

Tal Ilan

Silencing the Queen

The Literary Histories of Shelamzion and Other Jewish Women

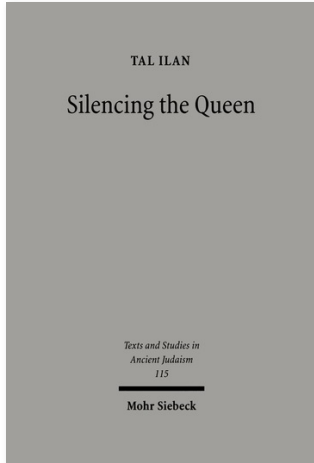
[Die Königin zum Schweigen bringen. Die literarische Geschichte Shelamzions und anderer jüdischer Frauen.]

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Tal Ilan explores the way historical documents from antiquity are reworked and edited in a long process that ends in silencing the women originally mentioned in them. Many methods are used to produce this end result: elimination of women or their words, denigration of the women and their role or unification of several significant women into one. These methods and others are illuminated in this book, as it uses the example of the Jewish queen Shelamzion Alexandra (76–67 BCE) for its starting point. Queen Shelamzion was the only legitimate Jewish queen in history. Yet all the documents in which she is mentioned (Josephus, Qumran scrolls, rabbinic literature etc.) have been reworked so as to minimize her significance and distort the picture we may receive of her. Tal Ilan follows the ways this was done and in doing so she encounters similar patterns in which other Jewish women in antiquity were silenced, censored and edited out.

Tal Ilan Born 1956; 1991 PhD on Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem; 2003–22 Professor for Jewish Studies at the Freie Universität, Berlin; 2022 retired; since 2008 she is the editor of the Feminist Commentary on the Mishnah and the Babylonian Talmud (FCBT).

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1909-2788>



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