spatial descriptions included in them was almost never based on personal acquaintance. On the contrary, most medieval Europeans, for instance, knew about spaces to which they

did have access solely through the mediation of either visual or textual sources, oral or written (and these could be real places like the Holy Land or less real, such as the kingdom of Prester John or Hell) (Gurevich 25–92).

The knowledge gaps between the traveler-narrators, whether real or fictional, and their audiences facilitated their use of hyperbole when describing the marvelous. These same gaps, however, required that the narrators use elements from the audiences' world of knowledge to describe the unfamiliar. Basically, the language forced the narrators to distort the sensory experiences that they believed they had personally had in order to adapt them to the limited knowledge of audiences that could otherwise not even imagine these things. The audiences themselves, especially in medieval Christian Europe, could call on knowledge from a variety of sources, to understand and enjoy the exotic descriptions.

I would like to focus here on this enjoyment. Travelers' and pilgrims' narratives, especially in the Middle Ages, are often discussed from a variety of standpoints – as an orientalist or proto-orientalist medium, as an important source of confirmation of religious truths, and as texts that enabled audiences to share in the experience of an encounter with a sacred space.<sup>13</sup> Most of all, however, these medieval narratives were stories of Europeans in other geographical spaces, especially in the east. This otherness was manifested in the different climate, in different natural resources and fauna. These subjects excited listeners' or readers' imagination no less than the descriptions of the sacred geography.

Latin Christian texts had two major advantages over their Hebrew counterpart. One was the iconographic tradition. What is hard to describe in words can be shown in pictures, and Christian authors had a tradition of a bestiary and visual representations ranging from the classical period to church decorations.<sup>14</sup> These illustrations were sometimes included in the manuscripts of travelogues and made it easier to describe things. When a narrator wanted to present a camel, he could describe it in words next to an illustration. Animals that the narrator had not seen could also be 'shown' in this way, as proven by numerous illustrations of dragons and griffins in manuscripts of those times. The tradition of illuminated Hebrew manuscripts developed slowly, later, and with certain limitations (see Kogman-Appel). In the High Middle Ages it had not reached the level of Christian bestiaries or illuminated travelogues.

13. To mention a few examples out of many from the last four decades: Howard (1980); Campbell (1988); Cohen, "Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands" (2001); Mittman (2003); Veltri (2005); Jacobs (2014).

14. About the tradition of illustrated bestiaries see Hassig; Jones.

Another tradition that the Jewish travelers and authors of their accounts lacked, unlike the Christians and Muslims, was that of systematic, scientific or pseudo-scientific descriptions of nature written in Hebrew. Although such compositions did exist, they were rare and were not familiar to the broad segments of the population to which the travelers' accounts were addressed.

The tool that Jewish narrators and audiences did have available to them was the Hebrew language, especially biblical and rabbinic Hebrew. This was the almost exclusive source for classifying and identifying natural phenomena and animals. The Hebrew language, in which the stories were told, was also the language of their sources of knowledge: the Midrash (exegetic literature), Talmud, *piyyutim* (Hebrew liturgy), and most importantly, the Bible. In the next two narratives, one from the 1170s and the other from the 1210s, two travelers contend with the advantages and disadvantages of this language.

The first story is by Petahia of Ratisbon,<sup>15</sup> who set out from Prague in the mid-1170s for a long journey through the Middle East, especially Babylonia and Eretz Israel:

At Nineveh there was an elephant. Its head is not at all protruding. It is big, eats about two wagon loads of straw at once; its mouth is in its breast, and when it wants to eat it protrudes its lips about two cubits, takes up with it the straw, and puts it into its mouth. When the sultan condemns anybody to death, they say to the elephant, this person is guilty. It then seizes him with its lip, casts him aloft, and kills him. Whatever a human being performs with his hand it performs with its lip; this is exceedingly strange and marvelous. Upon the elephant is the structure of a city, upon which there are twelve armed warriors; when it stretches forth its lip they ascend as over a bridge. (Benisch 11–13)

The signifier 'elephant' (פֶּיל in Hebrew) is not mentioned in the Bible. It was known to Jewish audiences from the Talmud as a strange animal – so strange that when seeing it, one must recite the blessing over a marvelous creature<sup>16</sup> – but its form is not specified. This time the narrator of Petahia's story cannot rely on biblical descriptions and comparisons. But we have here more than a hint that he is familiar with the textual and perhaps even visual sources known to non-Jewish audiences of the period. There is no hyperbole in this description – just the standard conventions of bestiaries. For example, depictions

15. For a folkloristic view of Petahia's travelogue see Hasan-Rokem. There are two scientific editions of this composition, both of them are based on much later sources: that of Gruenhut and that of David. An English translation is available in Benisch.

16. For example, BT *Berakhot* 58b: "Our Rabbis taught: On seeing an elephant, an ape, or a long-tailed ape, one says: Blessed is He who makes strange creatures. If one sees beautiful creatures and beautiful trees, he says: Blessed is He who has such in His world."



17. I thank the anonymous reader of the article who introduced me to this illustration.

Figure 1: Amsterdam Mahzor, held by the Jewish Cultural Museum (JHM B166), f. 52v (detail). Collection Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam and MiQua. LVR-Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne. Purchased with support of Landschaftsverband Rheinland, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mondriaan Fund, BankGiro Lottery Fund and private donors. I thank Mr. Anton Kras and the Museum's authorities for their permission to use this illustration.



Unlike the word ‘elephant,’ the Hebrew word for trunk (חֲדָק) was not familiar to Petahia or his audience, so he had no choice but to refer to “lips” that protrude “about two cubits.”

In any case, we can see how, with an animal whose name is familiar but which is not mentioned in the Bible, the available sources of knowledge required for the process of spatial reconstruction in the audience’s minds are extra-biblical. What was done with an animal that is not only not mentioned in the Bible by name, but is not mentioned by other Hebrew sources either? How could such an animal be described? This problem was encountered by Menahem ben Peretz, who apparently traveled from France to Eretz Israel about thirty years after Petahia:<sup>18</sup>

R. Menahem ben Peretz of Hebron further [told] us that he saw a large animal in Eretz Israel that tramples on, decapi-

18. The story of Menahem ben Peretz is known from a single thirteenth-century manuscript and was published by Neubauer. Since this first edition (1868) historians were doubting its authenticity, a question which is irrelevant for the current discussion.

tates, and devours other animals. When it is hungry, it devours them limb by limb. It has no orifice to eliminate anything from its body, but when it has filled itself with food and wants to empty its body and relieve itself, it goes to the seashore or riverbank, sits down, and opens its mouth very, very wide – as wide as it can. The birds then descend into its body, eat everything they find in its guts, remove all food and excrement that they find there, and go away. It then fasts for a week or fifteen days, and when it is hungry it kills and eats other domestic or wild animals until it is satiated, and then waits a week or two. And when it wants to relieve itself, it follows its practice. R. Menahem of Hebron saw that animal, which is as big as an ox. Its feet are cloven in three and its nails are sharp and long. It has something sharp and horn-like on its head, and something sharp and horn-like under its chin as well. Those small birds created for this purpose are prepared for this. And whenever it likes, it drinks its fill of water from the river. (Neubauer 628)

This description demonstrates the severe limitations of the language. The narrator, who apparently believed he had really encountered such an animal, simply could not find the words with which to describe its appearance or way of life in detail. His knowledge seems to have come not from long-term observation, but from local informants.<sup>19</sup> Was he able to induce his audience – his contemporaries – to conduct the process of reconstructing the world and to imagine the animal themselves? We cannot tell.

In any case, modern audiences have clearly had difficulty conducting this process. When reading the descriptions of animals in travelers' accounts such audiences, especially scholars, tend to assume that they are familiar with many of them and can even distinguish between those that really existed and those that did not. But here, too, the precondition is some foundation of shared knowledge, or shared language, between readers today and the narrators, and this, unfortunately, is limited. An attempt to reconstruct the process of 'reconstructing the world' engaged in by audiences of that period with respect to sights unfamiliar to them entails 'translation' into terms corresponding to our knowledge.

Indeed, ever since the account by Menahem ben Peretz was discovered, scholars have been hard pressed to figure out what animal is being described here. The first to publish the text, the bibliogra-

19. This practice of medieval travelers and pilgrims of learning about Palestine from the locals, is discussed by Yassif, and Reiner.

pher Adolf Neubauer, maintained, based on this story, that the text is full of fabrications and delusions (Neubauer 626). Later scholars have even suspected forgery (e.g. Klein). Today, too, scholars who consider the story authentic have had difficulty agreeing on the identity of the animal described and whether it is real or fictional. In recent decades some have claimed it is a unicorn (Yassif 892); others have suggested a rhinoceros, a hippopotamus (Malkiel 137–38), or a hybrid of several of these creatures. Apparently, this is the both strength and the weakness of a purely linguistic description where it is hard to identify the textual tradition from which it is taken. A possible answer to this lies in the fact that aside from the Bible and other sacred texts we have medieval sources of information, as mentioned above, that combine descriptions of animals and spaces with descriptive conventions of their own. And in addition to earlier traditions, some later Hebrew traditions make use of the same conventions but do name the animal, which Menahem ben Peretz may indeed have seen.

This is probably a description – conventional, common, and even rather realistic, to be fair – of the Nile crocodile, an animal common in Eretz Israel until the nineteenth century, especially in the area of the Caesarea Rivers (two streams that are called today Nahal Alexander and Nahal Taninim), which Menahem ben Peretz states he was near (Neubauer 626). Although its size is a bit exaggerated, other earlier descriptions, such as that by Pliny the Elder, exaggerate it even more when referring to this creature as one that is eighteen cubits long (*Natural History* 8.37).

The bird described is the ‘Egyptian plover’ (*Pluvianus aegyptius*), which is still found in today’s Israel.<sup>20</sup> The narrator’s claim that “those small birds created for this purpose are prepared for this” is a popular reflection of the philosophical position that views creation as perfect, with all its components well-matched. This view continues a Latin tradition of natural history, which often stressed this lesson using the example of the relationship between the Egyptian plover and the crocodile.<sup>21</sup> As in the case of the elephant’s “lips,” the narrator could find no better word than “horn” to describe the crocodile’s long jaws. This choice of words makes the ‘reconstruction process’ harder for an audience that is familiar with crocodiles and knows they do not have horns, perhaps even more than for an audience that was not familiar with them. One can claim that reality, in this sense, disturbed medieval readers of the spatial description less than it bothers us when we approach the ancient texts.

20. This is the bird that modern scholars identify with the well-known *trochilus*.

21. See the various sources brought by Malkiel.

From these few of many examples of Jewish literary representations of marvelous creatures, we can learn how biblical text functioned for Jewish narrating societies. As the ultimate source of knowledge about the world, it functioned as a kind of a screen; a tool that enables the readers and listeners to imagine phenomena and creatures which they had never been able to perceive by the senses. But since this tool was exclusively textual, it contained the same limits of texts: *i.e.* if and when the senses perceived something which the bible has nothing to say about, its representation became nearly impossible. These advantages and disadvantages are part of what makes, I believe, medieval Jewish representations of the marvelous so interesting.

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