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Roles and Relations in Biblical Law: A Study of Participant Tracking, Semantic Roles, and Social Networks in Leviticus 17-26

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Cover image: A fragment of a Hebrew Bible manuscript (Leviticus 18.15-19.3) from the Cairo Genizah (Cambridge University Library, T-S A3.30). Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.
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7. PARTICIPANTS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

1.0. Introduction

The preceding chapters laid the groundwork for exploring participants in social networks. Chapter 3 discussed the complex task of participant tracking, with the aim of establishing a comprehensive dataset of all participant references. Chapter 4 introduced a theoretical framework for capturing the agency of participants according to their semantic roles, and chapters 5–6 applied the theory based on the two most significant contributors to agency: dynamicity and causation. All these data come together in the social network analysis of the Holiness Code to be carried out in this chapter. At this point, we are not only interested in the semantic roles of the participants, as in the preceding chapters, but rather in what could be called 'network roles'. While semantic roles pertain specifically to the role of a participant in a particular event, network roles generalise beyond semantic roles and consider the roles of participants in a network of events. The framework of this undertaking is the relational sociology introduced in chapter 2, §4.0. With 59 human/divine participants, Lev. 17–26 poses a real challenge for understanding the social relationships among these participants. Who are the most important participants? Who are the most peripheral? Do some participants play the role of an intermediary between different social groups? And further, how do the specific roles of the participants correlate with the ethical obligations formulated by the Holiness Code? Are the laws simply arbitrary, or does the content

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of the laws hinge on the nature of the participants and the social roles constrained by the network? These are the questions to be addressed in this chapter.

2.0. Social Network Analysis

2.1. Brief History

Social network analysis is an umbrella term for theories and tools that aim to describe social networks and the roles of the participants within the network. The most important research questions investigated with SNA relate to the ties between participants. What kinds of ties are they? Friendship ties, ties of trust, or of economical transaction? Furthermore, how strong are they? The importance of investigating these questions lies in the fact that the performance of a team with the same members differs depending on the relationships between the members of the team (Borgatti et al. 2009).

The history of SNA is long and complex, and its roots can be traced back to the *Gestalt* tradition of psychology in the 1920s and 1930s.[1] By the 1970s, 16 centres of research into social networks had emerged, but none of these succeeded in providing a generally accepted paradigm for the study of social networks (Freeman 2014). Finally, with the rise of the seventeenth centre led by Harrison C. White at Harvard University, SNA became a more standardised paradigm and began to have immense impact

[1] For more comprehensive accounts of the history of SNA, see in particular Freeman (2004; 2014) and Scott (2017, 11–39).

on the social sciences. However, SNA did not only attract attention from sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. In the 1970s, mathematicians and computer scientists became interested in subjects related to SNA, such as network groups and communities, in particular with respect to their special interests, namely graphs and graph partitioning. Later, in the 1990s, physicists entered the scene (e.g., Watts and Strogatz 1998; Barabási and Albert 1999) and "revolutionized" the area of research, as Linton C. Freeman (2014) puts it. At that time, physicists and biologists were facing huge amounts of structured data to be analysed, and they started applying (and sometimes reinventing) the statistical methods developed in SNA. The 'revolution', however, was not applauded by all members of the SNA community. As Ann Mische (2014) explains, the cultural theorists in the field felt that the physics bent reduced the social and cultural richness of network analysis to a matter of 1s and 0s. In short, SNA was always a very diverse field of research, despite numerous attempts to bring the methodologies and terminologies into line. Even today, social network analysts disagree as to the nature of SNA. Is SNA basically "a collection of theoretically informed methods" (Scott 2017, 8), or is it a theory in its own right (Borgatti et al. 2009)?[2]

Today, SNA has become a huge field of research. Its evolution is partly owed to the development of Web 2.0 and the still recent, but enormously influential, phenomenon of social media, including Facebook, X, and Instagram, to name but a few. Each

[2] See also Mische (2014) for a discussion of whether SNA is a theory.

Facebook user participates in a huge social network, and the in-built application of friend suggestions on Facebook uses SNA-based algorithms for predicting new relationships on the basis of existing ones. Similar algorithms are known from Amazon and other web-shops, where products are recommended based on previous purchases and, importantly, on purchases of users with a similar profile. These advanced websites thus apply SNA methods in order to create social network profiles of their users, for the purpose of predicting behaviour and targeting products and advertisements.

With its emphasis on networks, clustering, prediction of behaviour, and role profiling, SNA is related to a broad range of network approaches in various research areas. These include physics and computer science (e.g., Watts and Strogatz 1998; Barabási and Albert 1999; Newman 2010), psychology (e.g., Westaby et al. 2014), biology (e.g., Luczkovich et al. 2003), and economics (e.g., Jackson 2011). Importantly, SNA has also found its way to the study of literature, where it provides a methodological framework for revealing subtle connections among participants and patterns of interaction (see §2.3).

2.2. Main Concepts

A great number of introductions to SNA have been published, both theoretical and practical ones (Borgatti et al. 2018; Scott 2017; Newman 2010), as well as highly technical (Brandes and Erlebach 2005). Moreover, several practical introductions to analysing social networks with Python have been published in recent years (Al-Taie and Kadry 2017; Raj P. M. et al. 2018). In

what follows, I will introduce the main concepts of SNA relevant for the present research. The interested reader is referred to more general introductions.

Nodes*:* The constituents or participants of a social network are called nodes.[3] The nodes can denote many different entities: typically individuals, but also companies, organisations, terror cells, teams, etc. Within the broader applications of network analysis, a node may be a computer, a blood cell, or a neuron, depending on the network under scrutiny. In this study, the participants of Lev. 17–26 form the nodes of the network; hence 'participants' and 'nodes' will be used interchangeably.

Edges*:* The nodes in a network are connected by edges, often also called ties. An edge denotes the type of relationship between two nodes, e.g., friendship, kinship, enmity, trust, wedding, economical transaction, etc. The values of the edges may be binary (e.g., wedding ties) or continuous (e.g., degree of trust or amount of money transferred). The edges can be undirected (e.g., wedding ties) or directed, e.g., one person may regard another as a friend, but the friendship or trust may not be mutual. The same nodes may even be connected by multiple, different edges.

Degree*:* The degree is the number of edges tied to a node, e.g., a node with three edges has a degree of three. For directed

[3] In computer science and graph theory, the nodes are also called vertices.

edges, incoming ties produce the indegree, while outgoing ties produce the outdegree.

Graph*:* The nodes and edges form a graph. Depending on the type of edges (undirected vs directed) and number of overlapping edges (singular vs multiple), the graph may be either a simple graph (singular, undirected graph), a directed graph, or a multiple directed graph. Graphs efficiently visualise network structures and can be modified with colour-coding of both nodes and edges, as well as scaling of nodes and edges according to their respective values. However, although graphs give a visual impression of the network, they can be difficult to interpret, especially for large networks with multiple directed ties. Therefore, it is common to transform the graph into adjacency matrices or vectors that allow for statistical computations of the structural properties of the graph. Moreover, recent approaches to studying network properties apply neural deep learning (Zhang et al. 2019; Wu et al. 2020) and so-called random walks (see §4.2).

Walk*:* The network graph can be traversed by following the edges between the nodes. Such traversing is called a walk and is essentially a sequence of edges connecting two nodes. The walk must respect the directions of the edges (if directed). The concept of the walk provides information about the connectivity of the network and the environment of individual nodes. If a node can be reached by a number of different walks from another node, the two nodes are well connected. Other nodes may only be

linked by a single sequence of edges and are therefore only loosely connected.

Ego*:* One can view a network from the viewpoint of the network at large or from the viewpoint of a single node, called ego. When exploring real-world data, one may not have access to the complete network because of lack of data. Instead, one can learn general network features by focusing on the individual nodes, the egos of the network. From the viewpoint of the ego, a node with a tie to the ego is called an alter.

Ego-network: An ego-network consists of an ego and its alters. The ego-network is, thus, a subset of the entire social network.

Neighbourhood: A neighbourhood consists of all adjacent nodes with immediate ties to the ego. This neighbourhood is called a first-order neighbourhood. By contrast, a second-order neighbourhood includes nodes within a distance of two edges from the ego.

2.3. Related Research

A number of social network analyses have been dedicated to historical social networks, the best-known example probably being the Medici-family network in Renaissance Florence (Padgett and Ansell 1993). Another important study is Charles Tilly's (1997) analysis of the parliamentarisation of Great Britain in 1758–1834. By systematically cataloguing numerous newspaper articles into categories of event, people, and action, among others, Tilly created a large dataset that could be explored to investigate

changing relations among people groups. The procedure was tedious, because each event had to be transcribed into an actor, the activity itself, and the undergoer of the activity, if any.[4] At the same time, Roberto Franzosi (1997) categorised 15,146 newspaper articles from the 'Red Years' (1919–20) that preceded the Fascists' rise to power in Italy. Relying on the works of William Labov and Joshua Waletsky (1967) and M. A. K. Halliday (1970), among others, the articles were classified according to actors and events. More pieces of information, such as time, space, number of actors in a particular group, and instrument, were also added to the dataset. For both Tilly and Franzosi, the ultimate goal was to create a searchable database of the texts in order to query actors and events. In other words, the building blocks were semantic triplets of participants (actor and undergoer) and event. Today, computational methods enable automatic or semi-automatic classification of all sorts of text, but Tilly's and Franzosi's works demonstrate the basic requirements in preparing natural text for SNA.

Somewhat related to the present study is Steven E. Massey's (2016) network analysis of Moses and his relations with other Biblical characters in the Pentateuch. The underlying structural patterns revealed by his network analysis show that Moses and YHWH are unusually highly connected, that is, given that the degree of participants tends to correspond to the number of participants, Moses and YHWH have surprisingly many connections.

[4] See also Tilly's (2008) later work in which he unfolds his approach in detail.

Massey suggests that this fact may be due to authorial emphasis on these two participants.

Other social network analyses have focused on novels and mythological texts (e.g., Beveridge and Shan 2016; Waumans et al. 2015; Carron and Kenna 2012). M. E. J. Newman and Michelle Girvan (2004) explored algorithms for detecting communities in social networks, including in Victor Hugo's famous *Les Misérables*. SNA has also been applied to the study of the literary characters in the Greek tragedies collected and digitised by the Perseus Digital Library (Rydberg-Cox 2011). Finally, Agawar et al. (2012) carried out a study of *Alice in Wonderland* in which they explored the narrative roles of the participants in terms of authority, degree centrality, and structural hubs. Moreover, although a text is static (in terms of network structure), by modelling each chapter as a separate network, they demonstrated how the network evolves over the course of the novel.

SNA has also been applied to the study of ancient corpora. In particular, Assyriologists have employed SNA for the research of Neo- and Late Babylonian archives (Waerzeggers 2014b; Wagner et al. 2013; Still 2019). The Babylonian archives contain thousands of tablets which record the activity of thousands of people, including economical transactions and marriages. By itself, a tablet gives a glimpse of a social world, but may not provide an extensive impression of the social roles of the participants recorded on the tablet. However, some participants occur in several tablets and possibly in different roles, e.g., witnesses or traders. Therefore, through the mapping of tablets and persons, a social network emerges, allowing for the exploration of social connectivity

in Babylonian society, flows of communication, and even "potential for mobilizing rebellions" (Waerzeggers 2014b, 209). In fact, the construction of a two-mode social network (i.e., a network with two types of nodes: tablets and persons) can even be used for the dating of tablets (Allon Wagner et al. 2013). In his dissertation, Bastian Still (2019) analysed 3,500 cuneiform tablets in order to map the social world of Babylonian priests and investigate how the Babylonian priesthood interacted with other social groups. To complete this short survey of SNA studies of cuneiform tablets, it is worth noting that Judean-Babylonian connections during the Judean exile in Babylon have also been mapped and explored (Alstola 2017; Waerzeggers 2014a).

All the social network studies of cuneiform tablets mentioned here essentially employ two-mode networks, that is, they involve two sets of nodes (tablets and persons) to be mapped. In this respect, they can reveal connections between persons across different tablets. By contrast, the present study is a one-mode network, because there is only one text, the Holiness Code. Therefore, the present analysis diverges from the archive approach in several respects. Most importantly, the participants in H are not assumed to be connected simply because they appear in the same text, but only if interactions are explicitly recorded.

Much more relevant for the present study is Chebineh Che's (2017) text-syntactic and literary analysis of Gen. 27–28, in which he applied SNA to a short, self-contained text, not unlike the present study of H. In his dissertation, the social network was modelled on the basis of the speeches recorded in order to quantify the relationships and roles of the participants in dialogue.

The methodology was adopted from Franco Moretti (2011; 2014), who argued that narrative plots can be quantified according to SNA centrality measures. In particular, like Jan A. Fuhse (2009; see also chapter 2, §4.0), Moretti pointed to the significance of the network edges, because it is not enough to simply record who is speaking to whom. Rather, according to Moretti (2011), speeches need to be quantified according to the space occupied by them, that is, the extent of communication. In this respect, participants with multiple or long dialogues will carry more weight than participants with just a single utterance. In his application of Moretti's methodology, then, Che demonstrated how SNA centrality measures can be used to identify different participant roles in a narrative.

3.0. The Social Network of the Holiness Code

Unlike the related research described above, the purpose of the present study is to examine a social network implied by a single, legal text. To my knowledge, it is the first attempt to model a law code as a social network. A number of issues arising from this endeavour have already been addressed (chapter 2, §5.0). Most importantly, despite Lev. 17–26 being a law text, the chapters constitute an apt candidate for SNA, because the legal basis is one of common law. Therefore, we can expect the laws to be dialogical and interactional in nature, as a reflection of their social context and as concretisations of the expectations and values of the author.

Another difference to the related research referenced above is the conceptualisation of the ties among the participants. It is common to count co-appearance as a tie—for instance, if two

participants are present in the same text or in the same chapter—or to quantify the interaction as the length of speech between two conversing participants. To my knowledge, no social network analysis has so far quantified the interaction between two participants by means of agency, as is done in the present study. The notion of agency allows for the inclusion of a vast range of interactions apart from merely dialogue or specific types of transactions. The procedure for capturing agency will be unfolded below.

Finally, the present SNA is the first attempt at taking the discourse structure of the text into account. The ETCBC database contains annotations of the syntactic hierarchy of the BH text, which allow the discourse structure to be considered another dimension of the network. When applied to texts, SNA is regularly employed to model the text as a two-dimensional network. Thus, the complexity of the text is often reduced to whether two participants appear in the same text or section of the text, or whether two participants are interacting. Texts, however, are not two-dimensional. They have an inherent 'depth' in that interactions are embedded in a discourse structure. Accordingly, the interaction of two participants may be conditioned by the interaction of another set of participants. Understood this way, the 'world' of the text is a three-dimensional space, and in order to capture the meaning of the network, the internal relationships of the participants are best understood within this space. This feature will be the topic of §3.5 and will be demonstrated concretely in the discussion of the role of *Moses* (§5.2.1).[5]

[5] Italics are used to mark participants, e.g., *Moses*, as network participants. Thus, the role of *Moses* is not (necessarily) the role of the 'real'

3.1. Data Modelling

The data used for deriving the social network of Lev. 17–26 are participant references and verbs. Together, these two types of data form semantic triplets of actor, undergoer, and event. Both sets of data have been documented in the preceding chapters and form the backbone of the present investigation. However, not all data produced in the participant tracking and semantic role analyses are included. A more precise definition of the data types is therefore in place:

Nodes*:* The nodes of the network are human/divine participants. In addition, body parts and expressions referring to a human/divine being, e.g., soul, are also included. The choice of including body parts is reasonable, given that they are frequently employed as references to persons, e.g., 'his hand' in "a man, if he has no redeemer, but his hand prospers…" (Lev. 25.26).[6] All non-human and non-divine participants have been excluded.

Edges*:* The edges of the network are the interactions taking place among the participants (i.e., the nodes). These interactions include speech, trade, marriage, execution, and fighting. The interactions also include cultic transactions, such as defilement and sanctification, as well as affective

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Moses outside the text or outside the bounds of Lev. 17–26, but the role of the participant within the social network derived from H.

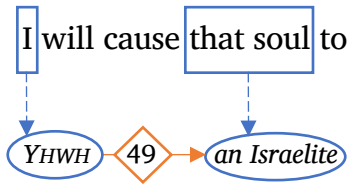
[6] Consequently, in the New Revised Standard Version, 'hand' is simply omitted, and the verb refers to the man: "If the person has no one to redeem it, but then prospers…"

relations, such as love and hate, and perceptual relations, such as hearing. Not all of these relations are actually transactions, but they capture different sorts of relationships (Borgatti et al. 2018, 5). In SNA, it is common to restrict the edges to representing only one type of interaction or connection, e.g., trade connections or marriage ties, in order to simplify the analysis. To justify the present approach, however, the events are also quantified in terms of agency. As explained in chapter 6, each participant is given an agency score according to its semantic role in a particular interaction, and this procedure effectively distinguishes highly agentive participants, such as traders or speakers, from less agentive participants, such as recipients or benefactors. The agency scores are computed on the basis of the semantic role hierarchy in chapter 6, §6.0 (see examples in Table 16 below). Since each interaction involves two participants, there are also two agency scores. The squared difference between these two scores produces a combined agency score for each interaction. In other words, the network edges are conceptualised as the agency difference between two interacting participants (see example in Figure 10).[7]

[7] While most interactions involve two participants, some actually involve three. More precisely, the three-argument sentence in Figure 10 involves three participants ('I', 'that soul', and 'his people') that are connected by edges; hence, there are three edges to represent the event going on between the three participants: YHWH → an Israelite, YHWH →

Figure 10: A schematic representation of the derivation of a semantic triplet from a clause in Lev 23.30. Agency scores are computed on the basis of the respective agency scores of the participants (YHWH = 5, an Israelite = -2). The difference is seven, and the squared difference is 49.

(Lev. 23.30) וְהַאֲבַדְתִּי אֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מִקֶּרֶב עַמָּהּ׃



The constraint on participants (i.e., only human and divine participants) resulted in a reduced list of potential edges. Moreover, since only semantic triplets are of interest here, many sentences were dropped because they involved only one participant. The semantic triplets were automatically extracted from the database according to the presence of human/divine participants. A few interactions were not captured by this approach, including, e.g., Lev. 25.14, where the addressees are prohibited from oppressing their fellows, literally 'You (Pl) may not oppress, a man his brother'. Since this event is formed by two clauses ('You may not oppress' and 'a man his brother'), it was not captured as a semantic triplet by the present approach. For the sake of consistency, only one-clause semantic triplets were included.

In sum, 479 semantic triplets were extracted from the text, which consists of 1,176 clauses. To be sure, some clauses generated multiple triplets, because a participant reference may refer

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his people; his people → an Israelite. The agency scores of the participants decide the direction of interaction.

to multiple participants, e.g., 'mother and father' in "any man (of you) shall fear his mother and his father" (Lev. 19.3). A sample of the resulting data is given in Table 16, and the resulting network is illustrated in Figure 11.

Table 16: A sample of the semantic triplets extracted from Lev. 17–26

Event ID (clause)	Actor	Undergoer	Event	Agency
439721	*YHWH* (Agent)	*Moses* (Volitional Undergoer)	speak (דבר D)	36[8]
440521	*2MSg* (Affected Agent)	*YHWH* (Neutral)	fear (ירא G)	9
439855	*2MSg* (Agent)	*YHWH* (Patient)	defile (חלל D)	49
439740	*sojourner* (Frustrative)	*mother* (Neutral)	approach (קרב G)	1[9]
440045	*foreign nations* (Neutral)	*YHWH* (Volitional Undergoer)	loath (אקץ G)	1

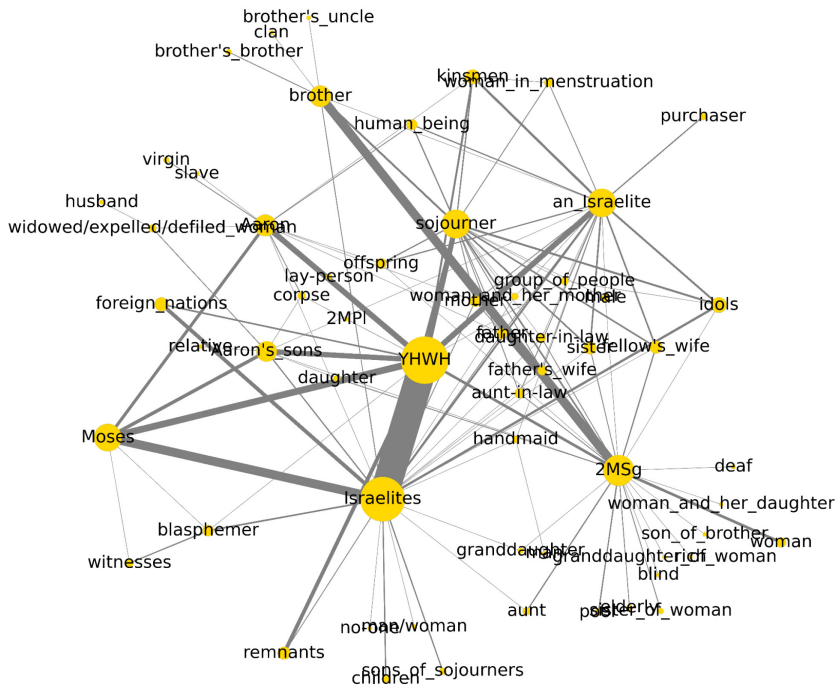
The network has 59 nodes, corresponding to the number of participants, and 479 edges. The edges refer to concrete verbs as well as to agency scores derived from the respective agency degrees of the participants in an interaction. Moreover, the edges are directional (from actor to undergoer) and multiple according to the number of interactions between the participants. The purpose of what follows is to explore the network by means of standard statistical measures. These measures include 1) network cohesion;

[8] The agency score is calculated as the squared difference between the actor score (5 for Agent) and the undergoer score (-1 for Volitional Undergoer). The difference is six, and the squared difference is 36.

[9] The clause would normally involve an agentive actor. In this particular case, however, the event is prohibited, i.e., negated. Strictly speaking, therefore, the event does not take place, and the actor is left frustrative (agency = 1) and the undergoer untouched (= 0).

2) reciprocity; and 3) centrality. Finally, the discourse structure of the text will be related to the social network. The visualisations and calculations were carried out with the Python package NetworkX.[10]

Figure 11: The social network of Lev 17–26



3.2. Cohesion

Cohesion is a measure of the 'knittedness' of a network, that is, how well connected it is (Borgatti et al. 2018, 174–79). A network with many interconnected nodes has a high degree of cohesion,

[10] For a practical guide to analysing social networks with Python and NetworkX, see Al-Taie and Kadry (2017). For a summary introduction to SNA and computational methods, see Tang (2017).

while networks with long paths between the nodes, as well as isolates (unconnected nodes), are less cohesive. In this respect, cohesion does not concern the nature of connections, whether the connections or relations are positive or negative (e.g., friendship or hate). A network may be structurally cohesive but sociologically fragmented if the connections are relations of enmity.

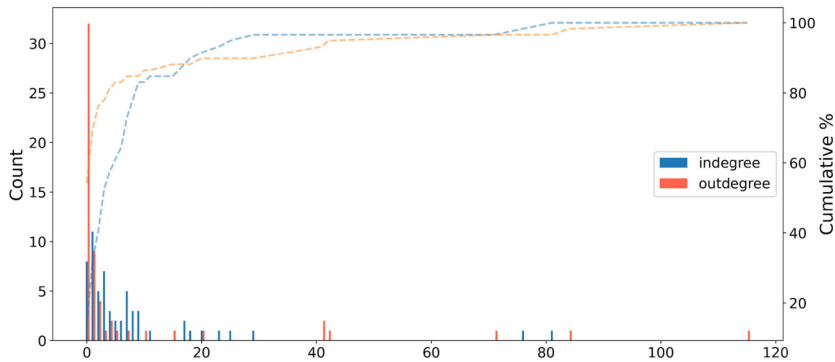
One of the simplest measures of cohesion is average degree.[11] The average degree is the average ingoing and outgoing ties of each node in the network. In the H network, the average degree is 16.23 if all connections are included (including multiple edges). The edges are far from evenly distributed in the network. As Figure 12 below illustrates, a large number of nodes (32) do not have outgoing ties, that is, more than half of the participants do not function as actors in the network but only as undergoers. By contrast, only eight nodes have no ingoing edges. The graph illustrates a common phenomenon for social networks in that the vast majority of the participants have few ties to other participants (Massey 2016).[12] A few participants are very well connected in the network. *YHWH*, for instance, has 115 outgoing ties and 76 ingoing ties and has the highest overall degree within the network (191). This is not surprising, since he is recorded as the divine speaker and frequently appears within the speeches

[11] Another measure is density, which is the number of edges in the network proportional to the number possible (Borgatti et al. 2018, 174). The Leviticus network has 59 nodes and 128 edges (undirected and unweighted), corresponding to a density of 0.075.

[12] 52.54% of the nodes have three or fewer ingoing ties (77.97% for outgoing ties).

themselves as recipient of sacrifices or as one under threat of ritual pollution (see §5.1.1). Other frequent participants include the collective group of *Israelites* (degree = 165), the singular 'you' labelled *2MSg* (78), the *sojourner* (66), the singular *an Israelite* (65), and *Moses* (61). These participants account for 65.34% of the interactions. Thus, the Holiness Code network is hierarchical, with a small set of very connected participants in crucial positions and a large number of peripheral participants dependent upon intermediating participants for their embeddedness in the network.

Figure 12: Degree distribution (multiple, directed graph). Dashed lines are cumulated degree.

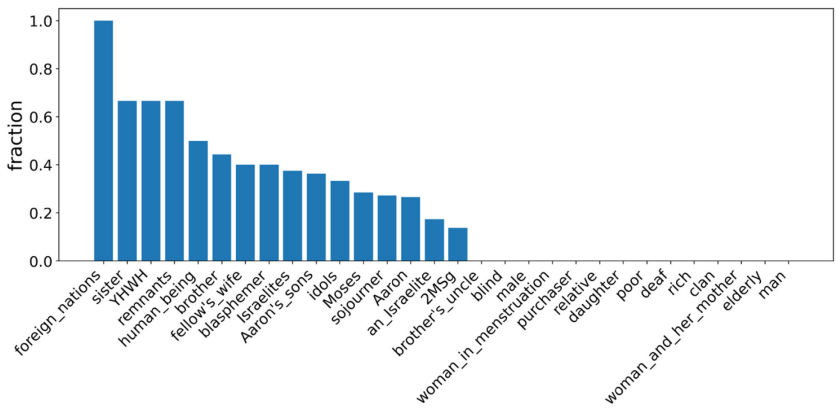


3.3. Reciprocity

The edges of the H network are directional, and some of them are reciprocal. Strictly speaking, reciprocity need not imply that one action is a response to another action. Reciprocal actions may not be directly related, since interactions can be captured from anywhere in the corpus. Reciprocity, however, gives an indication of whether the relationships of the network are mutual or one-sided. For a law text like the Holiness Code, the degree of reciprocity shows whether the obligations prescribed by the law are mutual

or whether one party benefits more than the other. In the H network, only 24.66% of the relationships are mutual,[13] while the remaining ones are only one-way interactions (see Figure 13).[14] Participants in reciprocal interactions include the most recurrent participants but also infrequent ones, e.g., *foreign nations* and *fellow's wife*. At this point, it can only be concluded that the benefits provided by the law are not equally distributed among the members of the network. To investigate whether this apparent inequality is arbitrary or meaningful, we need to dive into the smaller networks of concrete participants and their interactions (see §5.0).

Figure 13: Reciprocity (singular, directed graph)



[13] This measure excludes multiple ties. If multiple ties are included, 32.57% of the interactions are reciprocal.

[14] A participant with no reciprocal relations may be transmitter in one relation and receiver in another relation.

3.4. Centrality

In real-world social networks, people tend to cluster in smaller, cohesive groups within the larger network. The reason for this phenomenon usually relates to different sociological factors, such as homophily,[15] geographical concentration, and a tendency to connect with the relations of one's relations (Borgatti et al. 2018, 180). The indegree and outdegree scores recorded above already indicated a small core of highly connected participants and a majority of less connected participants forming a periphery of the network. A range of statistical measures have been developed to calculate the centrality of individual participants in the network. Four of these measures have been computed for the H network, and the top-ten scores for each measure are displayed in Figure 14.

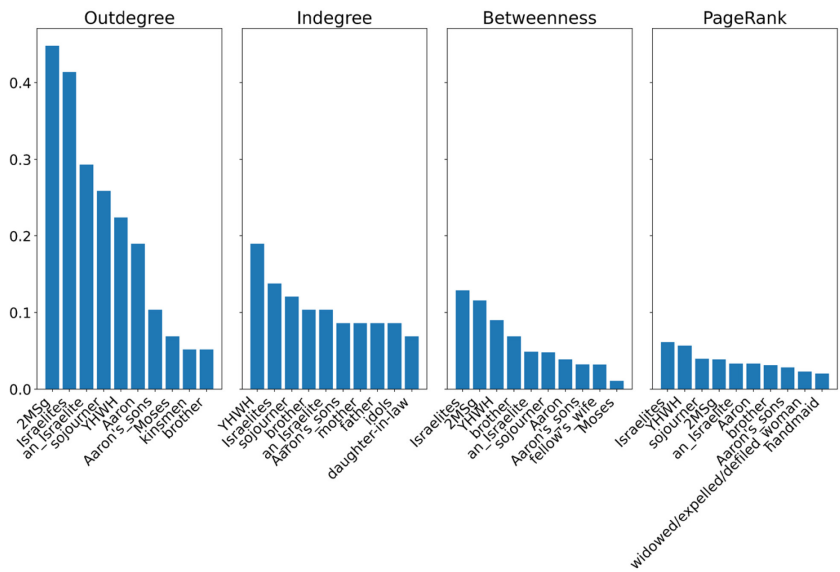
The first two measures are indegree and outdegree, already introduced above. Here, the degrees are calculated as degree centralities.[16] There is a marked difference between the outdegree and indegree scores. First of all, while the indegree ratios appear more evenly distributed across the participants, a few participants have strikingly high outdegree scores. The singular 'you' (*2MSg*), and the *Israelites* both have very high outdegree ratios and are thus very active in the network. They are the actors of many events and therefore occupy central positions in the network. *An Israelite* (Sg), the *sojourner, YHWH*, and the priests (*Aaron*

[15] Homophily is the tendency of participants to bond with similar participants, e.g., same gender or same age.

[16] Degree centrality is computed as the sum of ties normalised by the maximum number of ties possible. In simple graphs, the score is between 0 and 1.

and *Aaron's sons*) also have high outdegree ratios. As noted, the indegree ratios are less varied. *YHWH* has the highest indegree ratio, probably because he is the benefactor/recipient of offerings as well as the undergoer of reverence. While some of the outdegree top scorers also have relatively high indegree ratios (e.g., the *Israelites*, the *sojourner*, *an Israelite*, *Aaron's sons*), some participants score high in indegree but not in outdegree. These are the *brother*, the *mother*, the *father*, the *idols*, and the *daughter-in-law*. Except for the *idols*, these participants are all defined from the point of view of the Israelites (most frequently the singular Israelites). They occur relatively frequently in the network and thus have relatively high indegree ratios, but they occur predominantly as undergoers. These participants thus fall somewhere between infrequent, peripheral participants and frequent, active participants.

Figure 14: Top-ten distributions of centrality measures



The third measure is betweenness (Freeman 1978), where centrality is understood as how often a node is positioned along the shortest path between two nodes. Betweenness centrality is typically interpreted as an index of control, because nodes with high betweenness ratios occur at critical junctures of the network and function as 'gatekeepers' (Brass 1984). If these nodes fall out of the network, the network becomes fragmented, because a number of nodes will no longer have any connections with the network. In general, the H network does not exhibit high betweenness scores. This fact indicates that the network is generally well connected. The *Israelites*, *2MSg*, and *YHWH* have the highest betweenness scores in the network. In particular, *2MSg* and the *Israelites* are both connected to unique sets of participants and they therefore have an intermediary role in the network. *YHWH* also has a high betweenness ratio, because he is involved in interactions with many different parts of the network, which would otherwise be less cohesive.

The fourth measure is the PageRank centrality, which was developed by Lawrence Page et al. (1998) and became one of the main ingredients of Google's search engine at that time (Koschützki et al. 2005, 53). The algorithm rates a node according to the number of ties from other nodes and, importantly, the centrality of those nodes. In other words, a node (e.g., a website) is considered central if it is linked to by other central nodes. As for the H network, one recognises several top scorers from the other centrality measures. The *Israelites* have the highest PageRank ratio, followed by *YHWH*, the *sojourner*, *2MSg*, *an Israelite*, and *Aaron*. The *Israelites* are the direct addressees of *YHWH's*

speech to *Moses,* and they are therefore directly connected to other important participants, unlike *2MSg*, which is only indirectly connected by being referred to within the speeches. As recipients of divine revelation, the *Israelites* would be assumed to be a central figure within the law text.

In sum, the first explorations into the Holiness Code network have shown a highly hierarchical network with a small set of very connected participants in crucial positions and a large number of peripheral participants dependent upon intermediating participants for their embeddedness in the network. The addressees of the law code, namely the *Israelites* and *2MSg* (and less frequently, *Aaron* and *Aaron's sons*), occupy central positions in the network. They are very active (high outdegree), and they have direct ties with other important participants, including *YHWH*. *Moses* does not score high in centrality, despite his role as the intermediary of *YHWH's* speeches. This observation is curious and needs further investigation below.

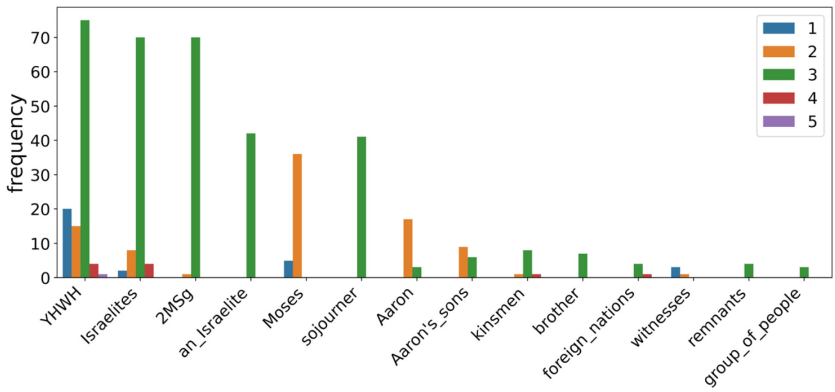
3.5. Discourse Structure

As explained above, the purpose of SNA is to reduce the complexity of a social setting into a two-dimensional map consisting of nodes and edges. The same approach applies to SNA of texts, which have traditionally been analysed with SNA by modelling the participants and their internal connections on the basis of some criteria. Edges may be conceptualised as the cooccurrence of participants in the same chapter, newspaper article, or tablet, but also as concrete dialogue between participants (e.g., Che

2017). These traditional approaches tend to run counter to a fundamental feature of texts, namely the internal syntactic structure of texts. Texts are not one-dimensional, but are structured according to the discourse of the text, so that each sentence is structurally related to other sentences in one way or another. The dialogical structure of Lev. 17–26 illustrates this phenomenon well, e.g., "And YHWH spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them: I am YHWH your God" (18.1–2). These two verses contain several layers. The first layer is a narrative introduction by the author of the text (18.1). Embedded in the narrative context, YHWH's speech is a command to Moses to speak to the people of Israel (18.2ab). Finally, Moses' speech begins in 18.2c with a quotation of YHWH. Thus, the first two verses of Lev. 18 contain three levels of discourse: narrative introduction (level 1) > YHWH's command to Moses (2) > Moses' speech to the Israelites (3). Most interactions occur at the third discourse level (Figure 15). This level usually contains the content of Moses' speeches and comprises the body of the legislation. Moses himself is by far most active at the second level, that is, the level where YHWH typically commands Moses to speak. Consequently, the interactions contained in the laws of Lev. 17–26 are *conditioned* by the speeches of Moses; they are the content of what he says. Ultimately, the legal interactions and Moses' speeches are the content of YHWH's speeches to Moses and, of course, the content of the author's narrative. In a word, then, interactions on one domain are *controlled* or *conditioned* by the higher-level domains. Obviously, this phenomenon has implications for how we understand

the importance and roles of participants, because higher-level participants are in control of lower-level interactions.

Figure 15: Frequency of participants (actors) as a function of textual domain in Lev. 17–26



As shown in Figure 15, there are five discourse levels in Lev. 17–26.[17] On a more fundamental level, however, the structural hierarchy of a text is not limited to the embedding of speeches but

[17] The five discourse levels are as follows.

Level 1: 17.1; 18.1; 19.1; 20.1; 21.1a, 16, 24; 22.1, 17, 26; 23.1, 9, 23, 26, 33, 44; 24.1, 10–13, 23; 25.1; 26.46.

Level 2: 17.2ab, 8a, 12a; 18.2ab; 19.2ab; 20.2a; 21.1b–15c, 17ab; 22.2a–3a, 4a–16d, 18ab, 27a–33c; 23.2ab, 10ab, 24ab, 27a–32c, 34ab; 24.2a–9d, 14a–15b, 22; 25.2ab.

Level 3: 17.2cde, 8b–11f, 12b–14d; 18.2c–24c, 26a–27b, 28a–30e; 19.2c–37c; 20.2b–23c, 24e–26b, 27; 21.17c–23f; 22.3b–h, 18c–25d; 23.2c–8c, 10c–22f, 24c–25b, 34c–43d; 24.15c–21d; 25.2c–20a, 21–55; 26.1a–13c, 14–45.

Level 4: 17.3–7, 14e–16c; 18.25, 27c; 20.23d–24a, 26cd; 25.20bcd; 26.13de.

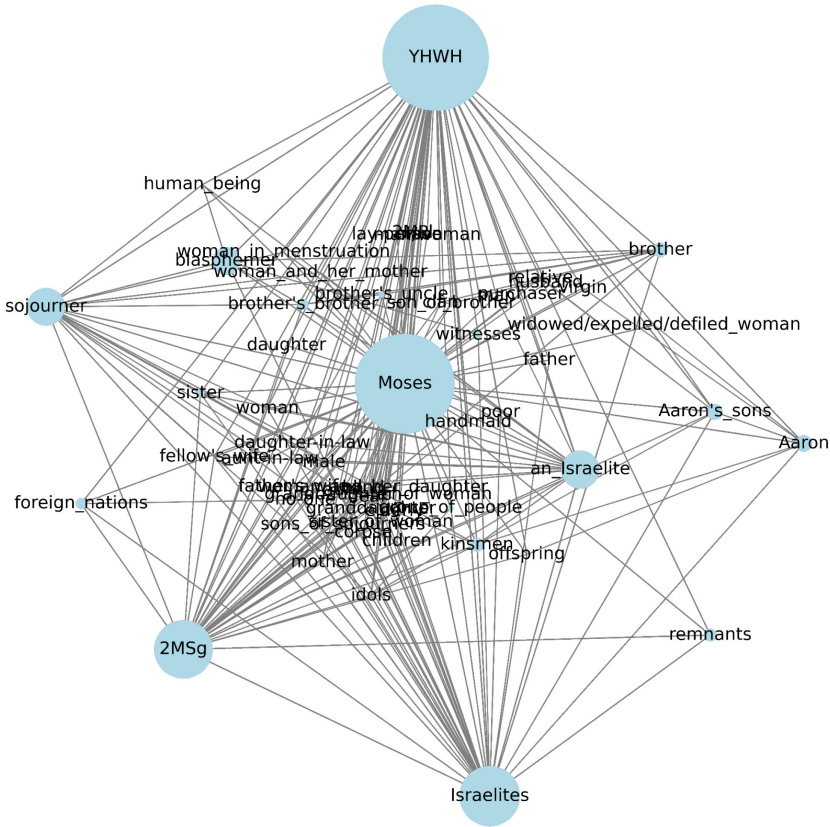
Level 5: 20.24bcd.

applies to all sorts of interaction. Indeed, one sentence in a text is structurally conditioned by another sentence. In a narrative, for instance, one event is conditioned by the preceding event, and the narrative is thus formed by a series of successive and conditional events. In the case laws of Lev. 17–26, the apodosis is conditioned by the protasis, for instance, the sentence "If the people of the land should hide their eyes from this man" conditions "I will put my face upon that man and his clan" (Lev. 20.4–5).[18] This information is stored as the 'mother' feature in the ETCBC database of the Hebrew Bible. If this feature is retrieved and mapped onto the SNA-model of the text, 39 levels appear. If one event conditions another one, it is reasonable to consider the *actor* of the former event to condition the latter event, including the participants participating in the latter event. We can represent this conditional relationship as a directional edge going from the actor of the former event to the participants involved in the conditioned event. For example, insofar as *YHWH's* speech in 18.2ab conditions *Moses'* speech in 18.2c, an edge can be drawn from *YHWH* to *Moses* to represent the conditional relationship between the two participants. Put differently, *Moses* is embedded in *YHWH's* domain, and *YHWH's* 'domain ownership' can be represented as a directional edge from *YHWH* to *Moses*. If such edges are drawn from all controlling actors in the network to all their respective conditioned participants, another type of network emerges, representing the syntactic structure as a network. In this

[18] To be sure, a clause need not be conditioned by the immediately preceding clause, because two clauses may both depend on the same higher-level clause.

network, the nodes are still participants, but the edges are not interactions but direction of embeddedness. The syntactic hierarchy thus establishes a third dimension to the network of Lev. 17–26 and can be represented as a network on its own (Figure 16).

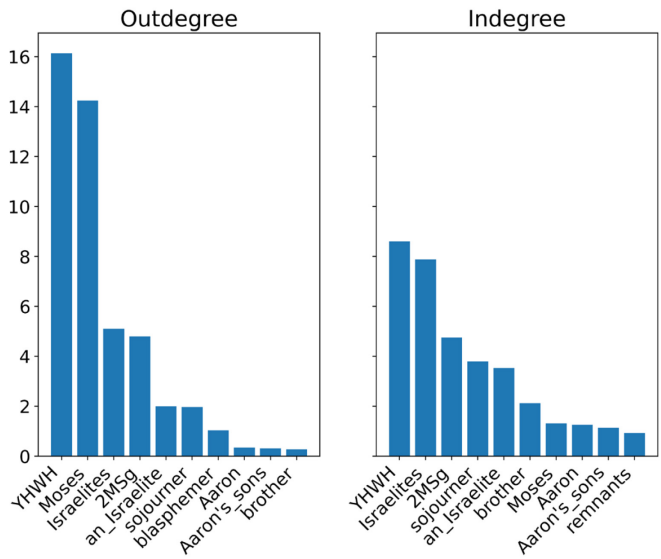
Figure 16: A multiple, directed network of domain ownership/control. Node size corresponds to outdegree.



Compared to the regular social network of Leviticus (Figure 11), the main participants still dominate the network. The centrality of *Moses*, however, is significantly increased, as illustrated by the size of his node. He has the second highest outdegree (826) in the entire 'control network', that is, he conditions or controls the

interactions of 826 participants.[19] The high outdegree values are also reflected in the centrality measures displayed in Figure 17. Put differently, *Moses* and *YHWH* dominate the network because they control most of the interactions. This observation will be considered along with the general discussion of *Moses'* role in the network (§5.2.1). Other main participants follow, e.g., the *Israelites*, *2MSg*, *an Israelite*, and the *sojourner*. Interestingly, the *blasphemer* appears among the top scorers, despite his less than central role in the regular network (see §5.2.3). *YHWH* also dominates the indegree scores, presumably because he not only instigates the speeches but also has *Moses* referring to him within the speeches. In other words, *YHWH* is embedded in his own speeches, a phenomenon already discussed in chapter 3, §3.6.

Figure 17: Centrality measures of the control network



[19] The number does not correspond to 826 unique participants, but to 826 participant references in the interactions controlled by *Moses*.

4.0. Role Assignment

Complex networks are hard to pin down, because the edges of the network may be directed and weighted. In the Holiness Code network, the edges represent various different types of interaction, which further complicates the analysis. This complication, however, is partly mitigated by conceptualising the edges as degrees of agency rather than diverse events. A crucial objective of network analysis is to reduce the complexity of the network in order to capture and visualise the most important features. An abundance of methods for network reduction have been proposed and need not be summarised here (Borgatti et al. 2018; Brandes and Erlebach 2005). The goal of network analysis is the classification of nodes according to their structural position in the network (Lerner 2005). Some nodes are peripheral, others central, and yet others may be 'bridges' and connect otherwise unconnected communities of nodes. Node classification first arose in sociology, where the structural roles of nodes were used to explain their social functions. More recently, the emergence of big data and graph theory has led to new explorations into node classification and role discovery, and network analysis has become subject to highly advanced mathematical scrutiny (see Rossi and Ahmed 2015).

An abundance of methods has been developed to detect the network roles of nodes. The wealth of methods also reflects the increasing interdisciplinary interest in graphs and networks, which means that traditional, small-scale sociological models now exist alongside highly advanced computational algorithms for role detection in huge networks. Nevertheless, the methods

can be divided into roughly three groups (Rossi and Ahmed 2015): 1) graph-based; 2) feature-based; and 3) hybrid approaches. Firstly, graph-based role detection has been the most common approach among sociologists and aims to detect roles directly from the representation of the graph. Secondly, feature-based approaches have become increasingly popular with the rise of computational methods. These methods basically involve two steps: 1) transformation of the graph into vectors, each node being described as a vector; and 2) statistical analysis of the vectors for role detection. Thus, in contrast to graph-based methods, feature-based methods only compute roles indirectly from the graph. Thirdly, hybrid approaches combine graph-based and feature-based approaches. In what follows, I shall try out two role detection methods on the H network. The first of these is a graph-based method called structural equivalence. The second method is a feature-based algorithm called node2vec.

The purpose of this section is not to introduce the applied methods in detail, as this has been done elsewhere. The selected methods will only be introduced in general terms, and the main focus of this section will be on their implications for understanding the participants of H.

4.1. Graph-Based Role Discovery

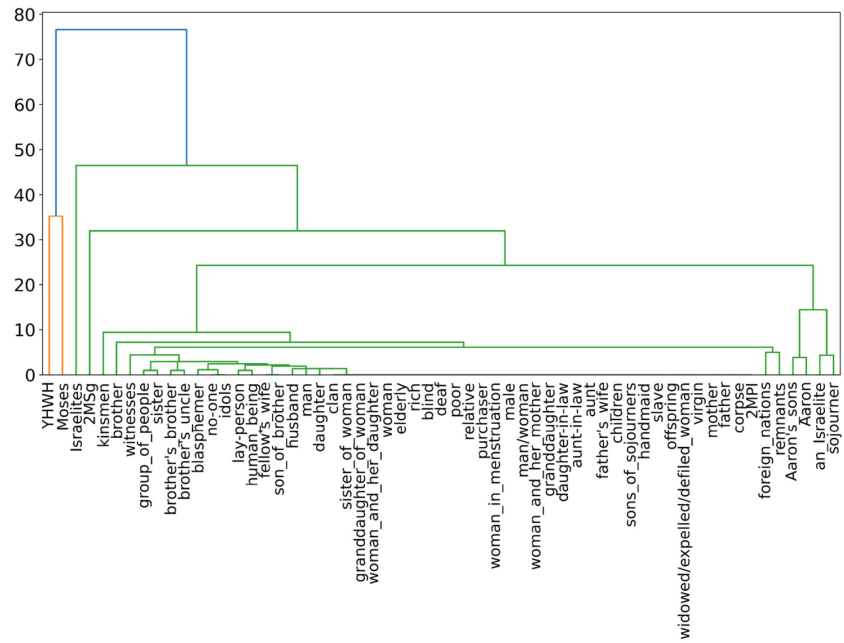
A social network essentially consists of a group of participants connected by various ties. Intuitively, some of the participants appear more similar than others because they have similar roles in the network. In networks of families, for instance, some of the participants are parents while others are children. In order to

identify participants with similar roles, social network analysts have developed a range of statistical tools. One of these tools is derived from what is called structural equivalence (Lorrain and White 1971).[20] In simple terms, two participants can be said to be structurally equivalent if they have exactly the same ties with exactly the same third-parties. The two participants need not be connected themselves. Sociologists have noted that structurally equivalent participants tend to show a certain amount of homogeneity. As Stephen P. Borgatti, Martin G. Everett, and Jeffrey C. Johnson (2018, 240) explain, "one mechanism underlying the relationship between structural equivalence and homogeneity is the idea that persons adapt to their social environments, and therefore actors with similar social environments will tend to have certain similarities." Now, structural equivalence is a mathematical ideal, clearly defined in theory but a rare phenomenon in real data. In the real world, people rarely have exactly the same relationships, even if they have the same formal roles, e.g., teacher or father. In practice, then, if one wants to examine the social networks of teachers, for example, it is more useful to look for structural *similarities* rather than complete equivalence. The concept of structural equivalence has therefore been relaxed in order to cope with real data. Nevertheless, in order to identify similar participants, structural equivalence provides a strong theoretical framework. Essentially, all participants are compared on the basis of their ties to one another. Two structurally equivalent participants would be two participants that have the same ties to

[20] For a recent explanation of structural equivalence and applied methods, see Borgatti et al. (2018, 240–53).

the same third parties. Two structurally *similar* participants, on the other hand, would be two participants with a low degree of internal variation. Thus, statistical methods can be applied to cluster participants on the basis of similarity. This type of analysis is frequently conducted with hierarchical clustering, such as the dendrogram in Figure 18.[21] Accordingly, all participants in the H network are grouped into a hierarchy of clusters.

Figure 18: A dendrogram of the participants in Lev 17–26. The clustering is computed with the Ward algorithm.

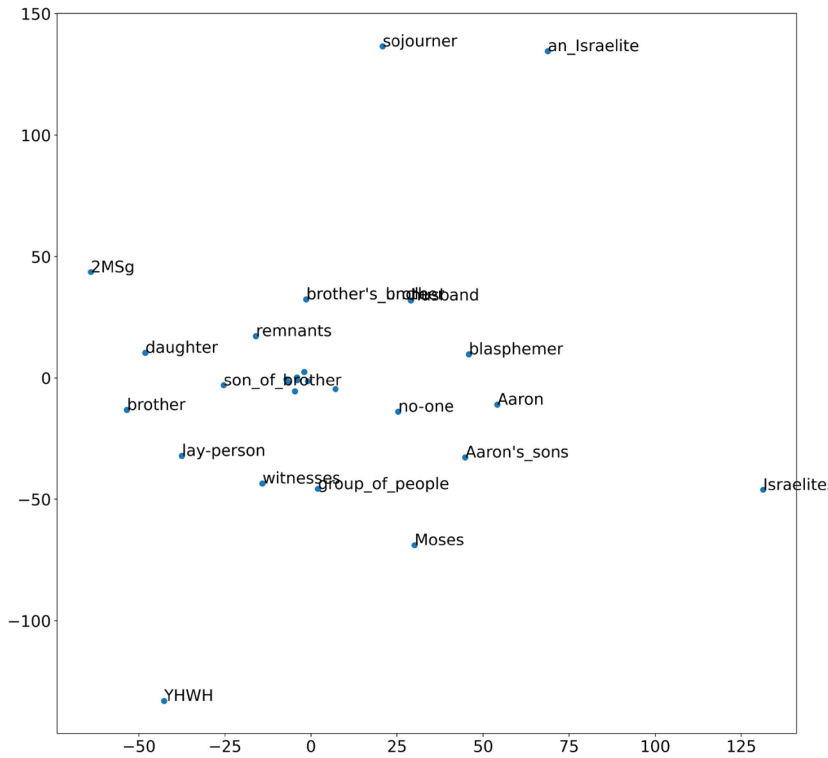


[21] In this analysis, the H network is considered a network with multiple, directed ties, i.e., the ties between the participants are weighted on the basis of frequency. The values of the ties (e.g., event type or degree of agency), however, are not taken into account. The clustering itself is computed with the 'Ward' algorithm.

Two major clusters appear: one consisting of *YHWH* and *Moses*, the other consisting of all remaining participants. The *YHWH-Moses* cluster is not strongly cohesive, as it exhibits large internal variation. However, they are still more similar to each other than to the rest of the participants. The largest cluster is dominated by a great number of infrequent participants, e.g., the *poor*, the *blind*, the *deaf*, etc. Many of these participants occur only once, so they are statistically insignificant. Some of these may be structurally equivalent because they have one third party that happens to be the same. The right side of the dendrogram is more interesting. Firstly, *Aaron* forms a cluster with *Aaron's sons*. This observation is interesting because both participants are priests; hence, there appears to be an integrated group of priests with similar roles. Secondly, *an Israelite* and the *sojourner* form another cluster. This observation is curious, because we might expect the two parties to be in opposition. However, this clustering procedure does not take into account the nature of the ties, only the fact that they are tied to the same third parties. Thirdly, a similar relationship is found between the *foreign nations* and the *remnants*, both of which appear in the same context in Lev. 26. Due to the complex relationships among the participants (i.e., multiple, directed, and valued ties), it is highly complicated to compare all relationships at once. In the dendrogram above, then, the cluster analysis was carried out on a network of multiple, directed ties, ignoring the values (i.e., the agency scores) of the ties. It is also possible to explore structural similarity with respect to the mean agency score of each relationship in the social network (see the semantic hierarchy of semantic roles and corresponding agency scores in

chapter 6, §6.0).[22] In this way, the semantic roles derived in chapter 6 now represent the interactions among the participants; hence, the semantic roles—along with the structural properties of the graph—now serve to yield the network roles of the graph. The resulting structural similarity is plotted in Figure 19 using multidimensional scaling (MDS), a dimension reduction method for high-dimensional data.

Figure 19: MDS of the H-network (edges conceptualised as agency scores)



[22] Unlike in chapter 6, §6.0, where the mean agency referred to the mean of all interactions pertaining to a particular participant, the mean

The graph shows the two dimensions accounting for the most variation in the data. In the graph, accordingly, participants situated close together are structurally similar, in contrast to participants that are situated far away from one another. In the centre of the plot is a large group of infrequent participants. Their labels have been removed for convenience. Participants exhibiting more variation are situated further from the centre of the plot. At the extremes of the plot, therefore, are those participants who are highly distinctive in the network. As we dive into the details of the plot, interesting features become apparent. To begin with, most of the major participants of the network are isolated, in particular the *Israelites* and *YHWH*, who lie towards the extremes of the plot. However, as with the dendrogram above, *an Israelite* and the *sojourner* occur more closely together. They are thus structurally similar as regards the frequency of ties to the same third parties, as well as the agency scores invested in those shared ties. In this plot, *Aaron* and *Aaron's sons* are also situated relatively close to each other. Thus, apart from their sharing many third parties, the agency invested in these interactions is similar. Finally, the *brother's brother* and the *brother's uncle* have a complete overlap. This observation is not unexpected, since these participants occur in the same context and involve the same third party, the *brother*.

As can be inferred from the dendrogram and the MDS two-dimensional plot, participants that are structurally similar are not

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agency score refers here to the mean of the concrete interactions between pairs of participants with respect to the social network (see the computation of combined agency scores in §3.1).

only similar but also proximate (see Borgatti and Everett 1992). That is, in order to be structurally similar, the participants need to be proximate in the network, because they need to tie in with the same third parties. In some social networks, proximity is indeed an important factor. For instance, in a contagion network, proximate persons are more prone to the same infections, because they are exposed to the same persons. However, in other networks, proximity is irrelevant. A teacher has the role of a teacher irrespective of whether he/she is related to the same students as other teachers. In other words, two participants have the same role (e.g., teacher, mother, etc.) because they have a *similar* relationship with participants with *similar* roles (e.g., pupil, child, etc.). This notion of similarity implies an abstraction from structural equivalence, because the specific position in the network is no longer important. Two participants may be similar, even if they are not neighbours or second-degree neighbours in the network. There have been several strategies for abstracting from structural equivalence, e.g., regular equivalence, where two nodes are considered structurally equivalent if they are connected to the same class of nodes (Borgatti and Everett 1993; see also White and Reitz 1983; Audenaert et al. 2018). Recently, the methods for abstract role partitioning have exploded, largely thanks to the rise of computer technology and the overwhelming interest in graphs and networks in a variety of research areas, including computer science. Thus, rather than detecting the roles of nodes directly from the graph (i.e., graph-based methods), it has become much more common to transform the graph into vectors by means of which the structural features of the graph can

be coupled with a large variety of other features (i.e., feature-based methods). One of the recent algorithms for transforming graphs into vectors is called node2vec and will be the focus of the next section.

4.2. Feature-Based Role Discovery

With the rise of computational methods, new approaches are constantly being developed for classifying node roles and reducing the complexity of graphs. Many of these new approaches fall under the category of feature-based role discovery.[23] Unlike graph-based role equivalence, which is based on the derivation of node properties directly from the graph, feature-based role discovery involves the transformation of the graph into a feature representation to be analysed. More specifically, each node in the graph is transformed into a vector, and nodes with similar vectors are ascribed the same role. In general terms, the approach has two steps: 1) computation of feature vectors on the basis of user-defined criteria; and 2) assignment of roles according to the computed features. The advantage of transforming a graph into a set of vectors is that any node, irrespective of how well it is embedded in the network, is represented in the same shape, and vectors are therefore a well-suited input for machine-learning algorithms. A feature-based approach allows for the consideration of a diversity of data, as the input data are not restricted to the structural properties of the graph, but may also include node val-

[23] For an overview of feature-based approaches, see Rossi and Ahmed (2015).

ues (e.g., attributes of neighbour nodes), edge features (e.g., attributes of the walk from the target node to the neighbour nodes), and non-relational features (attributes not dependent on the relations of the target node; Rossi and Ahmed 2015).[24] One of the most recent tools for capturing graph features is node2vec, developed by Aditya Grover and Jure Leskovec (2016). In technical terms, it is "a semi-supervised algorithm for scalable feature learning in networks" (Grover and Leskovec 2016, 856). In less technical terms, the method aims to balance two different concepts of role similarity. The first concept concerns homophily, that is, two nodes are considered similar if they belong to the same community within the larger network. As for the second concept, two nodes are considered similar if they have the same structural role, irrespective of their community. Thus, people from different communities can have the same role within their respective structural neighbourhoods (e.g., different teachers largely have the same role, although they have different pupils). This notion of structural role similarity resembles that of regular equivalence mentioned above. Since real-world networks commonly exhibit both types of equivalence, a realistic representation of node equivalence should take both perspectives into account (Grover and Leskovec 2016). As the name suggests,

[24] Here, 'neighbour' is not restricted to the immediate neighbours of the target node. The neighbours may be nodes within a certain distance from the target node. One could even rank the neighbours, so that the features of more adjacent neighbours are given greater weight than those of more distant neighbours.

node2vec is an algorithm designed to transform a graph into numerical vectors, each vector representing the features of a node.[25] The features of the H network relevant for the algorithm include the direction of ties, the number of ties, and the agency values. Having been transformed into vectors, the nodes can now be compared by means of traditional statistical methods, including hierarchical clustering, k-means clustering, and MDS. A two-dimensional projection was computed with MDS, as shown in Figure 20.

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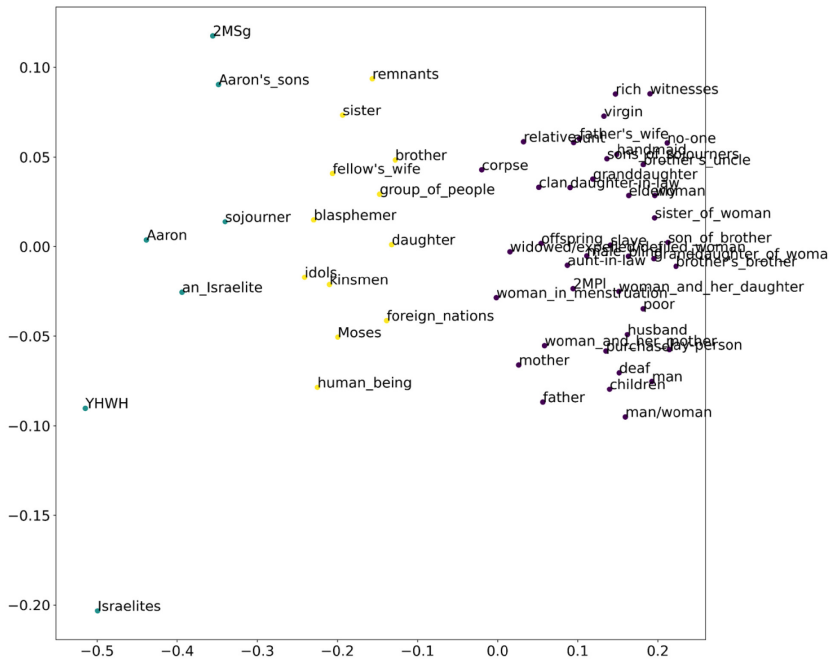
[25] What sets node2vec apart from most other node-to-vector transformation algorithms is its search strategy. Node2vec is a further development of DeepWalk, which was developed to learn the features of a network by performing a series of short random walks through the graph (Perozzi et al. 2014). A random walk is a walk from one node to another following a random path of edges (Brandes and Erlebach 2005, 14–15). Node2vec is a further development produced by applying two additional parameters to be adjusted by the user. The two parameters (p and q) control how fast the random walk explores and leaves the neighbourhood of the target node, hence a semi-supervised algorithm. The two parameters seek to balance two different notions of equivalence (homophily vs connectivity-independent structural roles), e.g., if $q > 1$, the random walk is biased towards exploring the immediate neighbourhood of the target node and thus towards similarity in terms of homophily. In short, the different notions of equivalence can be prioritised by adjusting the parameters. For the present purposes, the connection-independent structural roles have been prioritised. The random-walk algorithm was set to walk length $= 4$, $p = 1$, $q = 1$, and dimensions $=$ 16. 150 walks were conducted. The parameters have been set according to the comprehensive analysis of the algorithm by Hermansen et al. (2017).

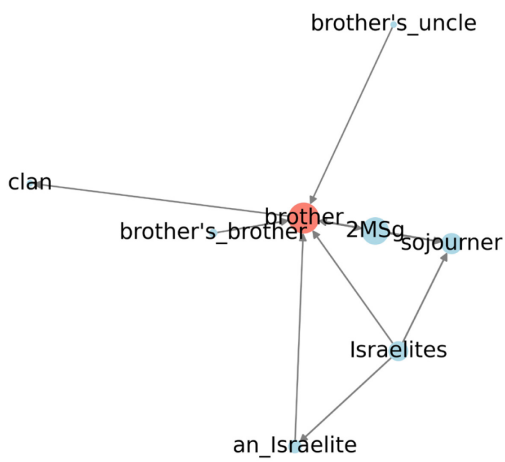
Figure 20: Structural role similarity based on feature vectors learned by node2vec



Three groups of structurally similar nodes appear, here coloured according to a k-means clustering of the vectors. One cluster includes peripheral participants (purple), the members of which are most often participants that are undergoers of events. That the participants are peripheral does not necessarily mean that they are socially marginalised, since the *rich* is included in this group. However, most participants may be considered vulnerable, e.g., a woman during her menstruation. Another cluster is formed by the most recurrent participants, namely *YHWH*, *2MSg*, the *Israelites*, *an Israelite*, the *sojourner*, *Aaron*, and *Aaron's sons* (green). As shown in the figure, these participants are more dispersed than the participants in the purple group, testifying to greater diversity among these participants. Nevertheless, the

members of this group are characterised by having a core role in the network, that is, they are highly connected with one another as well as with less connected nodes. The last group (yellow) is less easy to characterise. The members of this group include *Moses*, the *blasphemer*, the *daughter*, the *brother*, and the *fellow's wife*, among others. They are less frequent than the core participants, but generally more frequent than the peripheral participants. What characterises this group is the participants' relatively frequent interactions with core participants. They are both recipients and transmitters of events and are therefore more embedded in the network than are the peripheral members. Some of these participants function as bridges between core participants and peripheral participants, e.g., the *brother*, who interacts with several core participants, including the *Israelites*, *2MSg, an Israelite*, and the *sojourner*, as well as peripheral participants, such as the *brother's uncle*, *brother's brother*, and *clan* (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Ego-network of the *brother*



5.0. Law-Text Roles

Identification of clusters of participants helps to delineate the complex social network of the Holiness Code. But a structural analysis does not explain *why* the participants occur in these specific positions and *how* these structural positions relate—if they do—to the ethical values and expectations underlying these ancient prescriptions of right behaviour. These questions will need to be addressed by scrutinising individual participants according to their structural positions in the network, their concrete interactions, and the degree of agency invested in the events. Not all 59 participants of the Holiness Code-network will be explored. Instead, informed by the cluster analyses conducted above, important representatives from each group will be investigated.

5.1. Core Participants

There are seven core participants in the network. They are the main literary characters and the most frequently attested participants of Lev. 17–26. The group includes *YHWH*, the *Israelites*, *2MSg*, *an Israelite*, the *sojourner*, *Aaron*, and *Aaron's sons*. The distinction between the *Israelites* (2nd Pl), *2MSg* (2nd Sg), and *an Israelite* (3rd Sg) is somewhat arbitrary, since there is a considerable semantic overlap between those participants. However, although they all refer to the people of Israel or members of the Israelite community, each of them may reflect a certain perspective on how the laws relate to different segments of the group. In fact, if Joosten (1996; 1997) is right, the distinction between 'you' in the plural (= the *Israelites*) and 'you' in the singular (= *2MSg*) bears on a crucial rhetorical thrust. This hypothesis

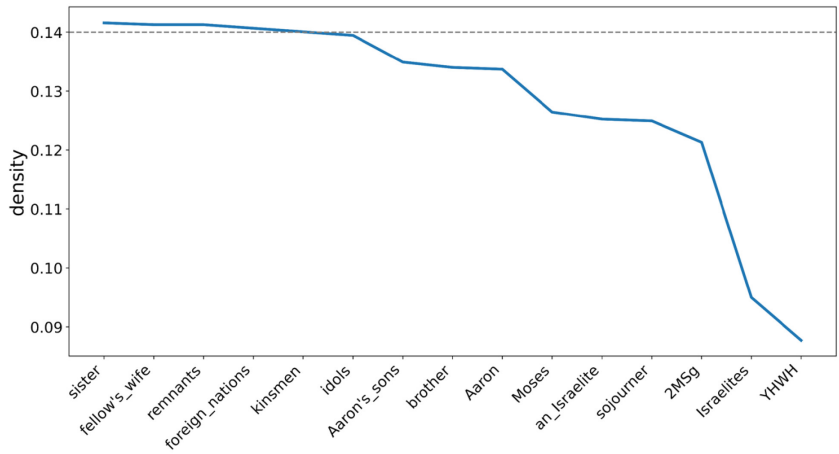
will be tested by projecting each of the participants as individual nodes in the network.

In what follows, all core participants will be discussed with respect to their roles in the network and how their roles relate to the intention ('expectations', see §2.4) of the law and the ethical obligations associated with the participants.

5.1.1. *YHWH*

The most important participant in the Leviticus network is *YHWH*. This claim can be demonstrated by a so-called 'elimination test' (see Che 2017). An elimination test measures the density of a network that results when one of the participants is removed. Density is a measure of the cohesion of the network (see §3.2). Therefore, if the network becomes less dense as a result of removing a certain participant, this participant is important for the cohesion of the network. If that participant were missing, the network might become fragmented. On the other hand, if the resulting network becomes denser, the participant under consideration is peripheral and not structurally important. Here, elimination tests are applied to the entire network or a subset of the network (i.e., the ego-networks of particular participants), and the density of the network is computed while excluding one participant at a time. In the end, the participants can be compared with respect to who causes the highest loss or gain of density. The result of the elimination test carried out on the entire H network is shown in Figure 22, where the participants are ordered according to their effect on the network density.

Figure 22: Elimination test of the H network. Only the 15 most important participants with respect to density are shown. The dashed line represents the original density of the network.

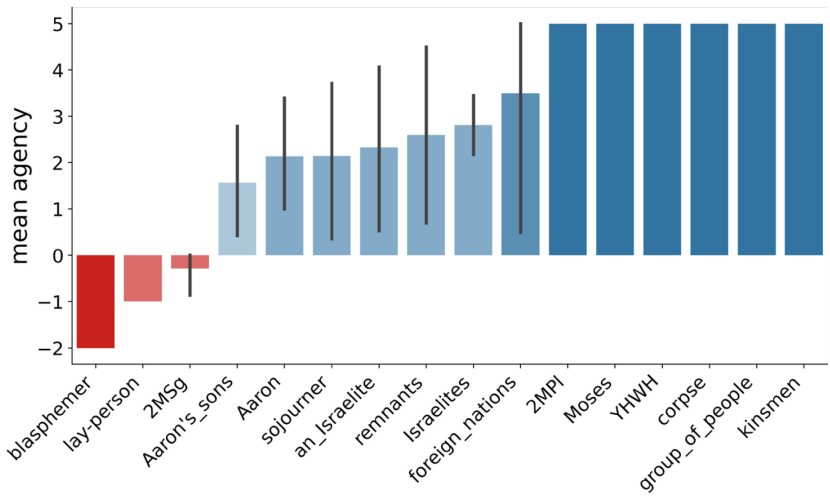


As shown in the elimination test, *YHWH* is the most important participant. If he were removed from the network, the resulting density would be smaller than it would be if any one of the other participants were removed. *YHWH* is also the participant involved in most interactions (degree = 191), although he is not related to the most participants. While *YHWH* is connected to 15 participants, the sojourner and the three different configurations of the Israelites (i.e., the *Israelites*, *2MSg*, and *an Israelite*) are all connected to more participants.[26] Thus, the network is hierarchical insofar as the most important participant, *YHWH*, is only the fifth-most connected participant. By implication, most participants of the network only have an indirect connection to *YHWH*. A closer look at the participants interacting with *YHWH* reveals that he

[26] *2MSg* has 27 different connections, while the *Israelites* have 26, *an Israelite* 21, and the *sojourner* 19.

interacts with all other core participants, six intermediate participants (*Moses*, *kinsmen*, *foreign nations*, *remnants*, *blasphemer*, *group of people*) and three peripheral participants (*corpse*, *2MPl*, and *lay person*). By contrast, *2MSg* is only connected to three other core participants, five intermediate participants, and 19 peripheral participants. In fact, *YHWH* is the only participant who is connected to all other core participants. For this reason, it is safe to conclude that the divine speaker is in fact the most important figure in terms of network cohesion. At another level, moreover, *YHWH* is even more significant. If the syntactic structure of the text is taken into account, *YHWH* is by far the most important participant, because almost all recorded interactions in Lev. 17–26 are the products of the divine speeches. This dimension will be unfolded below (§5.2.1).

Figure 23: Mean agency invested by *YHWH* in all his interactions. The black bars show the confidence intervals (95%).



YHWH fulfils a variety of roles in his interactions. Figure 23 shows the mean agency scores invested by *YHWH* in all his relationships.

To begin with, *YHWH* is a Patient or a Volitional Undergoer in his interactions with the *blasphemer*, the *lay person*, and *2MSg*. The *blasphemer* curses *YHWH* (24.11), which makes *YHWH* the Patient of the interaction (-2 in agency), and this interaction is never directly returned. The *blasphemer* is punished but not directly so by *YHWH*. Other participants are directly punished by *YHWH*, resulting in high agency scores for *YHWH*. These participants include a *group of people* (20.5), the *sojourner* (17.10; 20.3, 5, 6), and *an Israelite* (17.10; 20.3, 5, 6; 23.30). *YHWH's* one interaction with the *lay person* results in a negative agency score, because *YHWH* is portrayed as the recipient of a sacrifice (22.21). By contrast, the interactions with *2MSg* are more diverse, since *YHWH* is sometimes depicted as a participant under threat of defilement (18.21; 19.12) and sometimes as someone to be feared (19.14, 32; 25.17, 36, 43). Interestingly, no interaction between *YHWH* and *2MSg* is recorded where *YHWH* is the actor. By contrast, the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* (the collective reference to the people) is more varied. In most cases, *YHWH* is the recipient or beneficiary of an event, mostly sacrifices.[27] However, *YHWH* is also someone to be listened to (26.14, 18, 21, 27) and to be considered holy in the midst of the *Israelites* (22.32). Therefore, the *Israelites* are not to "walk in opposition" (i.e., be resistant or stubborn) to *YHWH* (26.21, 23, 27), nor to defile his name (22.32), e.g., by abusing his name in a false oath (19.12). Rather, they have to let themselves be admonished by *YHWH* (26.23), so that

[27] 17.5; 19.5; 22.2, 3, 15, 22 (×2), 24, 29; 23.8, 16, 25, 27, 36 (×2), 37, 38, 40.

he will not abhor them (26.11, 30). *YHWH* is also frequently recorded as the actor in his interactions with the *Israelites*. On the positive side, he is portrayed as the God who made the *Israelites* go out of Egypt (19.36; 22.33; 23.43; 25.38, 42, 55; 26.13) and made them live in booths in the wilderness (23.43). He also removed the previous inhabitants of the promised land (18.24; 20.23) to let the *Israelites* inhabit the land (18.3; 20.22, 24; 23.10; 25.2, 38). He will bless the people (25.21), e.g., by making them fertile (26.9), and he will establish a covenant with them (26.9), place his sanctuary in their midst (26.11) and walk among them (26.12). The latter expression is likely an allusion to God's presence with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (Harper 2018, 194–95). He sanctifies the *Israelites* (20.8; 22.32) and provides blood for atonement (17.11). Just as he separated the people from the surrounding foreign nations (20.24, 26), he has separated clean animals from unclean for the benefit of the people (20.25). A few times *YHWH* is also recorded as speaking directly to the *Israelites* (17.12, 14; 20.24). On the negative side, *YHWH* responds to the unfaithfulness of the people by punishing them (26.16, 21, 24), in particular by sending wild animals (26.22), famine (26.26), sword (26.25, 33), and plague (26.25). He admonishes the *Israelites* (26.18, 28) and walks in opposition to them (26.24, 28) as they do to him. Finally, he even threatens to scatter the people among those nations from which they were separated (26.33). The conflict between the *Israelites* and *YHWH* is carried on by the *remnants* of the people who eventually confess their sins and humble their hearts (26.40–41).

The connection between *YHWH* and *Moses* is simple, because the only type of interaction recorded is the recurrent speech by *YHWH* to *Moses*. As will be demonstrated below, this type of interaction leaves *Moses* in a quite distinct intermediary role (see §5.2.1). The relationship between *YHWH* and the *sojourner* will also be discussed later. The priests*, Aaron* and *Aaron's sons*, are connected to *YHWH* primarily by means of the sacrifices of which *YHWH* is the recipient (22.22 [×2], 24, 29; 23.11, 20).[28] Moreover, the priests are prohibited from defiling the name of *YHWH* (21.6; 22.2, 32). *YHWH*, on the other hand, is portrayed as sanctifying the priests (21.15, 23; 22.9, 16, 32), but he also threatens the offspring of the priests with being 'cut off' (נִכְרְתָה N) if they mistreat the sacrifices of the people (22.3). Finally, the priests are included in the large group of people brought out of Egypt by *YHWH* (22.33).

In sum, *YHWH* is the central-most participant insofar as he is the participant involved in most interactions and the only participant connected to all other core participants. He is not the participant connected with most participants, but he performs a large variety of roles in those interactions in which he is involved. He is frequently depicted as a recipient of sacrifices but also once as a Patient of cursing. He is a speaker and a direct causer of extinction. The relationship with the *Israelites* is probably the most complex relationship in the whole network, because of the dynamics of blessings and curses unfolded in Lev. 26 in particular. This perspective will be explored further below.

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[28] Other related cultic activities are the kindling of the golden lampstand and the arranging of the 12 breads (24.3, 8).

5.1.2. The People

H refers to the people of Israel in many ways. Apart from a few outsiders, including the *sojourner*, the *handmaid*, and the *foreign nations*, all participants are presumably part of the people. More specifically, the people is addressed in either the plural or the singular. It has been argued that the participant shifts between the plural and the singular are a rhetorical device (see chapter 3, §3.7). Although the participant shifts do not implicate a semantic difference, the different rhetorical aspects pertaining to each of the participant references are worth exploring in depth. Thus, the distinction is retained in the H network, where the two types of references are conceptualised as individual participants. It is the objective of the network analysis to explore whether the distinction bears on subtle differences in the characterisation and the roles of the participants. In particular, two aspects will be discussed. Firstly, is there any difference in terms of content and agency with respect to those relationships that are shared by the two participants? Secondly, what do the non-shared relationships imply for the characterisation of the two participants?

The *Israelites* and *2MSg* share 14 relationships, several of which are the result of a single verse (Lev. 18:6): "You (Pl) may not approach anyone near of kin." This expression functions as a summary statement of the following incestual laws in Lev. 18, and, as a result of the semantic hierarchy of the participants, all family members in this list of laws are subsumed under 'anyone

near of kin' (see §3.9).[29] Consequently, the interactions and the agency invested are the same with respect to this group of shared relationships, except for *father, mother*, and *brother*. The remaining shared participants are *YHWH*, the *idols*, *Aaron's sons*, the *sojourner*, and the *fellow's wife*. The *Israelites* and *2MSg* relate quite differently to *YHWH*, as described above, since the *Israelites* have a much more substantial and dynamic relationship with *YHWH* than does *2MSg*. This difference may explain the difference between the ways in which the two participants interact with the *idols*, a category that includes Moloch (18.21), goat-demons (17.7), and idols (19.4), as well as dead spirits and soothsayers (19.31). While *2MSg* is only prohibited from giving his son to Moloch (18.21), the *Israelites* are warned against sacrificing to the goat-demons, attending dead spirits and soothsayers, and casting idols. The latter practice, in particular, stands in a marked contrast to the right worship of *YHWH* (19.2–3). Therefore, because the relationship between the *Israelites* and *YHWH* is more substantial, the relationship with the idols is also more explicated in order to contrast true and false worship. The same context in Lev. 19 also includes the command to fear one's *father* and *mother* (Lev. 19.3). In this case, the law is directed to the *Israelites* as a group, the reason for which may be the context of right worship of *YHWH*. As for the interactions with *Aaron's sons*, the priests, the two participants differ slightly. While the *Israelites* are recorded as bringing sacrifices to the priests (Lev. 17.5; 23.10), *2MSg* is

[29] The shared family members include *mother*, *father*, *sister*, *brother*, *father's wife*, *daughter-in-law*, *aunt*, *aunt-in-law*, and *granddaughter*.

commanded to consider the priests holy (21.8), depending on how the reference is interpreted (see chapter 3, §3.5).

Figure 24: Mean agency invested by the *Israelites*

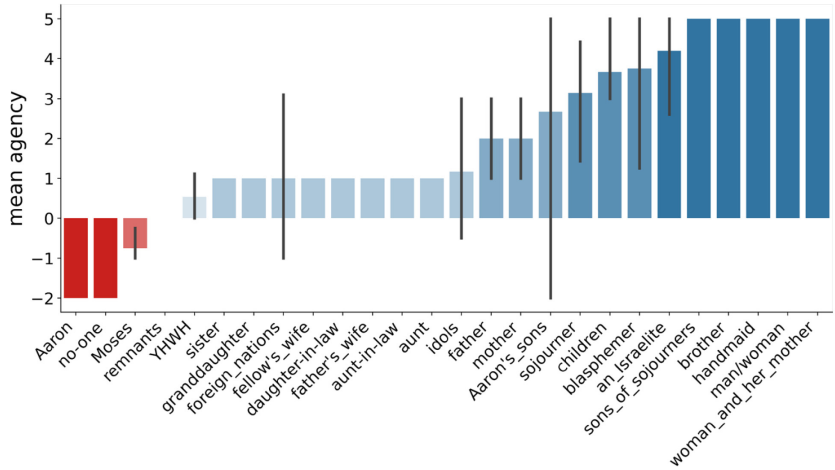
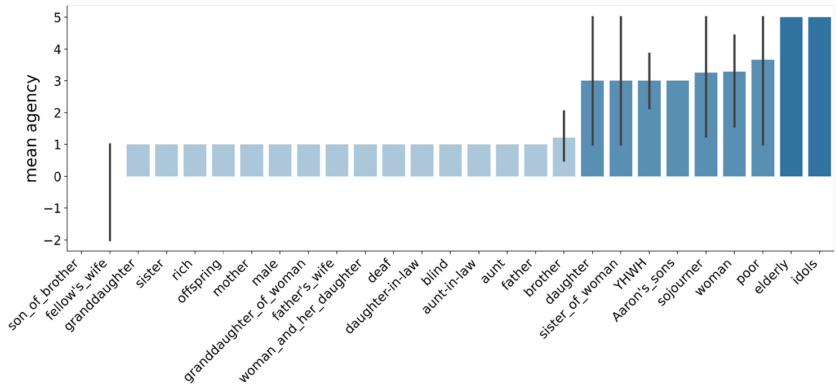


Figure 25: Mean agency invested by *2MSg*



The mean agencies of the *Israelites* and *2MSg* in their interactions with the *sojourner* are similar, although both scores show internal variation, indicating diverse interactions. Interestingly, *2MSg* is consistently commanded to show love and compassion towards the *sojourner* (19.10, 34; 23.22), whereas the actions of the *Israelites* are more varied. While they may not oppress the *sojourner*

(19.33), they are nevertheless commanded to execute the death penalty for idolatry and blasphemy (20.2, 14; 24.16). Again, the difference can be explained in light of the relationship with *YHWH*. As a group, the *Israelites* have to take responsibility for the right worship of *YHWH*.

The *Israelites* and *2MSg* are related quite differently to the *brother*. While the *Israelites* have no interactions with the *brother* apart from a general description of a transaction between the two parties (25.14),[30] *2MSg* is repeatedly commanded to love and care for his *brother*, or fellow, and treat him with justice.[31] This difference supports Joosten's claim that exhortations to the individual concern individual relationships.

The *Israelites* and *2MSg* each have a number of unique relationships. There is a striking contrast between these relationships, since all of *2MSg*'s 13 unique relationships regard individual, unnamed members of the society, including family members.[32] The *Israelites* have 12 unique relationships, two of which resemble the individual, unnamed members of the society related to *2MSg*.[33] The *Israelites* are also related to concrete individuals,

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[30] This single case of interaction between the *Israelites* and the *brother* may be due to the parallel structure of the verse, where two plural references envelop two singular suffixes (Jensen 2019).

[31] 19.13, 15, 16, 17 (×3), 18 (×2); 25.15, 35 (×2), 36 (×2), 37, 39, 43, 46.

[32] These relationships include the *deaf*, *blind*, *poor*, *rich*, *daughter*, *elderly*, *woman*, *son of brother*, *granddaughter of woman*, *sister of woman*, *woman and her daughter*, *offspring*, and *male*.

[33] The *woman and her mother* and *man/woman*.

namely, *Moses*, *Aaron*, and the *blasphemer*, whose mother is named (24.11). The only interaction with *Aaron* recorded, however, is in a context where *Aaron* and his offspring are warned not to eat the sacrifices of the *Israelites*, which would cause the *Israelites* to incur guilt (22.16). The relationship with *Moses* will be discussed below (§5.2.1). The connection with the *blasphemer* follows the pattern observed above, where the *Israelites* as a community are commanded to execute the death penalty for blasphemy.[34] The same kind of interaction pertains to the relationship with *an Israelite*, who must be executed as punishment for child sacrifice (20.2, 4, 14) or blasphemy (24.16).[35] Three of the *Israelites'* unique relationships regard relationships with outsiders, including the *foreign nations* (that is, foreigners from surrounding countries, as well as enemies), the *sons of sojourners*, and the *handmaid* of foreign descent. The relationship with foreign peoples is dynamic. On the one hand, the *Israelites* can buy *handmaids* from the *foreign nations* (25.44), as well as chattel slaves, labelled *sons of sojourners* (25.45, 46). Moreover, as part of the covenantal blessings given in Lev. 26, the *Israelites* are promised that they will be able to pursue and fight down their enemies from the surrounding nations (26.7, 8). On the other hand, if the *Israelites* fail to obey *YHWH*, the *foreign nations* will now pursue and fight down the *Israelites* (26.17, 25, 38). These interactions support the idea that the people are addressed as a

[34] The interactions are recorded in 24.14, 23 (×2).

[35] The punishment applies to *an Israelite* as well as the *sojourner* (see §§5.1.2–5.1.3).

group in cases of foreign affairs. Moreover, the dynamic relationship with the foreigners is placed in a context of curses and blessings as implications of the relationship between *YHWH* and the people.[36]

In sum, the network analysis largely supports and qualifies Joosten's thesis of a pragmatic distinction between community and individual in H. For one thing, the unique relationships of the *Israelites* are qualitatively different from those of *2MSg* in that they include relationships with concrete, named participants and non-domestic participants. On the other hand, both the *Israelites* and *2MSg* have relationships with the *father* and the *mother*, as well as other domestic participants. The most important difference is that the recorded interactions between the *Israelites* and *YHWH* are much more substantial than those between *2MSg* and *YHWH*. The individual Israelite (the *2MSg*) is to fear *YHWH* and be cautious not to defile his name, but the responsibility of right worship lies with the people as a whole. Thus, the individual ethical obligations are embedded in a collective identity, most importantly the collective covenantal relationship with *YHWH*. This

[36] The remaining unique relationships of the *Israelites* include the *children* (25.46; 26.29), the *remnants* of the *Israelites* (26.36, 39), and *no-one* (26.17). While the latter is hardly a participant at all, the *children* are the *Israelites*' *children* whom the *Israelites* are threatened with being forced to eat due to hunger because of their rebellion against *YHWH*. The relationship with the *remnants* is not interesting in terms of interaction, because the 'interaction' is only one of qualification.

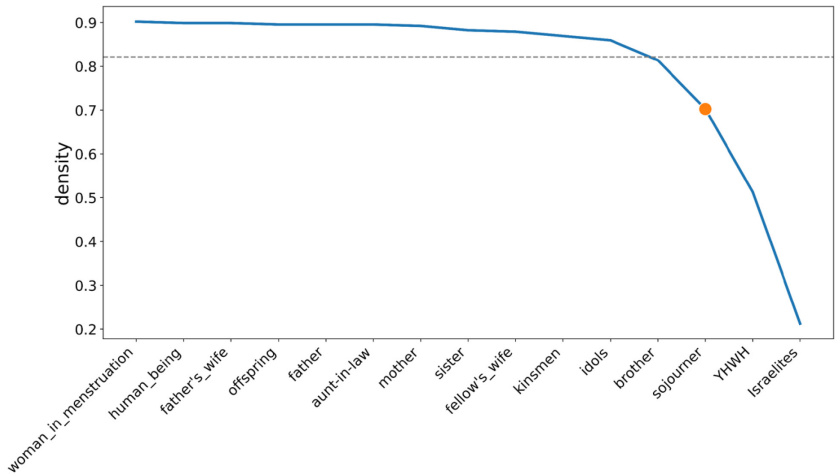
identity has ramifications for the communal responsibility for adherence to the law and punishment of perpetrators, as well as for foreign affairs.

5.1.3. The *Sojourner*

Probably one of the most curious participants of the H network is the *sojourner*. Despite generally being considered a person on the margins of society, the sojourner appears prominently in the core of the network. Many laws apply equally to the *sojourner* as to the native *Israelite* (see 18.26; 24.22). However, the *sojourner* is never directly addressed, so it is not accurate to handle the *sojourner* and the *Israelites* alike. The *sojourner* is clearly not thought of as belonging to the plural 'you' (the collective *Israelites*), because the *sojourner* is described as residing 'in your midst' (Lev. 18.26).

The structural importance of the *sojourner* can be computed by conducting an elimination test of the *sojourner* and his ego-network. The result of the test is illustrated in Figure 26 below. It should be noted that the *Israelites* represent a merger of *Israelites*, *2MSg*, and *an Israelite* in this part of the analysis, because it is less important to distinguish different notions of the native Israelites (e.g., plural and singular) than to distinguish the native Israelites and the *sojourner*. In the elimination test, therefore, the *sojourner* is found to be only the third most important participant within his ego-network. The *Israelites* and *YHWH* are far more important, and the density of the network would drop drastically if they fell out. On the other hand, the *sojourner* is more important than the *brother*, among many other participants.

Figure 26: Elimination test of the *sojourner*'s ego-network

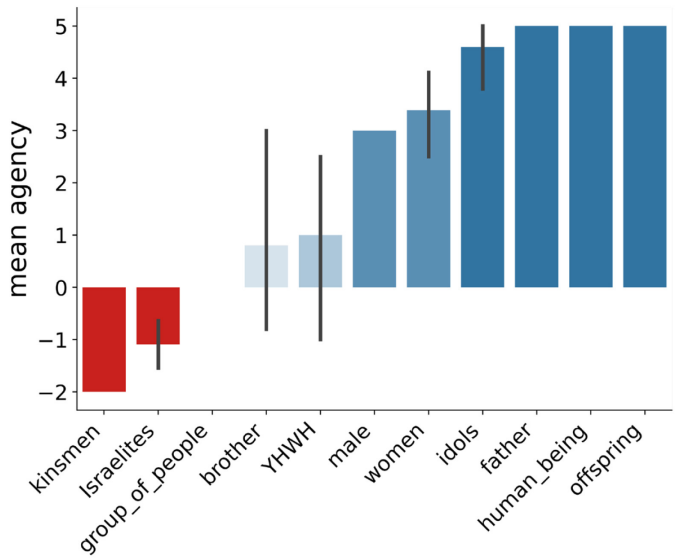


The *sojourner* and the *Israelites* are related to many of the same participants. In fact, all the *sojourner*'s connections are shared by the *Israelites*, and this fact explains why the density of the network only decreases slightly if the *sojourner* falls out. By contrast, the *Israelites* have ties that are not shared by the *sojourner*. Moreover, the internal relationship between the *sojourner* and the *Israelites* is markedly asymmetric. The *sojourner* is never the instigating participant in interactions with the *Israelites*. By contrast, the *Israelites* have many outgoing ties to the *sojourner*.[37] The ties are of very different kinds and include the command to leave remains from the harvest to the *sojourner* (Lev. 19.10; 23.22) and the prohibition against oppressing *sojourners* living among the *Israelites* (19.33). As a more general command, the *Israelites* are commanded to love the *sojourner* (19.34). However, if the *so-*

[37] 19.10, 33, 34; 20.2, 4 (×2), 14; 23.22; 24.16.

journer partakes in child sacrifices to Moloch (Lev. 20.2, 4), blasphemy (24.16), or incest (20.14), the *Israelites* are commanded to execute him.[38] The *sojourner* is not granted this legal right or duty, so we see here a marked difference between the legal rights of the *sojourner* and those of the *Israelites*. The asymmetry is supported by the mean agency scores illustrated in Figure 27. In his interactions with the *Israelites*, the *sojourner* is generally the undergoer.

Figure 27: Mean agency invested by the *sojourner*. The *women* comprise all female participants in the network.



[38] Strictly speaking, it is not the plural addressees who must execute capital punishment (20.2, 4), but the עַם הָאָרֶץ ‘the people of the land’. The term ‘the people of the land’ has attracted attention, because it functions elsewhere as a technical term referring to an active political group in the history of the Judaic monarchy (Joosten 1996, 42). Within the context of Leviticus, it has been argued that the term refers to “the male populace at large” (Milgrom 2000, 1730) or ordinary citizens in

An SNA should not focus exclusively on the ego and its alters. Equally important—and often more informative—are the ties among the alters. For instance, if two alters were to become enemies, the enmity would affect the relationships between the ego and each of the two alters, because the ego would likely need to pick a side.

The two most important participants in the ego-network of the *sojourner* are the *Israelites* and *YHWH*. A closer look at the ties between these two participants and the *sojourner* reveals that the *Israelites* have many more and more important ties with *YHWH* than does the *sojourner*. The *sojourner* is portrayed similarly to the *Israelites* to the extent that he can offer sacrifices to *YHWH* and that he can potentially defile or blaspheme the name of *YHWH*.[39] However, the references to the *Israelites* offering sacrifices are much more numerous, partly because the *sojourner* is not mentioned in the speeches concerning the holy convocations (Lev. 23).[40] Therefore, although the *sojourner* can partake in the cult,

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contrast to elders and judges; see Lev. 4.27 (Wenham 1979, 278; Hartley 1992, 333). The parallel between עַם הָאָרֶץ 'the people of the land' and הָעֵדָה 'the congregation' has been noted (Joosten 1996, 44). Thus, it is generally accepted that 'the people of land' is used non-technically in Leviticus as a way of referring to native Israelites as opposed to non-Israelite sojourners.

[39] 17.9; 20.3; 22.18; 24.15, 16. The *Israelites* have many more outgoing ties to *YHWH*: 17.5, 9; 18.21; 19.5, 12 (×2), 14, 32; 20.3; 22.2, 3, 15, 18, 22 (×2), 24, 29, 32 (×2); 23.8, 16, 25, 27, 36 (×2), 37, 38, 40; 24.15, 16; 25.17, 36, 43; 26.11, 14, 18, 21 (×2), 23 (×2), 27 (×2), 30.

[40] In fact, it is explicitly stated that the אֶזְרָח 'native' is supposed to celebrate the Feast of Booths by living in booths for seven days (Lev.

his participation is presumably limited to common sacrifices. Moreover, only the *Israelites* are portrayed as being expected to listen to *YHWH* (26.14, 18, 21, 27) and to be admonished by him (26.23). The actions of *YHWH* towards the *Israelites*[41] are also more numerous than and qualitatively different from the actions of *YHWH* towards the *sojourner*. As for the relationship between *YHWH* and the *sojourner*, all actions instigated by *YHWH* concern punishment.[42] To be sure, *YHWH* does also threaten the *Israelites* with severe punishments for violating the divine laws.[43] But the overall image of the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* is one of greater complexity. On the one hand, *YHWH* intends to bless the *Israelites* for their faithfulness by commanding his agricultural blessings upon them (25.21) and by making them fruitful (26.9) and numerous (26.9). On the other hand, *YHWH* also threatens the *Israelites* with chastisement (26.18, 28) and curses, such as plague (26.25), wild animals (26.22), and exile (26.33), if they do not obey him. Thus, *YHWH's* punishments, despite their harshness, are more nuanced than mere annihilation. The *Israelites* are pictured as children who need to be disciplined. When

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23.42). By implication, the sojourner is not supposed to participate in this feast.

[41] 17.10, 11, 12, 14; 18.3, 24; 19.36; 20.3, 5, 6, 8, 22, 23, 24 (×3), 25, 26; 22.32, 33; 23.10, 30, 43 (×2); 25.2, 21, 38 (×2), 42, 55; 26.9 (×3), 11, 12, 13 (×2), 16 (×2), 17, 18, 21, 22, 24 (×2), 25 (×2), 26, 28 (×2), 33 (×2), 46.

[42] 17.10; 20.3, 5, 6.

[43] 17.10; 20.3, 5, 6; 23.30; 26.16 (×2), 17, 18, 21, 22, 24 (×2), 25 (×2), 26, 28 (×2), 33 (×2).

comparing the *sojourner* and the *Israelites*, we should keep in mind that the sojourner is portrayed as an individual, while the *Israelites* sometimes refer to an individual (who can certainly be annihilated; see 17.10; 20.3, 5, 6) and sometimes to the people at large. It is the people at large which is said to be disciplined and not the individual Israelite. The composite picture of the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* is based on the covenant between these two parties. The *sojourner* is never said to have been freed from slavery in Egypt. By contrast, the *Israelites* are repeatedly reminded of their status as liberated slaves.[44] As liberated slaves, the *Israelites* are separated from the nations as a unique community (20.24, 26), and *YHWH* sanctifies the people and considers them his own (20.8; 22.32).

To sum up, then, the overall picture of the *sojourner* is somewhat complex. On the one hand, he is certainly more agentive than peripheral participants, such as the *women* (§5.3.1) of the text, and than the *brother* (§5.2.2). The *sojourner* has ethical obligations, can partake in certain ritual activities, and is threatened by divine punishment for violating the law. Given his interactions with both *YHWH* and the *Israelites*, the *sojourner* is situated safely in the core of the network. The role of the *sojourner* is most clearly seen in contrast with the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites*, which is stronger and more complex. The *Israelites* have a deeper and more intimate relationship with *YHWH*, because it is rooted in a covenant. In this light, the *sojourner* serves to mark the boundary of the covenantal community.

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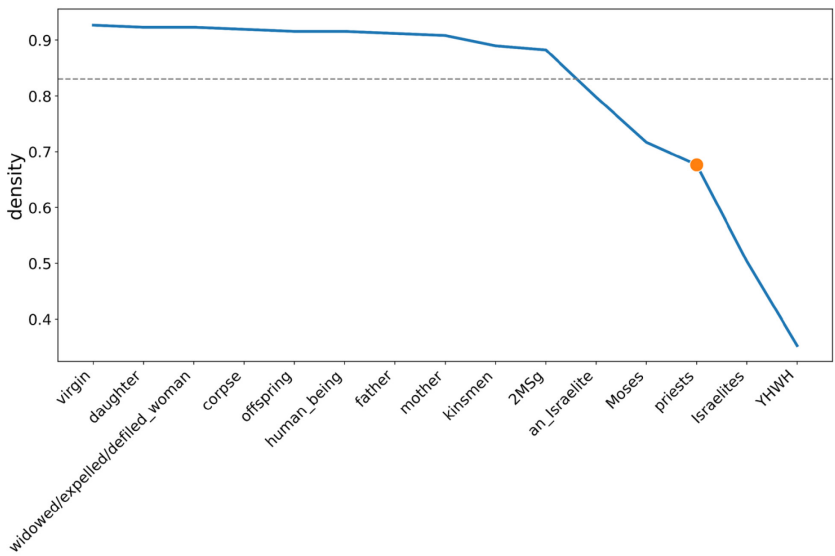
[44] 19.36; 22.33; 23.43; 25.38, 42, 55; 26.13.

5.1.4. The Priests

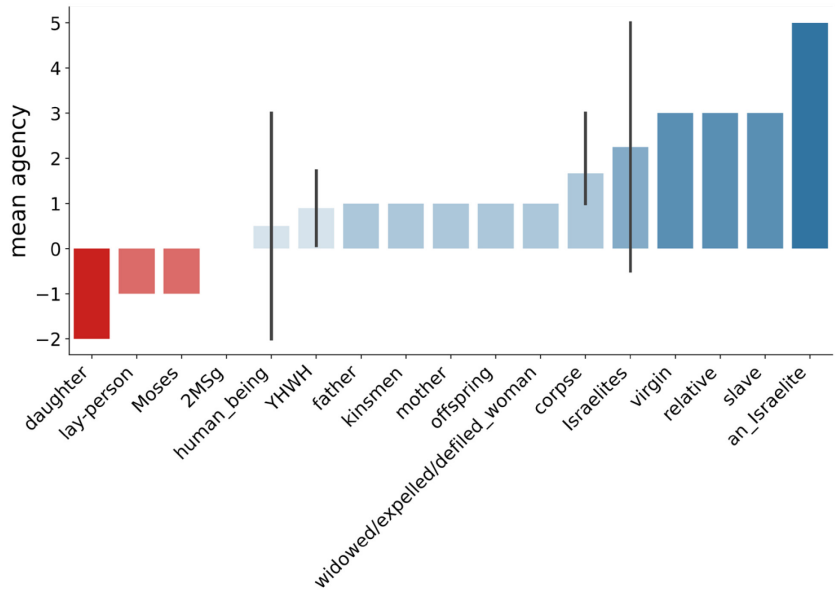
The priestly class is formed by the high priest *Aaron* and his sons, labelled *Aaron's sons*. Although one might expect a book like Leviticus to emphasise the role of the priests (which is indeed the case in the first half of the book), in this part of the book, the priests play a less central role. Elimination tests show that both *Aaron* and *Aaron's sons* are only the fourth most important participants in their respective networks. With *YHWH*, the *Israelites*, or *Moses* removed, the networks become less cohesive than they do when any of the priestly participants is removed. In fact, the removal of *Aaron's sons* results in a *more* cohesive ego-network, a fact that demonstrates the less important structural role of this participant. If the two participants are combined in a node called *priests*, the structural importance of the priestly participants increases, as shown Figure 28.

Figure 28: Elimination test of the *priests* (comprising *Aaron* and *Aaron's sons*)



The *priests* interact with a range of participants, most frequently their relatives (*daughter*, *father*, *mother*, *offspring,* and *relative*, the latter of which is the virgin sister of a priest), and (non)potential wives (*widowed/expelled/defiled woman* and *virgin*). These and the remaining participants interacting with the *priests* are displayed in Figure 29, along with the mean agency invested by the *priests* in the interactions.

Figure 29: Mean agency invested by the *priests*



With regard to the *priests,* the major concern of the text is the threat of defilement. All interactions with family members and potential wives are fraught with the risk of defilement.[45] In this respect, the *priests* are set aside as a distinct group within the community, because they are not allowed to be as involved in

[45] The same concern regards the interactions with *corpses* and the *human being* (i.e., an unclean person; see 22.5).

daily-life activities as regular people. Moreover, there are serious constraints as to whom they can marry. The only kind of interaction recorded between *Moses* and the *priests* is the communication of divine revelation from *Moses* to the *priests*.[46] Interestingly, while the cult is therefore maintained by the *priests*, divine revelation is not mediated by the *priests* but by *Moses*.

The most substantial relationship between the *priests* and another participant is their relationship with *YHWH*. On the one hand, their interactions with *YHWH* demonstrate their unique privileges. They are sanctified by *YHWH* and are thereby set aside as a distinct group (21.15, 23; 22.9, 16, 32). The most prominent privileges include their role in the offering of sacrifices to *YHWH* (22.29; 23.11, 20),[47] as they are the recipients of the sacrifices offered by the *Israelites* (17.5; 23.10) and the *lay person* (22.14). In fact, they can cause the *Israelites* to incur guilt by mistreating the sacrifices (22.16). Moreover, they are in the crucial position of mediating atonement to *an Israelite* (19.22). However, in terms of frequency, other types of interactions are more significant. While the *priests* certainly have the role of handling sacrifices and providing atonement, most interactions recorded emphasise what is required of the *priests*. They are to be cautious not to defile the name of *YHWH*, e.g., by becoming impure through contact with a dead person, by shaving their beards, or by marrying a prostitute or a divorced woman (21.1–7). Moreover, by mistreating the sacrifices, they also defile *YHWH's* name (22.2, 32). The

[46] 17.2 (×2); 21.1 (×2), 17, 24; 22.2, 3, 18 (×2).

[47] In addition, *Aaron* is to arrange the golden lampstand and the 12 breads (24.3, 8).

punishment for defiling the name of *YHWH* is to be 'cut off' from the presence of *YHWH* (22.3).

In sum, the *priests* form a distinct class in the community. They are set aside by *YHWH* for cultic service and are responsible only to *YHWH*. Nevertheless, within this particular text, there is a marked limit to the domain of the *priests*, since *YHWH* never speaks directly to the *priests*, but only to *Moses*, who is outside the priestly class. It is therefore fair to conclude that the *priests* have a 'facilitator' role in that they facilitate the relationship between *YHWH* and the Israelite community, although that relationship does not originate with the *priests* but with *YHWH* himself in his exodus-intervention. This conclusion has implications for the ongoing debate on the authorship of Leviticus. Watts (2013, 98) has argued that Aaronide priests produced the book in order to legitimise their cultic monopoly. However, while the priests do facilitate the sacrifices of the Israelites and thereby have an important role, the main focus of the text (or Lev. 17–26 at least) is not on the prerogatives of the priests but on their responsibilities. It is not likely that a priestly class authored this legislation which lends so much significance to direct interaction between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* outside the cultic activities of the *priests*, and which attributes divine revelation solely to a person outside the priestly class, namely *Moses*.[48]

[48] This conclusion aligns with Gane's (2015, 219) argument that "the priestly role is part of a tightly controlled ritual system that makes it possible for holy YHWH to reside among and be accessible to his faulty and often impure people for their benefit without harming them." Thus, according to Gane (2015, 220–21), "There is no question that Leviticus

5.2. Intermediate Participants

12 participants belong to the cluster called 'intermediate participants'. These participants are not as embedded in the network as the core participants. Nevertheless, they do interact with both core participants and peripheral participants, so they obtain a kind of middle position in the network. The 12 participants are *Moses*, *kinsmen*, *blasphemer*, *foreign nations*, *remnants*, *group of people*, *human being*, *brother*, *idols*, *sister*, *fellow's wife*, and *daughter*. Some of the participants have rather simple roles, such as the *kinsmen*, which almost always represent the extended family from which a member is removed because of capital punishment.[49] Several participants may be 'cut off' from their *kinsmen*, which makes *kinsmen* a somewhat structurally connected entity. This explains why the *kinsmen* belong to the 'intermediate participants', although they are entirely inactive. Other participants have been discussed with regard to core participants, e.g., *foreign nations* and *remnants* (§§5.1.1–5.1.2). The three women of this

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can be regarded as 'priestly' in the sense that much of its teaching concerns matters that involve priests. However, it is less certain that the author(s) belonged to the priestly profession, or at least primarily wrote in a priestly capacity. It is true that in Leviticus the priests are responsible for teaching laws to the other Israelites, but the priests receive these laws from Moses, whose reception of them from YHWH is what makes them authoritative (e.g., 10.11)."

[49] 17.4, 9, 10; 18.29; 19.8; 20.3, 5, 6, 18; 23.29, 30. The only exception is 21.15, where the *kinsmen* are the group of people to which the offspring of the high priest belongs and who are all defiled as a result of the high priest marrying a woman outside his own kin (see Milgrom 2000, 1820).

group will be discussed along with the peripheral women in the network (§5.3.1). Three participants will be discussed here, namely, *Moses*, the *brother*, and the *blasphemer*.

5.2.1. *Moses*

It may come as a surprise that *Moses* is not listed among the core participants of the network. After all, he is the mediator between *YHWH* and the *Israelites*, and he controls the divine revelation. Within the larger narrative of the Pentateuch, Moses is explicitly described as the covenantal 'broker' between YHWH and the people, e.g., in Exod. 20.19, where the people want Moses to mediate the covenant, so that they themselves can escape YHWH's direct speech (cf. Exod. 24.2; Deut. 5.25–27). In H, except for *YHWH's* command that *Moses* is to bring the *blasphemer* out of the camp for execution (Lev. 24.14), all *Moses'* actions are speeches. *Moses* speaks to the *Israelites,*[50] *Aaron,*[51] and *Aaron's sons*.[52] *Moses* is primarily the undergoer of *YHWH's* speeches.[53] However, he is also the central participant when the *witnesses* bring the *blasphemer* to him (24.11), and when the *Israelites* are to bring pure olive oil to him (24.2). To sum up, *Moses* has a central role in terms of

[50] 17.2 (×2), 8; 18.2 (×2); 19.2 (×2); 20.2; 21.24; 22.18 (×2); 23.2 (×2), 10 (×2), 24, 34, 44; 24.2, 15, 23; 25.2 (×2).

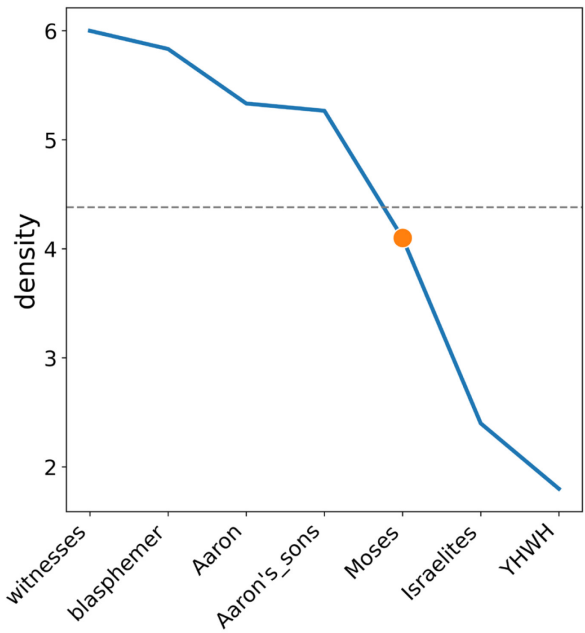
[51] 17.2 (×2); 21.17, 24; 22.2, 3, 18 (×2).

[52] 17.2 (×2); 21.1 (×2), 24; 22.2, 3, 18 (×2).

[53] 17.1; 18.1; 19.1; 20.1; 21.1, 16; 22.1, 17, 26; 23.1, 9, 23, 26, 33; 24.1, 13, 23; 25.1.

revelation, special legal cases, and in some cultic activities.[54] Important as these activities are, they are not enough to cast *Moses* as a main participant of the text with respect to a regular social network analysis. An elimination test of *Moses'* ego-network shows that *Moses* is only the third most important participant next to *YHWH* and the *Israelites* (Figure 30). Without *Moses*, the density would only be slightly smaller than in the original network.[55]

Figure 30: Elimination test of *Moses*' ego-network



[54] Moses is also commanded to bake 12 loaves and put them on the table in the Sanctum. However, Aaron is to regularly arrange the table every sabbath, and the people is to deliver the bread, so Moses is apparently only involved at the time of the inauguration of the cult (see Milgrom 2001, 2095).

[55] The original density of *Moses'* ego-network is 4.38, whereas the removal of *Moses* results in a density of 4.10.

Moses has a slightly more important role than *Aaron* and *Aaron's sons* in this subset of the network, because *Moses* has more interactions with the *Israelites* and the *sojourner*, the latter not interacting with the priests at all. However, the *Israelites* and *YHWH* are much more important for the cohesion of the network than is *Moses*. For one thing, the *Israelites* and *YHWH* interact with many of the same participants as *Moses*, including the *blasphemer*, *Aaron*, and *Aaron's sons*. Secondly, while *Moses* is clearly a broker for revelation, the *Israelites* and *YHWH* interact in multiple other ways. Their relationship, being covenantal in nature, is multifaceted and involves both negative and positive interactions. On the positive side, the *Israelites* can offer sacrifices to *YHWH* without the mediation of *Moses*. Strictly speaking, the sacrifices are brought to the priests, who are the sacrificial mediators.[56] However, in many cases, *YHWH* is explicitly mentioned as the beneficiary or recipient of those sacrifices, so even delivering sacrifices to the cult may be viewed by the author as a direct interaction between the offeror and *YHWH*. While the facilitating role of the priests is implied and often fleshed out, in many cases the priests are simply omitted, e.g., "and you shall bring fire offerings to YHWH" (23.25).[57] The number of such cases suggests that the immediacy of the covenantal relationship between *YHWH* and the

[56] The priestly 'brokerage' role is emphasised in Lev. 22, where the priests are commanded to treat the sacrificial gifts of the Israelites properly.

[57] See also 19.5; 22.2, 3, 15, 22 (×2), 24, 29; 23.8, 16, 27, 36 (×2), 37, 38.

Israelites should not be overlooked. The intimate relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* is also underscored by *YHWH's* unmediated response to the *Israelites'* conduct, already elaborated upon in §5.1.1.

Perhaps the most important expression of the immediate relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites* is the recurrent reference to *YHWH's* deliverance of the people from Egypt[58] and his granting a land to them.[59] In neither of these cases is *Moses* mentioned as the mediator, despite his obvious role, according to Exodus, in confronting the Egyptian Pharaoh and delivering the people from bondage.

Nevertheless, in order to present a balanced picture of the role of *Moses*, we must consider his role in the control network (see §3.5). While *Moses* is only an intermediate participant with a limited brokerage role in the regular network, he is the second-most important participant in the control network, because he controls most of the interactions recorded. The elimination plot of the control network illustrates this (Figure 31). While *Moses* is only the sixth-most important participant with respect to the cohesion of the regular network (see Figure 22 above), he is the second-most important participant in the control network. Thus, to explain the role of participants in a text more accurately, their role in the social network must be balanced by their role in the discourse structure.

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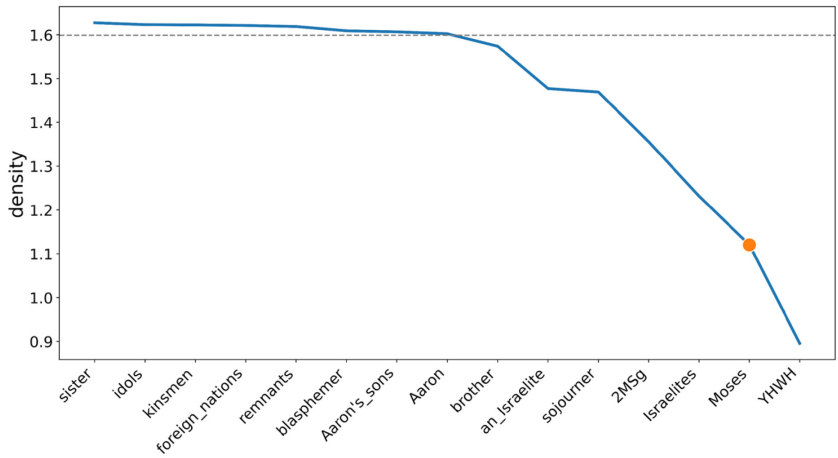
[58] 19.36; 22.33; 23.43; 25.38, 42, 55; 26.13.

[59] 18.3; 20.22, 24; 23.10; 25.2, 38.

Figure 31: Elimination plot of the entire 'control network', displaying the 15 most important participants for the cohesion of the network

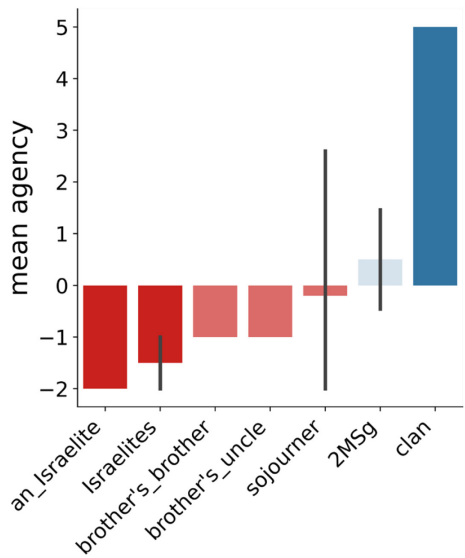


To summarise, in spite of *Moses'* obvious role as a mediator or 'broker' of the revelation of *YHWH*, he is not particularly important in the regular social network. Even in his own ego-network, the *Israelites* and *YHWH* are far more important. If *Moses* were removed from the network, the network would remain relatively stable, and the *Israelites* and *YHWH* would remain closely connected. This view is balanced by *Moses'* role in the control network, where he is the second-most important participant. We are thus left with a tension between an ordinary SNA of *Moses'* role and a discourse-structural analysis. To be sure, much interaction takes place between *YHWH* and the *Israelites*, but these interactions are nevertheless the content of *Moses'* speeches. In that sense, he is the 'broker' of divine blessings and curses, and he is more important than the *priests* with respect to authority. We are thus justified in claiming *Moses* to be a mediator.

5.2.2. The *Brother/Fellow*

The *brother* receives much attention in H. In the network analysis, the references to אָחִיךָ ‘your brother’ are collocated with references to nearly synonymous participants, namely, רֵעֲךָ ‘your fellow’, עֲמִיתֶךָ ‘your fellow countryman’, and בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ ‘sons of your people’, all of which occur in parallel in 19.17–18 (see chapter 3, §3.8). Understood this way, the *brother* is not merely a close family member, but represents any person belonging to the *Israelites*, literally, ‘the sons of Israel’. Indeed, the sons of Israel are portrayed as an extended family comprising the entire people. The *brother* is related to three groups of participants, including his close relatives (*brother's brother*, *brother's uncle*, and *clan*), members of Israelite society (*Israelites*, *2MSg*, and *an Israelite*), and the *sojourner* (see Figure 32). As such, the *brother* is constructed as a figure in the social sphere between family, society, and foreigners.

Figure 32: Mean agency invested by the *brother*



The mean agency invested by the *brother* is generally relatively low (see Figure 32). His only highly agentive interaction is with his *clan*, to which he returns after his release from debt slavery (25.41). Understood this way, the jubilee redemption is an act of empowering the *brother*, and his regained status as a free agent is expressed directly in his autonomous return to the *clan*. Most of the interactions of the *brother* are interactions with *2MSg*, one of the addressees of the text. First of all, *2MSg* is prohibited from oppressing, slandering, and hating the *brother* (19.16, 17). On the contrary, he must treat him with justice and honestly reprove him if he finds anything wrong with him (19.15, 17). In short, *2MSg* is to love his *brother* as he loves himself (19.18). These commands show that the *brother* is to be seen as an equal with equal legal rights. This concern is concretised in the jubilee discourse (Lev. 25). Here, the *Israelites* are commanded not to oppress one another (lit. 'one's brother') when they sell or buy property from one another in case of debt (25.14). In this chapter, the *brother* is portrayed as a fellow Israelite who has fallen into poverty and reaches out for help from *2MSg* (25.35). When the *brother* reaches out, *2MSg* is to seize him (25.35) and help him. He can buy his property but not in perpetuity (25.23). Moreover, if the situation of the *brother* is worsened and he needs to borrow money, *2MSg* may lend him money but not take interest (25.36–37). Finally, if the financial situation of the *brother* is so grave that he needs to sell himself to *2MSg* as a debt slave, *2MSg* must treat him not as a slave but as a hired worker (25.39), and he may not treat the *brother* with violence (25.43). Under these circumstances, the *brother's brother* (25.48) and the *brother's uncle* (25.49) must be

allowed to redeem the *brother* from his debt slavery. In this chapter, the *brother* also has interactions with the *sojourner*. The *sojourner* is depicted as a rich man to whom the *brother* may reach out for help. The *sojourner* can buy him as a debt slave, but he is not allowed to treat him with violence (25.53). Indeed, the command is not directed to the *sojourner*, but to *2MSg*, who is commanded not to allow the *sojourner* to treat the *brother* with violence. Thus, while the author does not assume that *2MSg* has authority over the rich *sojourner*, he demands that *2MSg* take responsibility for the *brother*, even when he is in the hands of the *sojourner*.

In sum, the *brother* represents a member of Israelite society. He is not actively involved in many interactions and does not pose a threat to the society. Rather, the aim of the text is to protect the legal rights of the *brother*, as well as to constrain the power of *2MSg* who is thereby constructed as a person in a powerful position with the ability to take advantage of marginalised and impoverished fellows. In the jubilee discourse, in particular, the *brother* is portrayed as a lonely figure on the margins of family and society. He can hope that his family will relieve him, but he has no guarantee. The *brother* may even drift away from the community and reach out to the *sojourner* in desperation. Indeed, we may construe the *brother* as a 'transitional' figure with an innate tendency towards drifting away from the community. The lawgiver wants to retain the order of society by regulating the behaviour of the *Israelites* towards their needy fellows. The interactions between *2MSg* and the *brother* thus reflect the author's expectations of equality between the members of the covenantal

community, explicitly argued for in the frequent references to the common history of the *Israelites*, the exodus (19.36; 22.33; 23.43; 25.38, 42, 55; 26.13). The *Israelites* are not to jeopardise the covenantal community by oppressing fellow members or closing their eyes to injustice.

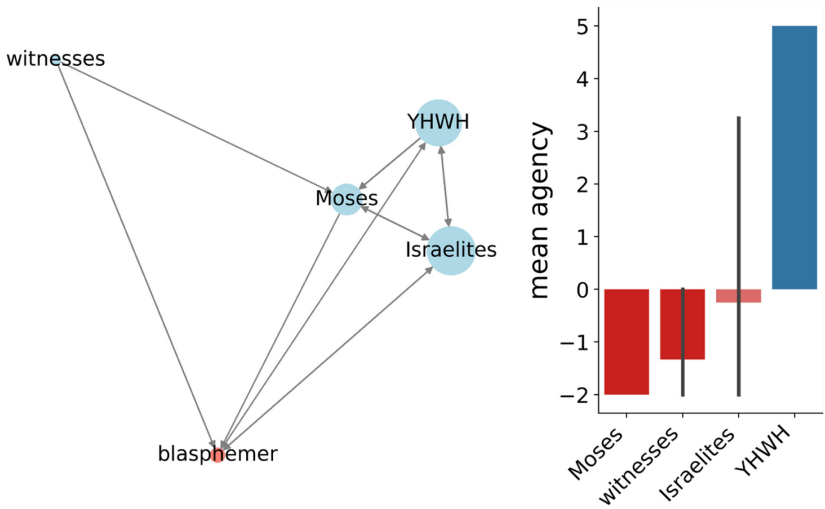
5.2.3. The *Blasphemer*

The *blasphemer* is an intriguing figure in the Holiness Code. Curiously, he is never named, but is consistently designated הַמְקַלֵּל 'the curser' (24.14, 23). By contrast, his mother is known as 'Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan' (24.11). The *blasphemer* has been considered a paradigmatic outsider, based on the gendered language applied in the portrayal of this figure (Rooke 2015; see also chapter 2, §6.6). Within the network structure, however, the *blasphemer* occurs among the intermediate participants. After all, he is actively involved in an event, and he has interactions with *YHWH, Moses*, and the *Israelites* (see Figure 33). The structural roles in the network analysis do not take into account the content of the interactions, only the agency invested. It is crucial, of course, whether the ties are positive or negative.

The ties of the *blasphemer* are entirely negative. His only act, apart from 'going out in the midst of the Israelites', is the cursing of *YHWH* (24.11). *YHWH* never responds directly to the blasphemy, but *witnesses* to the event bring the *blasphemer* to *Moses* and into custody (24.11–12). *YHWH's* response is given to *Moses*, who is ordered to bring the *blasphemer* outside the camp to stone him (24.14). The execution is carried out by the entire com-

munity (labelled *Israelites* in the network), who bring out the *blasphemer* and stone him to death, after the *witnesses* have laid their hands on his head (24.14, 23).

Figure 33: Ego-network (left) and mean agency invested by the *blasphemer* (right)



In short, the entire story of the *blasphemer* is fraught with enmity. It is not accurate, however, to describe the *blasphemer* as a paradigmatic outsider in the sense of being a "victim of impossible demands" (so Holguín 2015, 99). The relatively high agency invested by the *blasphemer* in his interactions sets him apart from other so-called marginalised participants (e.g., the *women*). Rather, the *blasphemer* is cast as a rebel who poses a threat to the community, not because of his ethnic origins, but because of his blasphemy against *YHWH*.[60] In other words, the pericope describes

[60] As explained in chapter 2, §6.6, the confusion pertaining to the case of the blasphemer relates to whether half-Israelites are subject to Israelite law. Since the blasphemer is only half Israelite, he could have been

a rebellion gone wrong. The first event recorded is when the *blasphemer* 'goes out' (וַיֵּצֵא G) in the midst of the Israelite camp. At the end, he is himself brought outside the camp (וַיּוֹצִיאוּ H) by the *Israelites*. That the *blasphemer* should not be understood simply as a paradigmatic outsider is underscored by his structural role in the discourse. In fact, in the so-called 'control network', the *blasphemer* plays a rather important role, which is indicated by his relatively high outdegree score (see Figure 17 in §3.5). By initiating the narrative of 24.10–23, the *blasphemer* 'controls' (or, at least, is responsible for) the narrative, in a total of 21 interactions.

In short, the *blasphemer* is not the paradigmatic outsider, but the paradigmatic rebel, and the function of the *blasphemer* within the Holiness Code is to illustrate what the community needs to do when the borders of the covenantal community are transgressed. Since the *lex talionis* applies equally to native *Israelites* and non-Israelite *sojourners*, it also applies to the half-Israelite *blasphemer*. Indeed, it is emphasised that the law applies to anyone within the domain of the covenantal community, regardless of ethnic descent.

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exempt from punishment. The divine speech prompted by the blasphemy, however, states that both Israelites and non-Israelite sojourners are within the scope of the law (24.16, 22). By implication, therefore, the half-Israelite blasphemer must be punished insofar as the blasphemy was pronounced in the midst of the camp (24.10).

5.3. Peripheral Participants

Most of the participants are situated in the periphery of the network. They are generally characterised by having minimal ties to other participants, and most of them only occur once or twice in the text. Of the 40 participants, 17 are women.[61] Another three women are in the group of intermediate participants (*sister*, *fellow's wife*, and *daughter*), but all women will be treated as one group below. Most other participants have already been mentioned in relation to core or intermediate participants, including the *witnesses* in relation to the *blasphemer* (§5.2.3), the *lay person* in relation to the *priests* (§5.1.4), and the *brother's brother*, *brother's uncle*, and *clan* in relation to the *brother* (§5.2.2). Therefore, apart from the *women*, only the *father* and a small group of vulnerable members of the society (the *poor,* the *blind*, the *deaf*, and the *elderly*) will be considered.

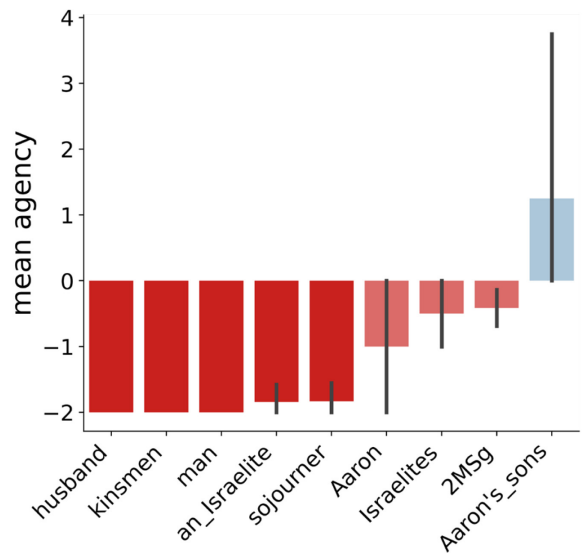
5.3.1. The *Women*

There are 20 women in the H-network, about one third of the human/divine participants. The vast majority of these are relatives of the core participants of the text, in particular *2MSg*, the

[61] These include the *mother*, *virgin*, *widowed/expelled/defiled woman*, *handmaid*, *father's wife*, *aunt*, *aunt-in-law*, *daughter-in-law*, *granddaughter*, *woman and her mother*, *man/woman*, *woman in menstruation*, *relative*, *woman*, *woman and her daughter*, *granddaughter of woman*, and *sister of woman*. The remaining peripheral participants are the *corpse*, *2MPl*, *lay person*, *witnesses*, *father*, *offspring*, *slave*, *sons of sojourners*, *children*, *no-one*, *male*, *purchaser*, *deaf*, *blind*, *poor*, *rich*, *elderly*, *son of brother*, *brother's brother*, *clan*, *brother's uncle*, *man*, and *husband*.

Israelites, *an Israelite*, the *sojourner*, *Aaron*, and *Aaron's sons*. Indeed, all core participants but *YHWH* interact with at least some of the women in the network. Although it might not be entirely correct to treat the women as a group, given that some of the women are related to the priests and others to regular Israelites, it is nevertheless the case that, by considering the women as a group, we can investigate whether a pattern of interaction and social status emerges. In general, the *women* have low mean agency scores in the network, indicating that they are typically portrayed as semantic undergoers rather than instigating actors. Curiously, the participants with whom the *women* are most agentive—although still low agency—are all core members of the network (see Figure 34).

Figure 34: Mean agency invested by the *women*



The three participants with whom the *women* have the lowest mean agency (-2) are the *husband*, the *kinsmen*, and the *man*.

These are all peripheral participants, so the interactions to report are scarce. The interactions include expulsion by the *husband* (21.7), removal from their *kinsmen* by means of capital punishment (20.18), and engagement to a *man* (19.20). The remaining participants are all core participants, and the *women* have a little higher mean agency with this group. The most common interaction is sexual intercourse, expressed with the verbs קרב G 'approach', גלה D 'uncover' [nakedness], ראה G 'see' [nakedness], נתן G 'give' [copulation], and שׁכב G 'lie with'. Related interactions are לקח G 'take' (here, 'marry') and נאף G 'commit adultery'. *An Israelite* and the *sojourner* are both prohibited from having sexual intercourse with close relatives, as well as the wife of another man (i.e., the *fellow's wife*), although, to be sure, the prohibitions are given as case laws in Lev. 20 and not as apodictic prohibitions.[62] The apodictic prohibitions are given in Lev. 18 with *2MSg* as the addressee.[63] The marriage laws are stricter for *Aaron*, who is obliged to marry a *virgin* of his own kin (21.13, 14). *Aaron's sons* are not explicitly commanded to marry a *virgin* of their own kin, but are prohibited from marrying prostituted, defiled, or divorced women (21.7). The overall concern of the incestual laws and marriage laws is the threat of defilement related to these illicit interactions. Defilement compromises the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites*, as explicitly stated in the opening and final verses of Lev. 18 (1–5, 24–30). For this reason, there is capital punishment for transgressing the incestual laws. Both

[62] 20.10 (×2), 11 (×2), 12, 14, 17 (×2), 18 (×2), 20 (×2), 21 (×2).

[63] 18.7 (×2), 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (×2), 15 (×2), 16, 17 (×3), 18 (×2), 19 (×2), 20; 20.19.

male and female perpetrators are put to death, either by the *Israelites* (20.14, 27) or, in one case, by *2MSg* (20.16). The threat of defilement also affects other interactions. Firstly, *2MSg* may not defile his *daughter* by making her a prostitute (19.29). A similar law is given with regard to the *daughter* of a priest, who may not defile her father by becoming a prostitute (21.9). Secondly, the *priests* may not defile themselves by coming close to a dead relative (21.1–3, 11), except that *Aaron's sons* may undergo defilement for a virgin sister, because she has no husband (21.3). The *mother* stands out in the group of *women*. She is the only woman explicitly to be feared, or revered, by the *Israelites* (19.3). Moreover, if *an Israelite* or a *sojourner* curses his *mother* (or his *father*), he will be put to death (20.9). Finally, the *Israelites* are allowed to buy *handmaids*, as well as male slaves, from the surrounding nations (25.44).

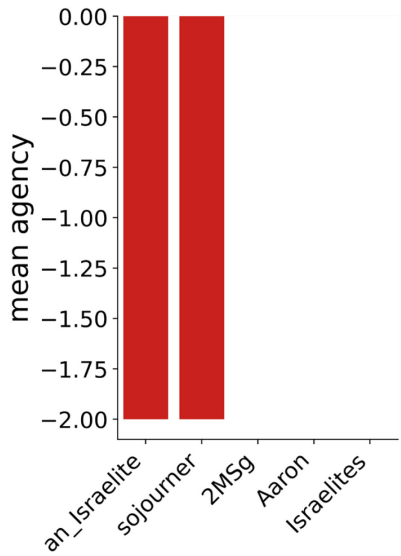
In sum, in light of the SNA, the purpose of the text is not so much to list the legal rights of the *women*, nor to objectivise the *women* as male property. Rather, it is the interactions themselves that are relevant, insofar as incestual relationships (as well as homoerotic and bestial acts) compromise the ritual and moral purity of the people and thereby the covenantal relationship with *YHWH*. Therefore, to preserve the ritual purity of the people, the interactions between men and women are constrained. If they deliberately incur defilement, both women and men are held accountable and are most often punished by death. In this respect, the text is not so much concerned with the rights and obligations

of the *women*, but rather the obligations of the Israelite addressees, because the interactions between men and women have critical implications for the relationship with *YHWH*.

5.3.2. The *Father*

The *father* occurs a few times in the network, only in relation to core participants, namely, *an Israelite*, the *sojourner*, *2MSg*, *Aaron*, and the *Israelites*. His mean agency is low, as illustrated in Figure 35.

Figure 35: Mean agency invested by the *father*



The intention of the discourse appears to be to protect the status and rights of the *father*. *An Israelite* is prohibited from cursing his *father* (as well as his *mother*), although indirectly, by means of a case law (20.9). The same law applies to the *sojourner*. Moreover, by prohibiting *2MSg* from having intercourse with his *mother*, whose 'nakedness' is said to be the 'nakedness' of the *father*, the

father's rights are protected (18.7). Rather than dishonouring their *father*, the *Israelites* are commanded to fear, or revere, their *father* as well as their *mother* (19.3). The only recorded exception to this call for reverence regards *Aaron*, who is prohibited from coming near his deceased *father* (21.11), most likely as part of a mourning rite (Wenham 1979, 291).

In sum, the *father* plays a peripheral role in the network and is never active. Nevertheless, the *father* is important in terms of delineating the domain of the Israelites (including *2MSg*, the *Israelites*, and *an Israelite*) and the *sojourner*. Their roles and social space are limited by their obligations to the *father*.

5.3.3. The *Deaf*, *Blind*, *Poor*, and *Elderly*

A certain group of peripheral participants are particularly vulnerable. To this group belong the *deaf*, the *blind*, the *poor*, and the *elderly*. Never active in the network, these participants are only connected with the individual Israelite (*2MSg*). Apparently, their function is to demarcate the domain of *2MSg* and illustrate his social obligations to vulnerable members of the community. Accordingly, *2MSg* may not curse the *deaf* (19.14), nor put stumbling blocks in front of the *blind* (19.14). In other words, *2MSg* is prohibited from taking advantage of the disabled—just as he is prohibited from taking advantage of his debt-burdened *brother* (see §5.2.2). His interaction with the *poor*, however, shows that there must be a limit to his generosity. On the one hand, he is obliged to leave the leftovers of the harvest for the *poor* (19.10; 23.22). On the other hand, he is not allowed to "lift the face of the poor" (19.15), that is, he is not to favour the *poor* in legal

cases, just as he is not allowed to favour the *rich* (19.15). Even if he sympathises with the *poor* in his legal struggle, *2MSg* is not allowed to bend the law. Finally, *2MSg* is to "honour the faces of the old" and to "arise before the aged" (19.32). Although the *elderly* may very well enjoy the respect that follows from a long life, the command to honour him presupposes a tendency to the opposite. Just as the *father* may be dishonoured (see above), the status of the *elderly* may be violated by the potentially presumptuous *2MSg*. Thus, the aim of the law is to preserve the respect deserved by the *elderly*, as well as the dignity of disabled people, as represented by the *deaf* and the *blind*.

6.0. Holiness and the Social Network

The detailed explorations of the participant roles in the Holiness Code network support the initial statistical analysis. That is, the participants can reasonably be divided into three groups based on frequency, connectivity, and agency. The most complex relationships revolve around the core members: *YHWH*, the *Israelites*, *2MSg*, *an Israelite*, the *sojourner*, and the *priests*. This is not unexpected, since the text is composed of divine speeches to the *Israelites* and, indirectly, to *2MSg*. Most other participants are presented in relation to the *Israelites* and *2MSg*. *Moses* has the role of a mediator by whom the divine law is revealed to the people. The *priests* are facilitators of the ongoing relationship between *YHWH* and the people through their special obligations concerning purity. The *sojourner* represents the border of the covenantal community, while the *blasphemer* is the paradigmatic rebel who

curses *YHWH* from within the covenantal community. The peripheral participants, the *women*, the *father*, the *deaf*, the *blind*, the *poor*, and the *elderly*, serve to demarcate the domain or agency of the addressees. Notably, therefore, the social network derived from the Holiness Code is not a neutral representation of an ancient Israelite society, but rather the author's depiction of a community with specific emphasis on the relationship between *YHWH* and the *Israelites*. The text appears to presuppose a tendency for *2MSg*, in particular, to extend his domain—in terms of wealth and power—at the expense of vulnerable members of his family and society. The purpose of the text, then, is to counter this tendency by commanding the addressees to view vulnerable members of the society as equals and persons with equal legal rights.

What, then, is the relationship between social domains, values of equality, and holiness? The Holiness Code is not merely a civil law, but a religious law composed of divine speeches and centred around the command to be holy (Lev. 19.2). How does the social network analysis relate to the religious perspective of the text? To begin with, religion is not only a partial concern of the law, in addition to social concerns. What makes the Holiness Code so interesting is that it integrates society and cult. Lev. 19 is a prime example, with its mix of cultic and social prescriptions. Holiness has to do with order and distinctions, the most important separation being that between the holy and profane. The Holiness Code claims that Israel is holy because it has been "separated" from the nations (Lev. 20.25), and therefore the people

have to separate the clean from the unclean to protect their holiness (Lev. 20.24, 26).[64] Within the priestly worldview, different degrees of holiness pertain to the spatial, temporal, and social spheres (Jenson 1992). These gradations of holiness, however, do not correspond to the social clusters of the social network analysis. On the contrary, the legal obligations of the Holiness Code run across spheres of holiness, in order to advance a social order within a covenantal community inhabited by both the holy and the profane. More concretely, holiness interferes with the social network in at least three domains. Firstly, the aim of the Holiness Code is to advance equality among equals, that is, among the members of the covenantal community. The repeated references to the shared exodus story and the frequent designation of the fellow as *brother* accentuate the laws' concern that one's fellow be viewed as an equal despite social differences (see Højgaard 2023). In a sense, therefore, the laws are unequal, in that they benefit the *brother* more than the addressees. This tendency to benefit some participants more than others was already shown in the reciprocity analysis, where only a minority of the stipulations of the law were found to be mutual (§3.3). Yet, the inequality of the law is meant to counter the assumed inequality of society, so that the poor *brother* should not remain poor.

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[64] Thus, while Deuteronomy anchors the holiness of Israel firmly in the election of the people, and the priestly laws restrict holiness to the cult, the Holiness Code blurs or merges this discrepancy. Holiness is both anchored in the election of Israel *and* something to be continually attained by the whole people. In other words, for the Holiness Code, holiness is dynamic (Milgrom 2000, 1398).

Secondly, while the poor *brother* is a hypothetical person in the Holiness Code, ideally non-existent in the expected equal society, the *sojourner* is a real category. For the Holiness Code, the sojourner remains a legal and social concern insofar as he is, unlike the *brother*, outside the covenantal community. The Holiness Code does not aim to integrate *sojourners* and make them natives, in contrast to the aim of restoring the poor *brother* to the status of a real equal of the addressee. In other words, equality does not extend beyond the borders of the covenantal community. The *sojourner*, rather, demarcates the domain of the community, by being a foreigner who has settled (temporarily) in the society.

Thirdly, even within the equal covenantal community expected by the author of the Holiness Code, inequality persists. Despite its communal view of holiness, the Holiness Code does not abandon the strict cultic hierarchy established in P. The *priests* continue to enjoy a somewhat privileged role, and *Moses* continues to be the mediator of divine revelation. The author most likely agrees with the phrase מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים "a kingdom of priests" (Exod. 19.6) as a designation of the covenantal people, but certainly not at the expense of the Aaronide priesthood (see Otto 2009, 140). In other words, equality does not negate the existence of different roles. The *priests* do have certain exclusive privileges, but they are also constrained by exclusive restrictions in order to fulfil their particular role for the good of the community in its covenant with *YHWH*.