

AN UNKNOWN VERSION OF
THE MYTH OF THE FALLEN ANGELS

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Abstract

Unlike the assumption of scholars as the scarce occurrence of the ancient myth of the fallen angel, in Ashkenazi literature written in the Middle Ages, various versions of this myth occur. The most elaborate one, extant in a unique manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Hebrew MS 859, is copied in the name of a certain Rabbi Barukh Kohen Ashkenazi, an unidentified, probably late 13th century author, has been ignored in scholarship. This unedited version has a much shorter parallel included in Rabbi Eliyahu Capsali early 16th century history entitled *Eliyahu Zutta*. The two versions have been printed here and commented on at some length in my discussions and footnotes. In my opinion, this version includes some motifs, stemming from late antiquity material, and its content may help reconstructing a different history of the transmission of variants of this myth, with an accent on the seminal contribution of medieval Ashkenazi preservation of older material, as it is also the case in other instances.