

STUDIA ANTIQUA

A STUDENT JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

VOLUME 10
FALL 2011

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
PROVO, UTAH

STUDIA ANTIQUA

A STUDENT JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

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STUDIA ANTIQUA

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ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations are taken from *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 8.4.

AASF	<i>Annales Academiae scientiarum fennicae</i>
AB	Anchor Bible
ArOr	<i>Archiv Orientalní</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago, 1999.
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford, 1907.
BMes	<i>Bibliotheca mesopotamica</i>
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca sacra</i>
BSC	Bible Student's Commentary
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CDME	<i>A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian</i> . Edited by R. O. Faulkner. Oxford, 1962.
COS	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by W. W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997–.

DDD	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst. Leiden, 1995.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
EBib	Etudes bibliques
EDNT	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. Grand Rapids, 1990–93.
EgT	<i>Eglise et théologie</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IB	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York, 1951–57.
IDB	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962.
IOS	<i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>
JAC	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JFSR	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</i>
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996.
NICNT	<i>New International Commentary on the New Testament</i>
NIGTC	<i>New International Greek Testament Commentary</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>

OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–76.
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

EDITOR'S PREFACE

This issue commemorates the tenth anniversary of *Studia Antiqua*. For this issue I have compiled an index of all articles published in *Studia Antiqua* since its inception in 2001 to the present issue. In this index we can see the breadth of articles published in *Studia* over the years. We can see all the articles written by a certain person. If, after viewing the index, readers desire to read any article listed there, they can consult studiaantiqua.byu.edu for online access to all past issues. We are currently working to make online access to the journal even more user friendly.

For this tenth anniversary edition of *Studia Antiqua*, we have attempted to contact all the past contributors, and they have written a miniature biography of where they are now. As these mini bios have trickled in, I have been amazed at what some of the past contributors, have accomplished in their careers. We were not able to hear back from all past contributors but a vast majority. This section may be used in tandem with the index in order to see which articles each of the following people published. I have also compiled a list of all the editors in chief of the journal throughout its history.

I am grateful that many of the past editors have contributed to this commemorative issue. I have asked past editors Dr. Matthew J. Grey and Breanne White to write a short piece about their experience with starting the journal and reviving the journal, respectively. Dr. Dana M. Pike has also written a reflections piece on his experience with the journal over the past ten years. Also, past editors Angela Wagner and Dan McClellan have respectively provided a book review and an article concerning Deuteronomy and the Septuagint.

As in the last issue, there are book reviews in this issue, and I have resubmitted book notices for this issue. I have endeavored to include a broad spectrum of interests in these book notices. These books are great candidates for future book reviews upon their release. *Studia Antiqua* welcomes book reviews of recent and pertinent books from all students. These book notices have been taken, in part or in whole, from the publishers' websites.

And of course, in this issue we have six wonderful articles. The first is a bit out of the ordinary—Daniel Becerra and Stephen Whitaker have written a piece about applying to graduate school in religious studies. Their words have been invaluable to me as I have navigated the application process. I hope they can serve valuable to many students throughout the years. Mary Abram has contributed a piece on the symbolism of the Mesopotamian rod and ring imagery. Emily Larsen has written an insightful piece about Minoan gender as illustrated through two pieces of Minoan art. I am grateful and excited to have

an art history submission and hope for much more diversity in the journal. Joshua J. Bodine, continuing his tradition of writing introductions to Hebrew Bible topics, has introduced us to the world of history and historiography in the Hebrew Bible, providing numerous references for further study. Also, Daniel McClellan offered the piece he presented at the 2010 Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting concerning the Septuagint and Deuteronomy. Finally, E. Odin Yingling has written a short piece about the *Acts of Peter*.

I am grateful to the departments who have donated funds in order to produce this journal. Their continued support makes this publishing venue possible. I am especially grateful to Dr. Dana M. Pike, who tolerates my countless demands, who reads so closely, and offers astute insights. He never gets enough credit for the immense work he does. Aside from his substantial academic contributions, he has served as a personal advisor, confidant, and listening ear to so many students over the years. He inherited the title of faculty advisor *pro tempore* to this journal and has gone above and beyond in assisting to make this a quality publication. I am also grateful to the Religious Studies Center, which houses the journal. The staff's supervision has ensured that this journal will continue for years to come. Joany Pinegar makes the world go around. Devan Jensen has reviewed these pages and suggested numerous tweaks. Thanks go to my fellow editors at the Religious Studies Center for tolerating my incessant computer and other technical questions; special thanks to Jonathon R. Owen, Jeff Wade, and Jake Frandsen.

I hope that this issue is worthy to be the tenth issue of this magnificent journal. After researching the history of this journal, I am humbled and grateful for those who have gone before me and provided this publication venue. I also hope that I am worthy to the task of serving as editor of this journal and that I have done a satisfactory job. Here's to another ten years of *Studia Antiqua*!

Alan Taylor Farnes
Editor in Chief, *Studia Antiqua*

REFLECTIONS ON THE BEGINNINGS OF *STUDIA ANTIQUA* ON ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY

MATTHEW J. GREY
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

It is a great pleasure for me to write some reflections on the beginnings of *Studia Antiqua* on its tenth anniversary. When a small group of undergraduates, including me, founded the journal a decade ago, we had high hopes for the ways in which it would foster student scholarship at Brigham Young University. As I have recently reminisced with individuals who participated in the journal's inception, several have expressed surprise and delight that it is still an active part of ancient studies on campus.¹ The journal has experienced a few setbacks and has evolved in many interesting ways over the last ten years, but its perseverance and its status in 2011 as an official publication of the BYU Religious Studies Center lends affirmation to the goals we set out to accomplish in 2001. Needless to say, the founding editors and early contributors of *Studia Antiqua* are quite pleased that it continues to fulfill its original intent by serving as a valuable academic resource for BYU students involved in the study of antiquity.

The founding of *Studia Antiqua* was directly related to the creation of a student organization for the study of the ancient world. In the fall of 2000, two BYU undergraduates—Thomas Spackman and Jason Combs—approached the Brigham Young University Student Association (BYUSA) with the idea of creating the BYU Ancient Studies Club. This club would provide a venue in which interested students of antiquity could associate with each other and listen to occasional faculty lectures. In April of 2001 the club held its first official elections and appointed Davin Anderson, an exceptionally talented student linguist, as president. That summer the club presidency expanded to include

1. In particular, I thank Robert Ricks, Mindy Anderson Jeppesen, Carli Anderson, and Bradley Ross for sharing some of their thoughts and memories of the journal's early days as I prepared this essay.

a vice-president (John Robinson), secretary (Robert Hunt), treasurer (Carli Anderson), and historian (Bradley Ross).

I had been acquainted with members of the presidency from shared Hebrew, Greek, and Near Eastern Studies classes, and in the Fall 2001 semester we began discussing ways in which the club could expand to include more student participation. For example, there was interest in providing a regular forum in which students could present their research in public lectures. As a part of these discussions, most of which occurred in the Hugh W. Nibley Ancient Studies Room in the Harold B. Lee Library, I suggested to the club presidency that they create a journal in which to publish this student research. They enthusiastically agreed and (as I should have anticipated before I made the suggestion!) appointed me as the general publication director of the club, thus making me responsible for overseeing the publication of student research.

As many of these activities went beyond the scope of the club's status with BYUSA, we decided to create a new society to better articulate the vision and facilitate the goals of the organization. That semester we changed the name of the club to the *BYU Student Society for Ancient Studies*, drafted a constitution to regulate the election and duties of society officers, and moved the organization from BYUSA to under the auspices of S. Kent Brown, the director of Ancient Studies at that time. This new society would provide a forum in which faculty and students from various disciplines and departments—History, Classics, Anthropology, Ancient Near Eastern Studies, and Ancient Scripture—could come together to present and evaluate student research dealing with the ancient world broadly defined.

Along with creating a new society, that semester we announced the establishment of its official semiannual publication—*Studia Antiqua: The Journal of the Student Society for Ancient Studies*.² The vision for *Studia Antiqua* ("Ancient Studies") was to provide an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to produce original research, experience the editing process (including receiving scholarly review and providing necessary revisions), and have a polished, published piece to put on their Curricula Vitae. We felt that this would be valuable preparation for future work in academics and would provide students with a professionally vetted writing sample as they applied for graduate programs or professional positions. We also hoped that the existence of such

2. To help organize, define, govern, and perpetuate the journal, we drafted a document—"By-Laws for the Governing and Operation of *Studia Antiqua*"—that outlined its purpose, content, submission process, editing, publication, promotion, funding, and distribution. This document was signed in October 2001 by S. Kent Brown as director of Ancient Studies, me as founding editor in chief, and the presidency of the Student Society for Ancient Studies.

a journal would expand the vision and raise the academic standards among ancient studies students on campus.

The initial production of *Studia Antiqua* proved to be a complicated, time consuming, and extremely rewarding experience.³ Before an issue of the journal could be published we needed funding to cover the necessary costs, members of the BYU faculty who would be willing to provide academic review, and, of course, student articles. Davin Anderson and I spent a busy week in the Fall 2001 semester meeting with various departments and entities on campus (History, Archaeology, Classics, Asian and Near Eastern Languages, Ancient Scripture, G.E. and Honors, and the Institution for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts [ISPART⁴]), sharing our vision of the journal, and soliciting funds. Each department graciously supported the project, provided money to publish the journal twice a year (every fall and winter semester), and appointed its own representative to serve on the journal's Faculty Review Board.⁵ In order to publish the journal's first issue in a timely manner we did not send out a call for papers as we would for subsequent issues. Rather, we invited a handful of selected students to submit papers they had already written for various classes. This resulted in five articles within the categories of Classical, Ancient Near Eastern, and Biblical Studies.

Work on the first issue also included an extensive process of editing, formatting, printing, and distribution. It would be several years before the student editors of *Studia Antiqua* had an official internship or paid position. In this early period the journal was completely dependent upon students who volunteered their time and efforts in order to turn our vision into a reality. I am personally very grateful to Robert Ricks, Mindy Anderson Jeppesen, and Andrea Ludwig—all incredibly talented and dedicated students, editors, and friends—who put in countless uncompensated hours as the managing editors for the first three to four issues of the journal. Each made valuable contributions to its content and format, and we all experienced a steep learning curve, as well as enjoyed a wonderful camaraderie, as we began this exciting project together.

3. Thoughts on this process as it unfolded can be found in the Society Update and the Editor's Preface at the beginning of each issue from 2001 to 2003. There was also a full-length article about the founding of the society and journal in the *Daily Universe* in 2002, but I have not been able to locate a copy of it or determine its precise date.

4. This entity has since become part of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship.

5. Technically, the funds from these various departments and entities were not made available in time for the journal's first issue, resulting in Ancient Studies solely providing the necessary funding for the initial publication. All subsequent publications, however, were made possible through the annual donations made by the various departments.

For the first issue we had to find facilities and software that would allow us to carry out the necessary editing and formatting. At the time, Robert Ricks was also an editor of the *Collegiate Post: BYU's Academic Fortnightly*, a student newspaper on campus whose facilities were located in the basement of the old Smith Family Living Center.⁶ Robert arranged for us to use those facilities after hours, which resulted in many late nights but allowed us to format the journal for publication. When the formatting was complete we took the content and funds to the BYU Printing Services for publication. As soon as printed copies of the journal came off the press, members of the society presidency distributed them throughout campus to interested students, faculty, and departments. Copies of the journal were also placed in the Harold B. Lee Library and were made available for purchase at the BYU Bookstore.

Although the first issue of *Studia Antiqua* (Fall 2001) was slightly belated (it was actually published in February of 2002), we were proud to have brought our vision of a student publication from conception to finished product in less than four months. We were also delighted that, with a few exceptions, students and faculty enthusiastically received the journal's first issue and began using it as incentive to improve course writing assignments. A personal highlight for me that semester was walking into the Ancient Studies office in the HBLL to see Hugh Nibley reading an article from it (I believe it was Ariel Bybee Laughton's piece "Vestal Virgins and Early Christian Asceticism") and hear him remark to Pat Ward (the Ancient Studies secretary at that time) on how excited he was to see such work being done by BYU students. Needless to say, this provided an additional motivation to continue work on the journal and further improve its quality.

Work on the second issue (Winter 2002) had already begun by the time the first issue was at the press, and we were considering new ways to develop the journal's content, format, and operation. For the second issue we extended an open call for student article submissions,⁷ expanded the student editorial staff (which was still working on a voluntary basis), added abstracts of student honors theses to the journal's content, and included student illustrations. By this time we had also moved out of the SFLC basement and were invited by Mel Thorne to work on the journal in the Humanities Publication Center, which offered vastly superior facilities and software. From here the project continued to expand. For the third issue (Fall 2002) we obtained an ISSN number for the

6. This building has since been torn down to make way for the new Joseph F. Smith Building.

7. Submissions at that time were initially reviewed and accepted for publication by the journal's Student Editorial Advisory Board, which consisted of the Student Society for Ancient Studies presidency.

journal from the Library of Congress and had a staff of ten student editors (an editor in chief, four managing editors, and five other staff members), each of which were now receiving university credit in the form of an editing internship. That issue contained seven articles, book reviews, a section featuring a discussion between a previous student author and an interested faculty member, and illustrations by Michael Lyon (a professional illustrator whose work adorns the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*).

By the Winter 2003 semester, I had been working on creating, developing, and producing the journal for over a year and a half. In addition, I was then preparing to graduate from BYU, get married, and begin graduate school at Andrews University (all of which I did in August 2003). A major concern I had during that semester was the perpetuation of the journal; obviously, I hoped that the work we had begun in 2001 would continue to be a part of student academics at BYU long after we had all moved on. For the fourth issue (Winter 2003) we added a second editor in chief, Tyson Yost, who would bring the journal into its third year. Tyson's most significant accomplishment was working with the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) to co-publish a special issue of *Studia Antiqua* (Summer 2003) which contained the proceedings of a student conference on Hebrew law in the Book of Mormon.⁸

Unfortunately I have not been able to determine precisely what happened to the journal (or the Student Society for Ancient Studies) in 2004. For some reason the journal was not published that year. (I suspect that this might have been connected to the decline of the society around this time.⁹) One issue of *Studia Antiqua* was published in the winter of 2005 with the subtitle being changed from "The Journal of the Student Society for Ancient Studies" to "The Student Journal for Ancient Studies," thus dropping its association with the (now defunct?) society. However, I know little about how this issue came to be, its connection to any student organization then on campus, or how its editorial process worked.

Despite this brief attempt at its resuscitation, *Studia Antiqua* appeared doomed to extinction after two years of not being published between the

8. This volume contains a lengthy introduction by John W. Welch on the conference and publication, and is still available for purchase through the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship.

9. Carli Anderson remembers that the society began to decline with the discontinuation of the old Near Eastern studies major and MA program. Even though the society's interests and activities included the entire ancient world, most of the society presidency members had been part of the old Near Eastern Studies program. When those ranks were no longer being filled society leadership and membership naturally declined.

springs of 2005 and 2007. I was delighted to hear that sometime in early 2007 Breanne White (who had been a student of mine in 2005 and 2006!¹⁰) and Daniel McClellan felt motivated to resurrect the journal and begin publishing it again on a semiannual basis. A number of changes were made to the journal in order to adapt it to the current situation on campus. For example, the Student Society for Ancient Studies no longer existed by this time. In its place had arisen the Students of the Ancient Near East (SANE), an organization to support students in the newly created Ancient Near Eastern Studies major. Although this organization was more narrowly defined than the former Student Society for Ancient Studies had been, SANE leadership took responsibility for publishing the journal. The organization retained the broad title of *Studia Antiqua* and the journal's original goal of publishing research from various parts of the ancient world, as indicated by its new and current subtitle, "A Student Journal for the Study of the Ancient World." This reinvention of the journal was soon accompanied by its new status as an official publication of the BYU Religious Studies Center and a paid internship offered to its student editor in chief (!). With a few minor adjustments along the way, the last eight issues of *Studia Antiqua* (Spring 2007–Fall 2011) have been published under these circumstances.¹¹

As I reflect on the beginnings of *Studia Antiqua* and its development over the last decade, I am proud of what we accomplished and delighted that it has exceeded the original goals we had for the project. This current issue (Fall 2011) will be the fourteenth issue of the journal over ten years. By my count, the journal has published articles, book reviews, or thesis abstracts from over a hundred student contributors, many of whom have since gone on to graduate school in related fields of study. In addition, the journal has provided almost forty student editors with the valuable experience of producing a high-quality publication. An online search of the journal shows that *Studia Antiqua* articles have been listed on resumes, discussed on blogs, and referenced on numerous library websites as being resources of student research on the ancient world. *Studia Antiqua* even has its own Facebook page,¹² a sign of success and relevance in our modern world!

10. In the summer of 2005 I taught as a part-time teacher in the Ancient Scripture Department at BYU. Breanne was in my Book of Mormon class that summer, and also attended a Biblical Hebrew course I taught for the Department of Asian and Near Eastern Languages in the summer of 2006.

11. Ultimately, placing the journal under the auspices of the Religious Studies Center has provided it with a stability and continuity that it was not able to attain under the Director of Ancient Studies. For an account of this transition see "Student Journal Explores the Ancient World," *BYU Religious Education Review* (Winter 2009): 22–23.

12. See <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Studia-Antiqua/133469226721929>.

As of 2011 the journal's content, look, quality, and exposure all exceed the expectations we had for it in 2001, and the future success of the journal promises to continue along this trajectory. I applaud the current student editors and authors whose efforts continue to make our vision a reality after ten years. I also express appreciation to those departments and members of the faculty who have supported *Studia Antiqua* throughout the last decade, as well as the Religious Studies Center for ensuring its continuous publication. With the help of these dedicated individuals and organizations, the original goal of promoting student research, writing, and publication at Brigham Young University will no doubt continue to flourish into the foreseeable future.

REVIVING *STUDIA ANTIQUA*: BRINGING THE JOURNAL BACK TO LIFE IN 2007

BREANNE WHITE

The second inception of *Studia Antiqua* began in a time of both turmoil and excitement for BYU students who studied the ancient Near East. The ANES major had been created—it and MESA taking the place of the extinct NES major—in the fall semester of 2005, and with it came the organization of the Students of the ancient Near East club, or SANE, as we liked to be called. Under Dr. Dana Pike's direction, SANE began to set up lectures and other activities related to the Ancient Near East. One of the first things on the to-do list was to find out what had happened to the student journal *Studia Antiqua*, which had been started by Matthew Grey in the fall of 2001, and continue the publication process.

At one of the first SANE officers' meetings, the question of how to re-initiate the publication process came up, since the journal seemed to have disappeared after the winter semester 2005 issue. No one even knew who the most recent editor in chief was or why publication had stopped. Furthermore, none of us knew where funding had come from for the journal, nor did we even know the process required to produce a student journal. However, we all agreed that with the new ANES major and SANE club, a journal would present BYU students with an incredible opportunity to be involved in the editing and publishing process, preparing them for graduate school and later academic publishing. So with the desire to provide a venue for these opportunities to BYU students, the SANE officers decided to find out if and how we could re-start the journal.

None of us realized, however, what a complicated process reinitiating publication would turn out to be. First we needed to find out what had happened to *Studia Antiqua* and if there were articles remaining or funding still available from the previous editions, and then we needed to find out the steps required

in preparing an edition for publication. Student articles needed to be written, submitted, and edited, and a staff of student editors and faculty reviewers needed to be assembled. The ever-present problem of funding needed to be solved, and someone needed to spearhead the whole process. This last problem had perhaps the easiest solution: I was the secretary for SANE at the time and was majoring in both English and ancient near eastern Studies. Because of this I was familiar with many editing and publication resources, so I was elected to find out how to restart the publication process.

One of my jobs during the summer of 2005 had been cleaning the old houses across the street from the bell tower, which used to hold university offices but which have now been razed. One of these houses held the student journal offices, and I often vacuumed a room with cupboards holding the materials for many of the student journals on campus. I remembered that one of these was labeled *Studia Antiqua*, so I figured that this would be the best place to start looking for the remains of the journal.

A visit to the student journal office revealed that the *Studia Antiqua* cupboard was still full of partially edited but unpublished student articles, submitted to the journal before it had stopped mid-year in 2005. Linda Adams, who was the faculty mentor for BYU student journals at the time and proved to be an invaluable source of information about the former *Studia Antiqua* as well as how to once again start publishing, mentioned that apparently the former editor in chief had been in an accident mid-semester, and with no one to push for the publication of the journal that semester, the journal had been set on a shelf, both literally and figuratively, and hadn't been touched since then.

This revelation presented us with both a problem and a solution: with all of these half-edited articles, our workload would hopefully be a bit lighter, and we might even be able to meet our late November deadline in order to publish by the end of fall semester 2006. However, most of the student authors had graduated and were no longer at BYU. I contacted them all with the proposition of publishing their essays in the new edition of the journal, and about half of them consented. Most of them were surprised to hear from me, assuming that since they hadn't heard anything in more than a year, the journal was no longer being published.

With several articles as a foundation for the journal, two more hurdles had to be overcome: a staff of editors needed to be gathered and new articles needed to be obtained. SANE officers sent out an e-mail and announced in their classes that we were looking for articles about anything related to the ancient world, short or long. For this edition we were more concerned about getting the journal published than we were about specific topics or lengths. I

made a desperate plea in both my English and my ANES classes for *anyone* that wanted editing experience to please join the *Studia Antiqua* staff, even if only for a semester. I was more than delighted when seven people, three English majors and four ANES majors, agreed to join the staff and work on editing articles.

With this team of editors, we began the process of sifting through the submitted articles and beginning the editing process. However, the problems of finding funding and faculty reviewers, as well as figuring out the details of designing and formatting the journal and preparing it for publication before finally printing it, proved to be much bigger hurdles than I had imagined. When I started the process, I naively thought that finding articles and editors would be the hardest part, while the actual publishing would be easy. Despite the amount of effort and enthusiasm that I put into reviving *Studia Antiqua*, however, deadlines weren't met, e-mails went unanswered, phone calls weren't returned, and several times people didn't show up to meetings that I had set up with them.

This process taught me a great deal about the difficulties involved in academic publishing and anything, really, that involves securing funding and coordinating with many different people. Furthermore, while I was enthusiastic about the journal and the publishing process, I was incredibly busy with school and work commitments and was preparing to leave the country for a study broad. By the end of the fall 2006 semester, I was very disheartened. The articles were nowhere near being ready for publication. The journal hadn't even been formatted, and I was still unfamiliar with the complete publishing and printing process. More than half of my staff of editors didn't have time to work with the journal the next semester, and the Jerusalem Center had just reopened after six years of being closed and I was leaving in January to study abroad there. This was great news for me, but I felt that it was a sure death sentence for the journal, as I had been working as editor in chief the past semester and I wasn't sure if the process would continue after I left.

Thankfully, one of the editors from that semester, Dan McClellan, volunteered to work as editor in chief during winter 2007 and see if he could prepare the journal to be published by April. In all honesty, I was relieved to leave such a source of frustration and disappointment for a semester. I hoped that Dan would be able to find a way to overcome the hurdles that had delayed publication up to this point, but I didn't actually think that the journal would be published by the time I came back. Four months in Jerusalem with no news confirmed my fears about the unfinished status of *Studia Antiqua*.

However, when I returned from Israel I was shocked and delighted to see that the journal had indeed been published in April 2007, just a few days before the end of finals. Dr. Pike had graciously assisted with finding faculty reviewers for the articles, and funding had been provided by the ANES major, the Students of the Ancient Near East club, and the Religious Studies Center.

I was informed later that Mel Thorne, the director of the Humanities Publication Center, had offered editorial assistance to help with the publication of *Studia Antiqua*, and Dr. Stephen Ricks had volunteered to be the faculty advisor for the journal that semester, both of whom provided much-needed insight and direction. Furthermore, in March of 2007, Dr. Dana Pike, Dr. Andrew Skinner, and Dr. Richard Holzapfel had met together to discuss funding options for the journal and had decided that the Religious Studies Center would take responsibility for the continued publishing of *Studia Antiqua*, offering a paid internship for the editor in chief and permanent funding for the journal. This step ensured that *Studia Antiqua* would always be available for student publishing without having to worry about the publication of the journal being discontinued because funding ran out or something happened to the editor in chief (as had been the problem before).

Now, several years later, the publication of the journal continues. The Religious Studies Center, Mel Thorne and Linda Adams from the BYU Humanities Publication Center, and Dr. Dana Pike deserve special thanks, as do Matthew Grey and the other student editors that have so diligently worked on a time-consuming and often thankless task. Because of their contributions, *Studia Antiqua* continues to be a venue for student scholarship about the ancient world, preparing students for graduate work and further research and study. I personally am thrilled to see that *Studia Antiqua* is celebrating its ten-year anniversary and feel that the journal will only improve, surpassing expectations in its scope and scholarship over the next several years.

STUDIA ANTIQUA AT TEN YEARS OLD

DANA M. PIKE

My brief contribution to this ten-year commemoration of *Studia Antiqua* provides me the opportunity to reflect on the key contributions of several students and faculty who are primarily responsible for the continuing existence and current health of this undergraduate student journal.

Although I was teaching at BYU when *Studia Antiqua* was born in 2001 and I was aware of the journal during its first few years of existence, I had no involvement with it. However, due to my serving as the coordinator of BYU's interdepartmental Ancient Near Eastern Studies major since its inception (Fall 2005), I have been in a position to observe the interest expressed and the challenges encountered by those ANES students who have brought this journal back from near death.

As was mentioned by Breanne White (pp. xix–xxii), *Studia Antiqua* was revived and reinvigorated by students majoring in ancient Near Eastern studies. However, it is *not just* an ANES journal (if it was, it would not have a Latin name!). As Dr. Matthew Grey indicates (see pp. xi–xvii), *Studia Antiqua* was created to provide publication opportunities for all BYU students interested in ancient studies generally (pre–C.E. 600). This initial vision remains unchanged. Publishing in the journal is still open to any BYU undergraduate student researching any ancient topic, thus fulfilling its creators' dream. Since its rebirth in 2007, students majoring in ANES, Classics, history, art history, and other departments on campus have published their work in *Studia Antiqua*. I hope this trend of students from a variety of disciplines submitting their work to *Studia Antiqua* will continue.

Studia Antiqua has provided valuable training for those who have served as student editors. It has been gratifying to me to see the more recent student editors—Breanne White, Daniel McClellan, Angela Wagner, David Peterson,

and Alan Taylor Farnes—devote such time and energy to the production of this quality undergraduate journal. Their commitment has been exemplary, and it is much appreciated.

Studia Antiqua has also provided a valuable opportunity for students to have the experience and satisfaction of not only researching and writing papers, but polishing and publishing them. Publishing in a journal is good for one's ego, but more importantly it demonstrates to graduate school committees and future employers that students who had their work published had the discipline and drive to go beyond, in at least this one way, mere course requirements. "Getting published" is part of the "extra mile" of an undergraduate student's experience that helps set them apart.

The past five years in the life of *Studia Antiqua* have not been easy. In addition to the challenges of resuscitating the journal, there have been the ongoing challenges of soliciting quality submissions from students, getting faculty-level review of submissions, and deadlines to meet. It is rewarding, however, to see how far the journal has come and the commitment that has been made to its continued existence.

On 16 March 2007, Drs. Terry Ball (then and still dean of Religious Education and agent dean of Ancient Near Eastern Studies), Andrew Skinner (then director of the Maxwell Institute of Religious Studies), Richard Holzapfel (then director of the Religious Studies Center), and I met in Dr. Skinner's office to discuss the value of and possible support for *Studia Antiqua*. At that meeting it was decided that rather than having student editors of the journal pursue editing support available through the Humanities Publication Center (then directed by Dr. Mel Thorne) it would be more productive in the long term to designate one student intern slot at the Religious Studies Center to be occupied by the student editor of *Studia Antiqua*. This would provide not only editing training and support, but also the equipment on which to produce the journal and some financial assistance for the student editors.

I express appreciation to Drs. Ball and Holzapfel for their support of this initiative. This development moved the journal from a labor of love, extra-load volunteer effort on the part of previous student editors to a more established position in which the student editor receives training *and* pay for doing what they love. This move has had a profound effect on the production values and sustainability of the journal.

I also express appreciation to those campus units which have provided funding for the ongoing publication costs of the journal: Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Students of the Ancient Near East, Anthropology, Classics, History, Humanities, and, significantly, the Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship,

which, although it has no student majors, is a regular supporter of the journal because it recognizes the value it adds to students' education (some of whom may become future contributors to the Institute's publications). The Maxwell Institute's commitment of financial support for *Studia Antiqua* began in 2007 under Dr. Skinner.

Thanks are also due to the faculty members who have served as advisors to *Studia Antiqua*, including Drs. Stephen Ricks, Kent Jackson, Michael Rhodes (now retired), and myself.

Finally, special thanks are due to the journal's current student editor, Alan Taylor Farnes, for ably helping trace the life story of *Studia Antiqua*. Landmarks such as this are worth commemorating. Well done, Alan.

Given its current, firmly established situation, I trust that ten years from now this journal will be alive and well, continuing to provide an important publishing opportunity for students at BYU who have interests in antiquity. Happy tenth birthday, *Studia Antiqua*! And best wishes for a long, bright life.

APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND COGNATE FIELDS

DANIEL BECERRA AND STEPHEN WHITAKER

Applying to graduate school in religious studies will be one of the most stressful times of a student's college career. It is our hope that the following paper will offer a concise reference guide to those who are preparing to apply in the coming season. Specifically, we will focus on applications to master's level programs in biblical/religious studies or a cognate field, as these are the programs with which we are immediately familiar, although we will attempt to highlight approaches that could, we hope, successfully translate into PhD program admissions as well. Although there is no one way to compose successful statements of purpose, establish a rapport with potential advisors, and choose one's recommenders wisely, after months of emailing graduate students and meeting with experienced professors, our efforts have proven advantageous at admissions decision time. We felt that it would be helpful for others facing a similar process to compile some of the advice that we found most helpful. Thus, we offer what we have learned from our experiences.

Getting Started

Be Interested

The first step of the application process is to be interested in something. Many students might feel as if their general knowledge of a given subject is not sufficient to determine whether or not to dedicate themselves to said course of study for the next few years. Some students may only be able to say, for example, "Well, I know I like the Old Testament, but that is all I can say at this point." However, the fact of the matter is that unless your interests are more delineated than broad terms such as "the Old Testament," your statement of purpose/intent will appear vague, and favorable letters at decision time could

be less likely. A degree of specificity will be requested in a university's application form; thus, you should be able to articulate your interests in *at least* a sentence or two. An example might be, "I have a particular interest in how Jewish, Greek, and Roman philosophical and religious themes influenced ancient Christian literature and rhetoric." Another could be, "A major question that has driven my interest and study of religions in antiquity has been the confluence of Hellenism and Judaism, and I have sought to understand the development of Judaism in the Second Temple Period and the rise of Christianity."

Generally, schools will admit candidates whose interests match the expertise of the university's faculty. So, finding faculty whose interests match your own will aid in deciding to what schools to apply. While this may seem like an obvious approach to doctoral admissions where a specific advisor is required for dissertation work, in our experience and according to the advice of consulted faculty members, this seems to be increasingly important for MA-level admissions as well. This step of the application process takes a significant amount of time and research and presupposes that you have already decided on a general area(s) in which to focus (e.g., textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, the Synoptic Problem, Second Temple Judaism, Dead Sea Scrolls, New Testament rhetoric, etc.). You can usually find the specific interests, publications, and projects of any given professor on said professor's respective university website.

If you are not already familiar with the leading scholars in your field of interest, you should contact your current professors and seek guidance on the matter or go to the library and look up *recent* books and articles. Given the difficulty of being admitted to graduate school with adequate funding, you should not put all of your eggs in one basket. Students who are passionate or even interested in a particular niche will likely find that there are at least a handful of scholars who share that interest, in some degree, throughout various programs. A good way to find multiple potential advisors is to search the footnotes of the most reputable publications in your field of interest. In doing so, you will be introduced to discrete lines of scholarship which will hopefully help in further honing interests and preferences.

Choose a Program

It is very important to do the legwork of determining what kinds of programs will afford access to your professors of interest. Some schools, for example, have relevant programs in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (or something to that effect) as well as in a divinity school. At some research universities (Harvard and Yale, for example) there is a professional school that

is separate from, but often works closely with, the Arts/Sciences faculty. Other schools (such as the University of Chicago Divinity School) do not have separate programs conferring degrees in religion, and others still have virtually no distinction between the two. Divinity Schools offer ministerial training with degrees such as the Master of Divinity (MDiv) or Master of Theology (ThM), as well as more academically focused degrees with various names such as Master of Arts (MA), Master of Arts in Religion (MAR), Master of Theological Studies (MTS), etc. Some of these schools or programs will have a separate dedicated faculty, and your person of interest may teach primarily PhD courses or primarily Divinity School courses. It is important to understand how these programs work together at the various schools and whether it is reasonable to expect sufficient access to academic persons of interest in a particular program.

It is also vital to note that the funding can be very different between these programs. Arts/Sciences MAs for example, can often be typically or exclusively unfunded, while divinity school MA/MTS/MAR programs at many schools will be at least 50 percent funded for all successful applicants. It is worth comparing how the programs compare at different schools in order to mix and match applications accordingly. Most importantly, it is helpful to understand these things when determining which faculty members to contact in order to ensure focusing efforts on those who can guide interested applicants most effectively in preparation for their program of choice.

Make Contact

The next step is to contact those with whom you are interested in studying. This allows you make a good impression, to get advice on preparation, and to find out if you are a good fit for the program. Moreover, the professors you hope to work with are often on the admissions committee themselves and thus, it helps if they remember who you are come application decisions time. Keep your correspondence with professors short and to the point. The following is an excerpt from one of letters we sent, although some elements have obviously been changed.

Dr. X,

My name is X, and I am currently a senior in Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Brigham Young University. I am writing to tell you that I have been reading some of your publications of late and I appreciate the work you do. Also, this coming winter I will be applying to master's programs and I

am very much interested in the MA in Religious Studies offered at X university.

My interests include Early Christian hermeneutics and, more specifically, how the earliest Christian authors and divergent groups interpreted the texts which later became the New Testament. I think yours and Dr. X's interests match well with the work I would like to do for my master's degree. I understand the program is somewhat competitive and I would like to know what I might do to set myself apart as a candidate/prepare me to succeed in your program.

As far as my current preparation, I have a X GPA in my program. I am fluent in X. I have had X semesters of Greek, X of Latin, and X of Biblical Hebrew. I am currently a research assistant and do X. I feel these things are my strongest aspects. However, I would like to know what I could possibly do to better prepare myself for the caliber of study a university like X would require. Thank you for taking time to answer my questions.

Another way to establish a relationship with a potential advisor is to read his or her work and ask any *meaningful* questions you might have regarding their publications. This shows them that you are actively engaged in reading current scholarship and that you take a genuine interest in augmenting your knowledge in the subject matter. Do not ask them any questions which you could reasonably find the answer to on your own.

Finally, if at all possible, meeting with these persons of interest in person either on a campus visit or at a professional conference (such as the Society of Biblical Literature's annual meeting) can be a very beneficial way to learn about the program, the faculty, and your fit with both. We have both benefited from this approach, and in some cases have been able to discern with some accuracy our chances of admission to preferred programs after these kinds of meetings. Some faculty members even made a point of encouraging us to mention the meeting in our statement of purpose as a flag to the admissions committee to talk to the faculty member, which is more likely to help than hurt your application and shows that your interest in the program is more substantial than just hedging your bets. When setting up meetings at a conference or campus visit, however, make sure to be considerate of what is likely to be a very busy schedule for your person of interest and make every effort to make sure such meetings are brief, to the point, and at the professor's convenience. It

is helpful to prepare thoughtful questions beforehand and to think of concise ways to explain your interests. In any case, informed and considerate contact with academic persons of interest whether through correspondence, meetings, or both can have a demonstrable effect on the success of your applications.

The GRE

Most universities in the United States will require you to submit your GRE scores as part of the application process. The actual influence GRE scores have on determining an applicant's candidacy is somewhat indistinct. At the master's level, GRE scores are not likely to make or break an application. Nevertheless, many universities do have cut off scores, and how well you score on the examination can influence the allocation of funding. At the doctoral level, where the university will likely be investing significantly more in their students and competition is much more keen, the GRE becomes much more important in justifying the department's decision to recommend you for admission. Therefore, it is wise to prepare well for this test. The GRE assesses the student's ability to solve mathematical equations or synthesize quantitative data (for the most part, at no higher difficulty than secondary school-level geometry), to define vocabulary words and evaluate their usage in analogies and sentences, to make logical inferences regarding several paragraphs of text treating discrete subject matter, to analyze and comment on the logical/fallacious structure of arguments, and to compose a cohesive argument regarding a provided topic.

Each student will have singular needs when it comes to studying for the GRE; however, consider a few general suggestions. First, take as many practice tests as you can and become familiar with the format of the test. Aside from the study practice, doing so will acquaint you with the directions of each test section thereby eliminating the need to waste precious minutes reading them during the actual timed test. You can find small practice tests at ets.org and larger ones in GRE study books. Second, try to keep perspective. While the whole test is important, certain aspects are more important than others. The verbal and writing sections, for example, will be more important than the quantitative section. Both of us scored fairly low—well, to be honest, significantly low on the quantitative section—yet we were both admitted to high ranked schools with no less than 75 percent funding (of course, your experience may be different). Finally, the last time you take the test (as you may want to take it more than once in order to get your scores up) should be *at least* a month before the application is due. The only scores you will receive immediately after the test are the verbal and quantitative. The wait for the writing score

is about two to three weeks, and the time it takes to send the test scores to the schools to which you are applying takes a couple of weeks at most. Thus, to be safe, you should plan on completing the test about a month before the application is due. We think it is wise to use the summer before the last year of your undergraduate studies to prepare for and take the GRE.

The Application

The Statement of Purpose

The statement of “purpose” or “intent” is where you make your case for being admitted to the university. Each university will have specific criteria for writing the statement of purpose. Generally, these criteria will inquire about the following subjects: (1) how you came to be interested in pursuing religious studies; (2) your academic influences, interests, and professional goals; (3) your preparation for graduate study; and (4) why you feel you are a good fit for the program and the university. However, the most important thing you should remember is that the statement of purpose should best represent your intellectual interests and that those intellectual interests should match, in some degree, the expertise of the faculty at the university. Delineating academic interests which are out of the general expertise of the university’s faculty is the quickest way to be rejected from a school.

Again there is no single way to write the statement of purpose; however, there are several guidelines you could profit from following. (1) Tell a story—this will help you to avoid, inasmuch as it is possible, writing two pages of “I have done this and I have done that.” While some degree of self-adulation is necessary, you don’t want this letter to sound like a list. (2) Show that you are serious and knowledgeable about the people with whom you want to study, (3) Know the strengths and goals of the program to which you are applying and show how you possess those strengths and share those goals, (4) Follow the directions exactly and proofread (and have another person proofread your statement). The following two examples will seek to illustrate these guidelines.

I am writing this letter to express my interest in your Master of Arts in Divinity degree. I am confident that my course work, language training, and work experience have sufficiently prepared me to succeed at the University of Chicago. My commitment to biblical scholarship began in 2004 while volunteering in Quebec, Canada. Consistent with my daily routine, I would wake up every morning at 6:30 for

personal scripture study and then teach lessons on biblical topics throughout the day. As I became more familiar with the stories in the Bible, I began to study Bible dictionaries, extrabiblical literature such as the apocrypha and pseudepigraphical works, and any commentary that I could get my hands on. When I returned to the United States in 2006, I summarily changed my photography major and transferred to a university with a religious studies program. I knew that I would pursue an education in biblical studies, and at present I am completing my training as a senior at Brigham Young University, majoring in Ancient Near Eastern Studies—New Testament track.

Academic Influences, Interests, and Professional Goals

Although my interests in the New Testament and Early Christianity are broadly based, I have developed a special affinity for ancient Christian literary culture. The contributions of scholars like Margaret Mitchell, F. M. Young, Bart Ehrman, E. A. Clark, and Hans Josef Klauck have greatly contributed to my understanding of the ancient Christian world. However, Dr. Mitchell's work in ancient Christian hermeneutics and rhetorical analysis has particularly influenced me. As a master's student at the University of Chicago and in my studies towards a doctoral degree, I hope to focus my research on the following issues:

1. How Jewish, Greek, and Roman philosophical and religious themes influenced ancient Christian literature and rhetoric.
2. The reception and appropriation of the biblical text by early Christians and its use in homiletic, apologetic, philosophical, and other types of literature. I hope to push pass the standard dichotomy between Antiochene literalists vs. Alexandrine allegorists and study the literature in the framework of what Dr. Mitchell has termed the "agonistic paradigm of interpretation."

3. Patristic literature, particularly in terms of christological issues and the development of orthodoxy and heresy.

I also look forward to improving my facility with Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. After graduate school I hope to secure a full-time position as a professor at a university with a vibrant religious studies program. Ultimately, in addition to my research, I would like to teach courses in New Testament studies, Early Christian literature, and Greek.

Research Skills and Academic Tools

Since beginning my studies at BYU, my priority has been preparation for graduate school and a professional career in biblical scholarship. While my core classes trained me in ancient history, critical thinking, historical methodologies, and clear and concise writing, I understood that additional effort would be necessary to succeed in the field. I attended school year round for my first three years at BYU in order to take as many extra classes as I could while other students were on break. This time allowed me to enhance and solidify my writing and language skills as well as to publish several papers in undergraduate journals. I also completed several courses in ancient philosophy, modern philosophy, and advanced philosophical writing. During this time, my professors approached me and suggested that the best preparation for graduate school would be “languages, languages, languages.” Thus, I began seeking every opportunity to ameliorate my language skills, including sitting in on several classes when my finances would not permit me to take them for credit.

Already being fluent in Spanish and French, I focused on the relevant ancient languages. I wanted to be able to read primary texts and to identify grammatical constructions, word forms, and rhetorical devices. I began to translate authors whose writing exemplified the quintessential style of the language. Therefore, in addition to a majority of the Greek New Testament and Latin Vulgate, I translated works from Antiphon, Demosthenes, Thucydides, and Plato, as well as from Caesar and Cicero in the Latin tradition. However, my

thirst for languages continued to grow. I began studying classical Hebrew, and my professors had such confidence in my abilities that I was invited to substitute teach beginning classical Hebrew for one month as well as contribute to the BYU classical Hebrew online course. As patterns in grammar and morphology became easier to recognize, I augmented my language repertoire to include Rabbinic Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac, and took a course in Greek prose composition. Studying these languages provided me with valuable skills and opened many doors of opportunity.

Towards the end of my college career, I expanded my research and gained more experience in the field. I worked for over two years with Donald W. Parry preparing the critical apparatus for the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* edition of Isaiah and translating for Brill's *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader* series. I was given the task of finding and evaluating textual variants in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Peshitta, Targums, and Latin Vulgate. I also worked with Syriologist Kristian Heal digitizing Syriac colophon, and with Thomas Waymont on copublishing an edition of 29 fragments of book 6 of Homer, *Iliad* found at Tebtunis (to be submitted in 2011). These scholars taught me the importance of attending academic conferences and making contributions to the field. And with their guidance, I wrote and presented a paper at the 2009 SBL International meeting in Rome, which dealt with how the *ketiv/qere* readings in the book of Isaiah are reflected in the versional witnesses of the Hebrew Bible. Upon my return, I was elected president of BYU's student club, Students of the Ancient Near East, and apart from helping to organize, direct, and participating in two other academic conferences, I was able to help younger students prepare to succeed in undergraduate religious studies.

Pursing a Master of Arts in Divinity would allow me to take courses from a variety of professors who specialize in my fields of interest. Having read their work and attended some of their presentations, I know that being under the tutelage of accomplished scholars like Drs. Mitchell, Klauck, and Martinez would expand my skill base and assist me

undertaking rigorous academic research with the goal of producing significant, publishable work.

Another approach might be:

Since entering university, I have come to the important realization that I have a voracious zeal for inquiry that will engage me for the rest of my life. This fundamental desideratum has led me to the Master of Arts in Religion program at Yale Divinity School, and to the concentrated program in Judaic Studies in particular. I am primarily interested in the program because I feel that the University, the Divinity School, and the associated faculty have a fine record of preparing students for careers in research, and because the research interests of many members of the faculty strongly coincide with the trajectory in which I would like to eventually direct my own work. My academic and career objectives include ultimately earning a PhD and subsequently continuing to produce important work while teaching in a Religion or Divinity program. As a master's student, I hope to be able to effectuate a breadth of contextual understanding to support depth in research, to gain familiarity with the relevant sources, to understand the cultural confluence, context, and ideas that produced these sources, and to further develop my abilities in the languages in which these were produced.

In the course of preparing for graduate study, I was particularly excited to discover Yale Divinity School's concentration in Judaic Studies. While at the Society of Biblical Literature's most recent annual meeting in Atlanta, I had the opportunity to meet with Professor Collins and to discuss the program, and have been further encouraged by his candid thoughts about the Divinity School and his support of my interest in the Judaic Studies concentration. A major question that has driven my interest and study of Religions in antiquity has been the confluence of Hellenism and Judaism, and I have sought to understand the development of Judaism in the Second Temple Period and the rise of Christianity. Since discovering the concentration in Judaic Studies some two years ago, I feel like this is the program for which I have

most carefully prepared. The course work and the faculty are very compatible with many of my own interests and goals. As I have pursued these interests as an undergraduate, I have referred frequently to Professor Collin's work on the literature of the Hebrew Bible and Judaism in the Diaspora. I have also referred to Dean Attridge's work as I have studied Hellenistic Jewish literature. I have been impressed with the meticulous research and careful circumspection of each and hope to work with them and to learn from their approaches. In addition to working with Dean Attridge and Professor Collins, I am also anxious to work with Professors Adella Collins and Dale Martin, given my interest in the formation of Christianity and my intention to pursue a PhD in New Testament. I would specifically like to develop my understanding of Second Temple literature and history to give breadth to my interest in ancient Jewish and Christian literature, and to my understanding of the cultural contexts that have produced these texts, and in my assessment Yale Divinity School is the ideal environment in which to do so.

I have made a serious effort to prepare to undertake rigorous graduate work at Yale Divinity School by seeking opportunities to develop skills in research and language study. As an undergraduate, I have made a marked effort to incorporate opportunities to learn the craft of research into my coursework, student employment, and extracurricular endeavors. Early on in my undergraduate career, I interned as a research assistant for a company that produced content for educational materials. More recently, I worked for a year researching and writing for the Joseph Smith Papers Project, a major Mormon history documentation venture. Concurrently, I worked as a New Testament research assistant for BYU's Religious Studies Center, assisting professors with research projects and writing content for publication for the web and print. I am currently preparing to work with a faculty mentor on a research project dealing with treatments of Adam and the inception of death in various pseudepigraphal texts in conjunction with early Christian literature. Over the course of my undergraduate studies, I have both published papers in student journals and have made an effort

to remain abreast of current scholarship through conference attendance and membership in learned societies such as the Society of Biblical Literature and the Association for Jewish Studies. These affiliations have introduced me to the work of important scholars and have helped me to assess my own approaches to critical analysis. In addition to these efforts, I have undertaken as much language coursework as my schedule has allowed. My major emphasis has been in Greek, in which I have taken several advanced courses, including readings seminars in Matthew, Luke, and, by the time of graduation, apocalyptic literature. My earlier coursework in Greek included Attic grammar and readings courses that focused on classical prose and rhetoric. I have also taken courses in Hebrew (Biblical and Modern), Aramaic, Latin, and German to prepare further to engage a wider range of texts. In addition, I am fluent in Modern Greek, having spent two years living in Greece and Cyprus. One of the major advantages of studying at Yale Divinity would be the opportunity to continue coursework in the relevant languages with excellent faculty. I specifically intend to take as many readings courses in Hebrew as I can, to take relevant seminars in Greek, and to strengthen my German reading skills to prepare for doctoral research.

In conclusion, I have confidence that pursuing graduate work at Yale Divinity School would prepare me for success in academia and help me to develop the aptitude for inquiry necessary to make significant contributions in this field. I feel that I have carefully prepared for the rigor required for such development and look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation do not require very much effort on your part outside of requesting them well enough in advance for professors to have adequate time to finish them. It is likely that you will be asked to provide between one and four letters per application and it is not unusual that a single professor will write several letters for you. Keep in mind, however, that your letters are probably not the only ones your professors are writing this application season, and that they have their own classes to teach, work to grade, and projects to

work on. So be considerate and ask well in advance. Although each prospective university will have different criteria for letters of recommendation, with regards to the applicant's (your) qualifications for graduate study, your professors will generally be asked to speak to the following issues: (1) performance in independent study or in research groups, (2) intellectual independence, (3) research interests, (4) capacity for analytical thinking, (5) ability to work with others (6) ability to organize and express ideas clearly, and (7) drive and motivation. Thus, it would be unwise to request a letter of recommendation from a professor who does not know you well enough to address these topics, or from one who knows you well but feels he or she cannot speak favorably of your performance. Because you need quality letters of recommendation, it is important to get to know well and work with at least a few of your undergraduate professors *before* your senior year.

Financial Outlays

It is important to be realistic about the rising costs associated with the application process and to create a budget accordingly. While applying to several programs helps to ensure more favorable odds of acceptance and funding, the costs add up quickly. Very few programs do not charge application fees, and of those who do, the fees can range anywhere from \$25–\$150 per application. Additionally, sending transcripts from all the schools you have attended can add up, especially for transfer students. Transcript fees range anywhere from \$2–25 per copy, or possibly more depending on the school and shipping method selected. In total, even these most necessary fees can approach or exceed the \$1,000 mark for students applying to 5–8 schools. Add to that the fee for each attempt at the GRE (around \$160 at the time of writing), travel costs, express shipping for last minute materials, “bribes”, etc., and the investment can become significant.

How much those odds are worth is something for each student to decide, but important to consider no matter the conclusion. As was mentioned above, campus visits or conference meetings can be very helpful ways to engage persons of interest, but can be fiscally or temporally prohibitive. Things like applying for help with conference travel costs, attending a conference where several scholars in your field will likely be available to meet with you, or paying attention to visiting scholar lectures in your area can help to alleviate those financial strains and may make such visits more plausible. The best way to determine the viability of each of these factors is to approach these considerations early on and to create a loose but realistic budget.

Funding Resources

Each situation is different, and we hesitate to give any kind of financial advice, but at least a passing familiarity with the options available to students to avoid or minimize debt are worth encouraging here. In general, it is helpful to be very familiar with the funding and financial aid policies of the schools and programs of interest. As indicated above, even within a single university some relevant programs may be completely unfunded, while others may be completely or partly funded as a matter of practice. The packages in which the funding comes vary by program. Some, for example, may offer different grades of grant offers based on merit, while the rest of the package may come in a combination of subsidized and unsubsidized loans, a work study agreement or teaching fellowship, or some other form of university or federal aid adding up to anywhere from a portion of tuition costs to tuition, fees, and cost of living. Schools will likely require tax and employment information along with whatever other documentation they may deem necessary to determine financial need (e.g., current statement of your checking and savings accounts). Most programs are “need blind,” meaning that they make the decision to admit or reject a student without any knowledge of that student’s ability to pay. Many programs will use this information to determine whether funds in addition to merit scholarships will be needed or available to facilitate students’ needs. It is therefore helpful to have as much of that information readily available as possible to give an accurate projection of financial need.

In addition to university and federal grants and loans, private scholarships may be available. Academic advisors and other faculty members may be able to point you towards relevant scholarships or scholarship databases that can be beneficial resources for applicants. Again, this is something worth doing early in order avoid a great deal of stress as deadlines approach.

Conclusion

In short, the best overall advice we can offer is to start the application process early and to be considerate of those whose help you will need to solicit. Trying to squeeze all the necessary steps into a month or two will cause a lot of unnecessary stress on you and your professors. Be aware of the various deadlines of the schools to which you are applying and give yourself time to meet these deadlines as comfortably as possible. Whether you will be applying to graduate programs in the coming application season or sometime in the future, we wish you the best of luck with your preparation and academic pursuits!

A NEW LOOK AT THE MESOPOTAMIAN ROD AND RING: EMBLEMS OF TIME AND ETERNITY

MARY ABRAM

A conjoined rod and ring appeared for millennia on cylinder seals, tablets, and stelae of ancient Mesopotamia. This unit evolved from a solitary depiction on a ca. 3000 B.C.E. cylinder seal to an emblem displayed by deities throughout the early first millennium B.C.E. Gods from the Third Dynasty of Ur (ca. 2100 B.C.E.) held the rod and ring, as did deities of Old Babylon (ca. 1800 B.C.E.) and Neo-Assyria until about 700 B.C.E. Despite a long history and diverse applications throughout a large geographical region, the exact nature of the rod and ring remains a mystery. What did this motif mean to the ancients who sculpted it from stone? This article will review possible meanings presented by scholars and propose a new theory: the rod and ring, separate objects with distinct symbolisms, combine to represent life in its temporal and eternal aspects.

Few scholars have attempted to solve the rod and ring mystery in depth. Kathryn E. Slanski is the most recent exception. Her comprehensive study published in 2007 proposes the rod and ring as “righteous kingship sanctified by the gods, and . . . an aspect of the enduring relationship between the palace and the temple.”¹ A 2003 statement by Slanski credits Elizabeth van Buren with the next most prolific scholarship on this topic.² Van Buren defines the rod and ring unit as a symbol of divinity.³ In 1939, Henri Frankfort articulated

1. Kathryn E. Slanski, “The Mesopotamian ‘Rod and Ring’: Icon of Righteous Kingship and Balance of Power between Palace and Temple,” in *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt*, ed. Harriet Crawford (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), 41.

2. Kathryn E. Slanski, *The Babylonian Entitlement Narus (Kudurrus): A Study in Their Form and Function* (Boston, Mass.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2003), 262.

3. E. Douglas Van Buren, “The Rod and Ring,” *ArOr* 17.2 (1949): 449.

a theory adopted and adapted by later scholarship: the rod and ring could have metaphorical and literal connotations of measurement.⁴

Not all conclusions about this motif concur. Nor does any one conclusion match all rod and ring occurrences in the visual record. Disagreements exist in the written venue also. "Attempts to link the object [rod and ring] to verbal identifications in the written record have failed to gain universal acceptance."⁵ These difficulties combine with another challenge, the lack of ancient texts describing the rod and ring motif. Despite the obstacles, a search for the true meaning of the motif may be undertaken through comparison and contrast. The major occurrences of the Mesopotamian rod and ring between the third and first millennia B.C.E. will be presented along with current scholarship and how varied conclusions apply to the examples. The new look at the rod and ring motif, a synthesis of previous scholarship with an added proposal, will also be measured against the examples.

The new proposal consists of three main components. First, as suggested by Van Buren, the rod and ring unit is an insignia of divine, not royal, power.⁶ The second component follows the scholarship of Frankfort and Slanski: the rod and ring are metaphoric measuring devices.⁷ Finally, the rod and ring, while separate units, may unite to visually symbolize mortality and everlasting life. The rod and ring together become emblems of time and eternity.

Defining the Mesopotamian Rod and Ring

The Mesopotamian rod and ring consist of two separate emblems held as one conjoined unit. The rod is generally slender, straight, and blunted at each end with no embellishments. The ring, is usually a thin, continuous circle gripped with the rod (see illustration 1).

The Solitary Ring

The ring is sometimes shown separated from its companion rod, as in the case of an 18th century B.C.E. Syrian cylinder seal where the deity Shamash holds a solitary ring.⁸ In a Neo-Assyrian relief from the time of Sennacherib, ca. 700 B.C.E., an enthroned deity holds a solitary ring while companion deities

4. Henri Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (London: Macmillan, 1939), 179.

5. Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 38, 41.

6. Van Buren, "Rod and Ring," 450.

7. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, 179; Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 41, 51.

8. Hamido Hammade, *Cylinder Seals from the Collections of the Aleppo Museum, Syrian Arab Republic* (BAR International 335; Oxford, England: BAR International, 1987), 76. See Shamash and Ring Cylinder Seal illustration, page 77.

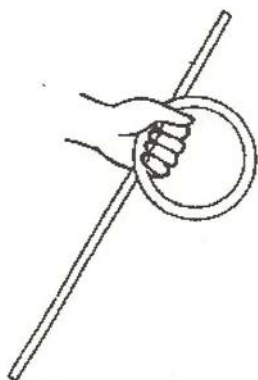


Illustration 1.
Conjoined Rod and Ring.
 As found in James Hall,
Illustrated Dictionary of
Symbols in Eastern and
Western Art (London:
 John Murray, 1994), 79.

hold the conjoined rod and ring.⁹ Does this solitary version of the ring carry the same meaning as the conventional conjoined-with-rod depiction? This question is just one aspect of the rod and ring mystery. Solid answers remain elusive. If the ring signifies eternal existence or continuation of life as proposed, it would retain that meaning when depicted alone while contributing its particular symbolism to a companion rod.

The ring's circular shape is the basis for its parallel with eternal existence, an idea supported by the ancient Egyptian circular *shen* symbol for "eternity."¹⁰ A circle neither begins nor ends. This unique quality leads to thoughts of continuity and eternity. *Continuity* implies a continuation of a current circumstance. *Eternity* is a word more associated with time, specifically endless time. "Babylonian religious speculation derived from the circle the notion of infinite, cyclical and universal time."¹¹ When used in the context of this study, eternity means more than endless time. The ring of eternity also represents endless existence or eternal life.

In some depictions, the ring appears as a beaded circle called a chaplet (see illustration 2). This is accepted as a decorative form of the conventional solid ring.¹² The chaplet with its individual circles connected in one large circle may even expand the symbolism of the conventional ring. In one aspect, it could more clearly delineate the nature of smaller time segments uniting to form a larger whole, in the same way that degrees form minutes. The Babylonians who

9. See Maltai Procession of Deities: Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia* (Austin, Tex.: Univ. of Texas Press, 1992), 40.

10. James Hall (*Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art* [London: John Murray, 1994], 79–80) notes that the Egyptian *shen* symbol, a ring attached to a short rod, resembles the Mesopotamian rod and ring. The *shen* hieroglyph means "eternity." The *shen* symbol appears in a cylinder seal from Alalakh, Syria in the early 17th century .c.e. See Dominique Collon, *The Seal Impressions from Tell Atchana/Alalakh* (Kevelaer, Germany: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1975), 6. This shows a merging of ideas between Egypt and peripheral Mesopotamia. While a *shen* visual and symbolic parallel is possible, however, the meaning behind the Mesopotamian rod and ring would have already been in place centuries before the existence of the Alalakh seal.

11. Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. John Buchanan-Brown (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994), 197.

12. Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 51–52.

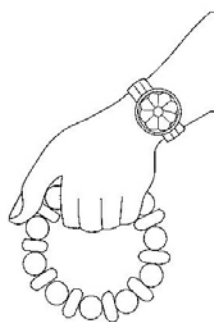


Illustration 2.
Chaplet. As found in Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia (Austin, Texas: Univ. of Texas Press, 1992), 51.

divided the circle into 360 degrees¹³ would have been familiar with such an ideology. In another aspect, the chaplet could represent the eternal existence of several deities in one universal eternity.

A question connected with this subject is whether or not the deity Marduk received a ring along with scepter and throne from other deities before they commissioned him to battle Tiamat. Tablet IV, lines 20–28 of the *Enuma Elish* describe Marduk speaking to destroy then bring back a constellation.¹⁴ In the next line, the gods bestow upon Marduk a “scepter, throne, and staff.”¹⁵ Robert Rogers adds the transliterated word *palu* to the scepter and throne received by Marduk, with the notation that Leonard King translates the *palu* as “ring.”¹⁶ While King’s translation is not a certainty, a ring given to Marduk after demonstrating restorative powers is an intriguing concept to consider, particularly when a ring could symbolize endless life.

The Solitary Rod

Although not so common a sight, the rod like its ring counterpart may stand alone as depicted in an Assyrian cylinder seal from the time of Esarhaddon, ca. 680 B.C.E.¹⁷ In this scene, the deity Ashur holds the conventional rod and ring while the lightning-bearing storm god Adad extends the solitary rod in his left hand. If the rod symbolizes measurement of time or lifespan, it is no surprise that Adad is depicted without the ring. An emblem associated with eternity in the hands of a storm god could denote endless rain and ruin. Brief periods of storm, compatible with the rod of measurable time, would be beneficial. This idea gains support from

13. Chevalier and Gheerbrant, *Dictionary of Symbols*, 197.

14. “Epic of Creation,” Benjamin Foster (COS 1.111: 397).

15. “Epic of Creation,” Foster, 397.

16. “The Story of Creation,” *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, trans. Robert William Rogers (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 25. Arthur Whatham cites King’s translation as *patu* rather than the *palu* of Roger’s text. See Arthur E. Whatham, “The Meaning of the Ring and Rod in Babylonian-Assyrian Sculpture,” *The Biblical World* 26.2 (August 1905): 120. Further note: *The Biblical World* was incorporated, 1921, into the University of Chicago’s publication *The Journal of Religion*. Whatham’s article can be accessed electronically through JSTOR.

17. See Esarhaddon Cylinder Seal illustration: Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 161.

the Maltai Procession of Deities relief where the storm god is the only deity not holding either a solitary ring or conjoined rod and ring.¹⁸

The slender, blunt-edged rod has been called a “staff” by some scholars. Despite the visual similarity, “staff” in the context of this study refers to a longer object that would touch the ground when held in the hand of a standing figure. The rod, however, could touch the ground when held by an enthroned deity.

Could the rod be a scepter, an insignia of power held by both gods and kings? Despite the similar shape and length along with parallel connotations of power, the rod and the scepter differ visually. The rod is plain whereas a decorative unit tops the scepter. Evidence defining these objects as separate in function, even in the ancient mind, can be seen in Neo-Assyrian art. A 705 B.C.E. painting from Dur Sharrukin shows the deity with rod and ring facing the king with his scepter.¹⁹ In another example, the 700 B.C.E. Bavian relief, Sennacherib gripping his scepter stands behind Ashur who rides on his animal while holding the rod and ring.²⁰ These examples seem to indicate that a king may wield a scepter, but the rod and ring unit belongs to deity.

The Rod and Ring, Emblems of Divinity

The earliest visual image of the combined rod and ring may be from a 3500–3000 B.C.E. Uruk Period cylinder seal (see illustration 3). Wiseman and Forman describe this scene as a female worshipper facing a shrine with the free-standing rod and ring “a symbol of divine authority.”²¹ The rod and ring in such a setting shows its sacred nature early in its history.

By the third millennium B.C.E. the rod and ring appeared in the hands of deities. Van Buren first noted this phenomenon, adding that the motif was held “by certain Great Gods only, but never . . . by a mortal or even a deified king.”²² This observation has been approved by later scholars.²³ The proposal of this study—that the rod and ring, either separately or conjoined, are symbols associated with divinity—follows previous scholarship with the addition

18. See Maltai Procession of Deities: Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 40.

19. See Dur Sharrukin Painting: Andre Parrot, *Nineveh and Babylon*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (London: Thames and Hudson, 1961), 99.

20. See Bavian Relief, Plate 81: Parrot, *Nineveh and Babylon*, 73.

21. D. J. Wiseman and Werner Forman, *Cylinder Seals of Western Asia* (London: Batchworth Press, 195-), 3. See Uruk Cylinder Seal illustration, page 4.

22. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 449.

23. E. Ascalone and L. Peyronel, “Two Weights from Temple N at Tell Mardikh-Ebla, Syria: A Link between Metrology and Cultic Activities in the Second Millennium BC?,” *JCS* 53 (2001): 7; Slanski, “Mesopotamian Rod and Ring,” 42.



Illustration 3. *Uruk Cylinder Seal, 3500–3000 B.C.E. As found in D. J. Wiseman and Werner Forman, Cylinder Seals of Western Asia (London: Batchworth Press, 195–), 4.*

of one notation. The rod and ring unit is actually one of the readily recognized insignia of deity.

Several divine insignia are present on an Old Babylonian cylinder seal presentation scene from Tel Harmal. The seal's owner, Tishpak Gamil, calls himself a "servant of Shamshi-Adad," thereby dating the seal to about 1800 B.C.E. and, along with the dragon motif, identifies the main god as Tishpak, patron deity of Eshnunna.²⁴ This seal depicts two deities. A god with a horned head-dress leads a male figure to an enthroned god wearing multiple horns and holding the Old Babylonian spiked version of the rod and ring. The enthroned deity rests his feet upon an animal. Both deities wear flounced garments. There are astral symbols in the background. All these emblems, including the rod and ring, appear to be visual markers of deity.

One of the core debates about the rod and ring motif is whether or not this emblem of divinity also becomes an emblem of kingship. Arthur Whatham suggested in 1905 that the rod and ring are symbolic of royalty, emblems of "world-sovereignty."²⁵ Modern scholar William Hallo proposes that the rod and ring be "treated as royal rather than only divine insignia."²⁶ Such conclusions are likely based on the assumption that the deity offers the emblems to a king who extends his hand to receive them. For instance, in reference to the Hammurabi Law Code Stela, Hallo states, "The king receives from the deity

24. Lamia al-Gailani Werr, *Studies in the Chronology and Regional Style of Old Babylonian Cylinder Seals* (BMes 23; Malibu, Calif.: 1988), 9–10. See Presentation Scene Illustration, IV.

25. Whatham, "Meaning of Ring and Rod," 120, 122.

26. William H. Hallo, "Sumerian History in Pictures: A New Look at the 'Stele of the Flying Angels'" in *An Experienced Scribe Who Neglects Nothing: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Jacob Klein*, eds. Yitschak Sefati, Pinhas Artzi, Chaim Cohen, Barry L. Eichler, and Victor A. Hurowitz (Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 2005), 161.

the rod and the ring.”²⁷ Yet the king’s hand reaches toward his own face, not toward the rod and ring. He does not take nor even touch these emblems. Van Buren, writing decades before Hallo, disputes the theory of the rod and ring as a divine investiture of power motif. She refers specifically to Hammurabi’s gesture as “the usual attitude of reverence before a seated god . . . it is incorrect to say that the king accepts the rod and ring which the deity extends to him.”²⁸ Indeed, Hammurabi’s hand assumes the same position as the Tel Harmal cylinder seal depiction of a supplicant being led to an enthroned deity grasping the rod and ring.²⁹ The difference is, on the cylinder seal, another deity stands between the supplicant and the enthroned deity, making it even more unlikely that the supplicant is reaching for the rod and ring.

Since the hand gesture of the king may be pivotal in this discussion, it would be useful to reference a worshipper using the hand gesture of reverence without involvement of the rod and ring. An Ur III era cylinder seal, ca. 2100 B.C.E., shows a goddess leading a worshipper to an enthroned deity with nothing in his extended hand.³⁰ The worshipper stands behind the leading goddess with his inward-facing right palm in front of his mouth in the same gesture as the Hammurabi depiction. As in the case of the Tel Harmal cylinder seal, a goddess stands between the worshipper and the enthroned deity. While the hand gesture of the Ur III worshipper may suggest reverence or salutation, he does not reach for an object, for the enthroned deity offers



Illustration 4. *Ur Nammu Stele Rod and Rope. As found in Anton Moortgat, The Art of Ancient Mesopotamia (London: Phaidon, 1969), Plate 201.*

27. Hallo, “Sumerian History in Pictures,” 150.

28. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 438.

29. See Presentation Scene: Werr, *Studies in the Chronology and Regional Style of Old Babylonian Cylinder Seals*, IV.

30. See Ur Worshipers illustration: Wiseman and Forman, *Cylinder Seals of Western Asia*, 41.

none. Reverence, rather than reaching out, is likely the same situation with Hammurabi's gesture.

The Rod and Ring of the Third Millennium B.C.E.

Mesopotamian artifacts depicting the rod and ring, beginning with the third millennium B.C.E., provide opportunity to test old and new theories about this motif. The Stele of Ur-Nammu at Ur plays a vital role in defining the rod in particular as a metaphoric measuring device.

The Stele of Ur-Nammu

Ur-Nammu, founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur about 2100 B.C.E., began construction on the great Ziggurat of Ur and commissioned several canals.³¹ These achievements are inferred in building motifs and water imagery on the stele attributed to Ur-Nammu. The building motifs have received the most attention, particularly in conjunction with the rod and ring. A deity holds a rod and a length of rope extending from a ring. Debates about whether the ring is the conventional ring or coiled rope point to the latter conclusion (see illustration 4).

Scholars identify the rod and rope unit as a "measuring rod and line."³² This literal definition, supported by the building activity evident on the stele, has led scholars to propose that the rod measures more than distance.³³ The measurement of justice has become the primary perspective.³⁴ The metaphoric view of measurement, based on the Ur-Nammu Stele, factors in other explanations of the rod and ring motif, including this paper's focus on the rod as both a literal and metaphoric measuring device.

The Rod and Measuring Line in Construction Imagery

Enough of the Ur-Nammu Stele has been restored to show scenes divided into five registers on both the better preserved "good" face and the "poor"

31. Leon Legrain, "The Stele of the Flying Angels," *The Museum Journal* (March 1927): 75.

32. Henri Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Univ. Press, 1996), 104; see also Van Buren, "Rod and Ring," 435.

33. Henri Frankfort first proposed the metaphorical theory of measuring instruments in 1939 (Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, 179). Thorkild Jacobsen later equated the rod and rope measuring tools with peace (Jacobsen, "Pictorial Language," 4). A 1992 dictionary of Mesopotamian symbols reiterates the rod-ring measuring instruments as symbolic in nature (Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 156).

34. Henri Frankfort first connected justice in metaphor with measuring tools (Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, 179). Black and Green follow this conclusion in their dictionary (Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 156). In 2001, Ascalone and Peyronel state that the rod and ring represent both literal measuring tools and a metaphor for measuring justice (Ascalone and Peyronel, "Weights from Temple N," 7). Finally, in 2007, Kathryn Slanski names the metaphor for justice theory the most prominent rod and ring definition (Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 41).

face most exposed to the elements. The enthroned deity holding a rod and length of rope appears in the second register from the top of the “good face.”³⁵ The fourth “good face” register shows a brick wall behind the workers and a ladder. These building scenes have generally been interpreted as representing construction of the ziggurat with the deity supplying the means to measure its dimensions.³⁶ The construction activity is not limited to the ziggurat, however. An inscription on the stele’s fourth register “poor face” lists the canals dug by Ur-Nammu.³⁷ Slanski follows Hallo in proposing that the depicted building activity refers primarily to canal construction rather than commemoration of the ziggurat.³⁸

Whatever his project, the king of the “good face” third register carries tools upon his back. Some interpret this as investiture of divine power to proceed with the construction. Hallo says of the scene in the register above where the deity holds measuring devices in the presence of the king: “He [the king] is clearly receiving the symbols of the royal office from the seated statue of a god.”

This doesn’t seem to be the case. The deity grips his emblems with a closed fist. A potted date palm separates the deity and the king who doesn’t lift his hand either in salutation or any attempt to receive the measuring devices. As Van Buren points out, the king “is wholly engrossed in pouring water from the tumbler-like vessel he holds into the vase.”³⁹ This doesn’t support an investiture of power scene. Van Buren makes another observation regarding the king carrying building tools in the third register. “The measuring rod and line . . . are not among [the tools] as might have been expected if they had really been handed over to him.”⁴⁰

Elizabeth van Buren separates the objects held by the Ur-Nammu Stele deity from the conventional rod and ring. “What the god there holds are really a measuring rod and line, but not the true rod and ring.”⁴¹

Jeanny Canby concurs that the “short staff and coil” in the deity’s hand “is not the familiar rod-and-ring symbol.”⁴² Canby’s statement certainly applies to the ring. The rod, however, appears to be the same rod of other depictions. Does its association with a questionable ring enhance or diminish

35. See Ur-Nammu Stele Restoration, good face illustration: Hallo, “Sumerian History in Pictures: A New Look at the Stele of the Flying Angels,” 145.

36. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 435.

37. Jeanny Vorys Canby, “Fragment of ‘Ur-Namma’ Stele,” *Art of the First Cities*, ed Joan Aruz (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 2003), 446.

38. Slanski, “Mesopotamian Rod and Ring,” 45; Hallo, “Sumerian History in Pictures,” 158.

39. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 435–36.

40. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 436.

41. Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 438.

42. Canby, “Fragment of ‘Ur-Namma’ Stele,” 445.

the rod's literal and metaphoric measuring attributes? William Hallo removes the conventional ring altogether from measurement imagery: "The ring is not remotely associated with measurements."⁴³ If the rod, not the ring, is the measuring tool, why would measuring and non-measuring imagery appear in the same motif? What is the connection? These inquiries may be addressed by a closer look at the so-called ring of the Ur-Nammu Stele.

A detailed view of the ring-shaped object held by the Ur-Nammu Stele deity shows grooves indicative of a fibrous rope. Slanski states several times in her 2007 work that this depiction is "clearly" a coiled rope or cord.⁴⁴ This fits other observations that this particular "ring" is not the conventional Mesopotamian ring. Thorkild Jacobsen keeps this perspective while maintaining the rod as a measuring tool. "The ring actually is no ring at all but a coil of rope, apparently a measuring-cord for measuring longer distances, while the accompanying 'rod' is a yardstick for details."⁴⁵

The conventional solid ring may also appear in relief on the Ur-Nammu Stele, although its presence is a debated issue. According to Canby, fragments of the Ur-Nammu stele were pieced together in 1927, resulting in a "reconstruction . . . somewhat hasty and in some cases inaccurate."⁴⁶ The fragment entitled "God with Rod and Ring" inserted into the third register of the "good face" was removed from its former place.⁴⁷ This fragment and others were taken for mineralogical examination in 1991 with no results yet released by the time of Canby's 2001 publication.⁴⁸ However, a 2008 article by Irene Winter at Harvard includes a drawing of the Ur-Nammu Stele "poor face" showing the "God with Rod and Ring" fragment in place on the third register.⁴⁹

The presence of both the conventional rod and ring along with the rod in connection with a coiled rope in the same stele presents a question. Is the rod the same device in both cases? There is no difficulty in considering it so if the rod is defined as a measuring tool. When linked with the rope, possibly a measuring line, the concept of literal measurement is reinforced. If the idea of

43. Hallo, "Sumerian History in Pictures," 160.

44. Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 41–42, 44, 51–52.

45. Jacobsen, "Pictorial Language," 4.

46. Canby, "Fragment of 'Ur-Namma' Stele," 443.

47. Jeanny Vorys Canby, *The "Ur-Nammu" Stela* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Univ. of Pennsylvania Museum, 2001), 56.

48. Canby, *The "Ur-Nammu" Stela*, 55.

49. Irene Winter, "Touched by the Gods: Visual Evidence for the Divine Status of Rulers in the Ancient Near East," in *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond* (ed. Nicole Brisch; Chicago, Ill.: The Oriental Institute, 2008), 90. For illustrative purposes, compare the detail of Register 2, poor face (Winter, 90) with the graphic provided by Legrain's "The Stele of the Flying Angels" (Legrain 96). The two pieces appear to be the same illustration of the conventional solid ring.

metaphoric measurement is valid, as generally accepted, the rod would add its particular symbolism to its companion conventional ring. If the rod and ring together represent measurable time and eternity as proposed, the companionship is a compatible one.

An Alternate Theory for the Coiled Rope

Slanski names two “leading interpretations” for the rod and ring, the first being the measuring tool theory already discussed with the second theory by William Hallo: “they are a staff and nose-rope, royal attributes representing the king’s ability to lead the people.”⁵⁰

Hallo proposes that the conventional ring was a later addition to the iconography and associated only with deities, whereas the staff and nose-rope were royal insignia bestowed upon the king to direct his people.⁵¹ “The clinching argument” for his theory, Hallo claims, “comes from the iconography,” especially the Akkadian mould showing the king holding his enemies by nose-ropes.⁵² The king, likely Naram-Sin, is enthroned next to the goddess Ishtar in her warrior regalia. Naram-Sin holds a ring-like object still in contact with Ishtar.

If Naram-Sin holds the conventional ring, a question arises in conflict with one premise of this study: how could a mortal hold an emblem reserved only for deity? The self-deification of Naram-Sin could answer this concern. He already wears the horned headdress. Holding the ring would not be a problem for him. But does he hold the conventional ring? A close examination of the object in his hand reveals a gap, indicating that this is not a solid ring or even the chaplet.

The nose-rope is likely a device separate from the measuring line of the Ur-Nammu Stele. This deduction is supported by Jacobsen’s observation that building takes place during a time of peace.⁵³ The Ur-Nammu Stele features building scenes rather than captive motifs in conjunction with nose-ropes.

The Rod, Ring, and Measuring Line in Mesopotamian Literature

In the Sumerian tale, *Descent of Inanna*, the goddess Inanna equipped herself with several items before her journey to the underworld. Inanna “slipped

50. Slanski, “Mesopotamian Rod and Ring,” 41.

51. Hallo, “Sumerian History in Pictures,” 151–52, 161.

52. Hallo, “Sumerian History in Pictures,” 153. The Naram-Sin with Ishtar iconography noted by Hallo is illustrated in another book: Donald P. Hansen, “Mould Fragment with a Deified Ruler and the Goddess Ishtar,” in *Art of the First Cities*, ed. Joan Aruz (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 2003), 206–07.

53. Jacobsen, “Pictorial Language,” 4.

the gold ring over her wrist, and took the lapis measuring rod and line in her hand.”⁵⁴ The gold ring worn on the wrist instead of clutched in the hand is probably not the ring of this study. The measuring rod and line, however, may be the same implements held by the Ur-Nammu Stele deity.

As the tale unfolds, the chief gatekeeper of the underworld, Neti, reports to Ereshkigal, the underworld queen, that another queen demands entry. Neti describes Inanna by her regalia, including the fact that “in her hand she carries the lapis measuring rod and line.”⁵⁵ Ereshkigal, though angry at this invasion of her territory, allows Inanna to enter with the stipulation that she remove portions of her regalia as she approaches each gate. When Inanna enters the sixth of seven gates, “from her hand the lapis measuring rod and line was removed.”⁵⁶ The final step, the removal of Inanna’s robe, is followed by Ereshkigal turning Inanna into a corpse.⁵⁷

In a variant version of this same story, the rod and line are taken from Inanna at the second door with “the golden ring gripped in her hand” taken away at the fifth door followed by her corpse being hung on a spike at her death.⁵⁸ The ring of this version, since it is held in the hand rather than worn, more closely resembles the conventional Mesopotamian ring.

The ring and measuring rod of this tale may not be the same objects as the rod and ring under discussion. If they are, the underworld activity supports the idea that the rod measures life span. Inanna cannot be killed by Ereshkigal until she relinquishes the symbols of temporal and eternal life. The Ur-Nammu Stele rod, while also measuring temporal existence, may combine with the ring of eternity to represent the preservation of life.

Life-Sustaining Imagery of the Ur-Nammu Stele

Life-sustaining imagery is a main component of the Ur-Nammu Stele. In 1927, Leon Legrain suggested an alternate name for this monument, “Stele of the Flying Angels.”⁵⁹ He based his proposal on the heavenly beings depicted in the first registers, both faces of the stele, who pour life-giving water upon the scene. The first-register beings are about twice the size of lower-register figures, indicating primacy of importance. Life-sustaining imagery, particu-

54. Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer, *Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth* (New York, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1983), 53.

55. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 56.

56. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 59.

57. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 59–60.

58. “Inanna’s Journey to Hell,” in N.K. Sandars, *Poems of Heaven and Hell from Ancient Mesopotamia* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1971), 140–42.

59. Legrain, “Stela of the Flying Angels,” 75.

larly of water, continues in the lower registers. The inscription below the drum of register four, “poor face,” references canals built by Ur-Nammu.⁶⁰ Without canals in this region, life fades.

Legrain proposes that the deity holding the rod and line is not the moon god Nanna as commonly accepted, but “Ea, the great builder.”⁶¹ Ea, a creator deity and god of the waters, both “the deep sea and . . . all waters surrounding the earth,” was also “author of the arts of life.”⁶² Water and life are again emphasized.

A palm tree receiving libations is another motif of the Ur-Nammu Stele. Legrain notes that “watering of the palm is a . . . sacred rite and takes its full meaning in a land where dates are one of the staple foods.”⁶³ The Ur-Nammu Stele rod and ring, if representative of time and eternity, harmonize with the monument’s life-giving depictions. But the Ur-Nammu Stele is not the only example of such imagery. An Ur III cylinder seal, ca. 2040 B.C.E., shows a date palm receiving a libation from a male figure while a frontal-facing goddess displays rod and ring. The male, defined by Buchanan as “either a king or some other major figure,”⁶⁴ seems focused on sustaining life in his own stewardship.⁶⁵ These depictions indicate the date palm’s importance. Could it be a tree of life? Could the rod and ring integrated into such scenes highlight life imagery? These questions merit further exploration.

Third Millennium B.C.E. Summary

The Ur-Nammu Stele lays a foundation in rod and ring scholarship. Most concur that the rod, a literal measuring tool, became viewed as a metaphoric measuring device. Also, the coiled rope is not the conventional ring. The rod as symbolic of measurable time and the ring indicating continuation of life or eternity is compatible with third millennium B.C.E. life-imagery depictions.

The Rod and Ring of the Second Millennium B.C.E.

Rod and ring imagery of the second millennium appears in three main contexts.

60. Legrain, “Stela of the Flying Angels,” 88.

61. Legrain, “Stela of the Flying Angels,” 80.

62. Charles Russell Coulter and Patricia Turner, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2000), 161.

63. Legrain, “Stela of the Flying Angels,” 83.

64. Briggs Buchanan, “An Extraordinary Seal Impression of the Third Dynasty of Ur,” *JNES* 31.2 (April 1972): 98. See Ur III Libation Scene illustration, page 96.

65. Another libation scene from Elamite Susa (ca. 2050 B.C.E) shows a figure watering a palm in the presence of a seated deity who grasps the rod and ring. See Anton Moortgat, *The Art of Ancient Mesopotamia* (London: Phaidon, 1969), Plate 210.

The Hammurabi Law Code Stele

Hammurabi's Law Code Stele of the Old Babylonian Period, ca. 1780 B.C.E., is the primary reason for the rod and ring being equated with justice. The sun god Shamash holding the rod and ring is considered the father of "truth" and "justice."⁶⁶ The text of the Law Code Stele reinforces the concept of justice. In addition to delineating laws, this text praises the piety and just rule of Hammurabi.⁶⁷ Using the measuring imagery of the Ur-Nammu Stele, Hammurabi apparently measures justice under divine direction.

This theory fits the Law Code Stele, but does not explain other depictions of the rod and ring. Other deities besides Shamash also carry the rod and ring. Does this motif imply justice when held by them? Do the rod and ring amplify divine characteristics? If so, the connotations would change according to the deity involved. Certainly, justice is emphasized in the Law Code Stele text and iconography, but it is the presence of Shamash alone rather than any of his divine regalia which underscores justice. The addition of the rod and ring imply something more.

The rod, if viewed as a measurement of mortality, may combine with the Law Code text to show how the life experience should be conducted. The Code's epilogue supports this idea: "These are the just decisions which Hammurabi, the able king, has established and thereby has directed the land along the course of truth and the correct way of life."⁶⁸ Hammurabi concludes with an appeal to several deities that he be always remembered and that those who erase his name be destroyed along with their posterity.⁶⁹ These allusions to eternal remembrance and end-of-time destruction parallel the rod and ring imagery.

Slanski observes that the rod of Hammurabi's stele tapers to a point indicative of "a peg suitable for driving into the ground and tying off a rope."⁷⁰ This spike-like depiction seems typical of the Old Babylonian style and could be an additional reference to measurement imagery. It might also denote the finality of measurement. After her death in the underworld, the corpse of Inanna was "hung on a spike."⁷¹

Another continuing debate is whether or not the deity invests the king with power. Investiture of power is possible in the Law Code Stele with

66. Coulter and Turner, *Ancient Deities*, 423.

67. "The Laws of Hammurabi," translated by Martha Roth (COS 2.131:337).

68. "The Laws of Hammurabi," Roth (COS 2.131:351).

69. "The Laws of Hammurabi," Roth (COS 2.131:351-53).

70. Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 53.

71. "Inanna's Journey to Hell," 142.

Hammurabi and Shamash depicted nearly as equals. As Winter observes, “The compositional balance suggests a relationship born not of subservience but of almost parity.”⁷² Even so, Hammurabi does not actually receive the rod and ring. Slanski follows Van Buren in saying these emblems are merely being shown to the king.⁷³ Hammurabi does not reach for the ring. His hand gesture is one of reverence. There are exceptions to the norm, however, cases when a king touches the rod and ring. The most famous example comes from Mari.⁷⁴

The Painting of Zimri-Lim

Zimri-Lim, a contemporary of Hammurabi, ruled the city-state Mari for about twenty years. The 1770 B.C.E. wall painting from the royal palace, called “The Investiture of Zimri-Lim,” shows Zimri-Lim in the company of Ishtar who extends the rod and ring.⁷⁵ The king touches this divine unit. How is this possible if the rod and ring motif signifies the powers of divinity rather than that of kings?

This concern may be investigated by a glimpse into Ishtar’s characteristics. This Babylonian deity was both a fertility goddess and a goddess of war.⁷⁶ Ishtar stands before Zimri-Lim in her warrior regalia, but her fertility persona should not be dismissed. Beverly Moon suggests a valid aspect of the ring’s perpetual life symbolism: “The ring may represent the powers of fertility, the unending cycle of life and death that is governed by the feminine principle. It may also signify union with the goddess.”⁷⁷ The “Sacred Marriage,” an occurrence in Mesopotamian history from the Ur Third Dynasty onward, featured either the literal or symbolic union of the king with a priestess representative

72. Winter, “Touched by the Gods,” 83.

73. Slanski, “Mesopotamian Rod and Ring,” 53; Van Buren, “Rod and Ring,” 438.

74. Another example, the Seal of Suliya, predates the more famous palace painting from Mari. The seal depicts Suliya, a self-deified king of Eshnunna ca. 2025 B.C.E., who touches the rod and ring held by warrior deity Tishpak. [See Clemens Reichel, “The King is Dead, Long Live the King: The Last Days of the Su-Sin Cult at Eshnunna and its Aftermath” in *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond* (ed. Nicole Brisch; Chicago, Ill.: The Oriental Institute, 2008), 136–37; Suliya Seal illustration: page 148]. This presents a question. Do deities associated with war, such as Tishpak more commonly let kings touch the emblems associated with life? Does this depiction imbue the king with extra powers? If the rod and ring unit represents life in its temporal and eternal aspects, the contact with such forces during wartime may be readily explained. The king may need an extra mantle to preserve his life or be given additional power to take life from enemies.

75. See Investiture of Zimri-Lim illustration: Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 216.

76. Coulter and Turner, *Ancient Deities*, 242.

77. Beverly Moon, *An Encyclopedia of Archetypal Symbolism* (Boston, Massachusetts: Shambhala, 1991), 209.

of Inanna/Ishtar to ensure fertility.⁷⁸ The king's touch of Ishtar's ring could indicate that union.

A recurrent question is whether or not the king actually receives the divine emblems. In the case of Zimri-Lim, Ishtar extends but does not release the rod and ring. Her hand is gripped, closed-fist, around the unit. Zimri-Lim touches it with the open palm of his left hand while his right hand is raised in the gesture of reverence. Ishtar, however, does give sacred items to kings.

Tablet XII of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, likely an addition to the original text, parallels the older Sumerian poem "Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Nether World."⁷⁹ In the poem, Inanna (the Sumerian version of Ishtar) plants a *huluppu* tree in her holy garden. It is subsequently infested by "the serpent who could not be charmed, an Anzu-bird, and the dark maid Lilith."⁸⁰ Gilgamesh divests the *huluppu* of these creatures. In gratitude, Inanna fashions for him a *pukku* from the tree's trunk and a *mikku* from its crown.⁸¹ Samuel Kramer defines the *pukku* and *mikku* as "probably a drum and drumstick."⁸² In another publication on the subject, Kramer acknowledges the uncertainty of this translation.⁸³ In yet another publication, Kramer and Wolkstein note that the *pukku* and *mikku* may be the rod and ring.⁸⁴ Jordan parallels these devices with the drum, but asks if they "possess . . . an intrinsic power of life."⁸⁵

78. Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 157–58.

79. John Gardner and John Maier, *Gilgamesh* (New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 255–256; Samuel Noah Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 194.

80. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 8.

81. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 9.

82. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 34.

83. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*, 196. The difficulty in translating the precise meaning of *pukku* and *mikku* is apparent in the varied proposed definitions. Thorkild Jacobsen calls the objects "hockey puck and stick" Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1976), 212. Benjamin Foster, Douglas Frayne, and Gary Beckman define *pukku* and *mikku* as "ball and stick." Benjamin Foster, Douglas Frayne, and Gary M. Beckman, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 134.

84. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 143. Further research may indicate a possible connection between the word *pukku* and the word *palu* or *patu* translated by Leonard King as "ring" as previously noted by Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, 25 and Whatham, "Meaning of Ring and Rod," 120.

85. Michael Jordan, *Gods of the Earth* (London: Bantam Press, 1992), 84. Jordan proposes the "power of life" parallel of the *pukku* and *mikku* with the "plant of life" nearly obtained then lost by Gilgamesh. The correlation of life powers with drum and drumstick is explained by the statement that these objects were "The old guardians of home and hearth against the spirits of misfortune and death." Jordan, *Gods of the Earth*, 84. This "power of life" observation regarding the *pukku* and *mikku* finds a stronger case for validity if these objects are the divine rod and ring rather than drum and drumstick, particularly if these emblems signify life powers as proposed.

Pertinent to this discussion, Gilgamesh loses these objects due to misusing their powers. "His vainglorious use of the *pukku* brings bitterness, lamentation, and tears to the mothers, sisters, and young maidens of Uruk, so that the wet earth opens and the *pukku* and *mikku* are lost in the underworld."⁸⁶ Kramer suggests that the women cried because Gilgamesh used the *pukku* and *mikku* (drum and drumstick) to summon their men to war.⁸⁷ If, however, the *pukku* and *mikku* are the ring and rod associated with life forces abused by Gilgamesh, the lamentation of the women takes on a different context.⁸⁸

Zimri-Lim touches the rod and ring in the first register of the Mari Palace painting. The second register below emphasizes life-sustaining water and plant imagery. As with the Ur-Nammu Stele, water seems an important connection with the rod and ring.

The Queen of the Night Plaque

A unique depiction of the conjoined rod and ring appears on the ca. 1750 B.C.E. Queen of the Night Plaque, also known as the "Burney Relief" after Sydney Burney, an art dealer who acquired the artifact in 1935.⁸⁹ Slanski mentions this artifact as one of the "significant pieces . . . that make deep and lasting impressions."⁹⁰ Otherwise, she does not include the plaque with other rod and ring motifs in her 2007 treatise on the subject.

Some doubt this plaque's authenticity. D. Opitz questioned authenticity in 1937 then withdrew those objections in 1939.⁹¹ In 2005, Pauline Albenda re-

86. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 143.

87. Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 199.

88. Women lamenting over Gilgamesh's misuse of the *pukku* and *mikku* opens another avenue of study beyond the scope of this article. Briefly, however, why would women cry over misuse of a ball and stick or hockey puck and stick unless that activity took attention away from them? In the case of Gilgamesh who forced his attention on women, a sporting-event diversion would have been welcomed by his victims. The drum call to war has merit because this would upset women. If the *pukku* and *mikku* are the rod and ring representative of life powers, the lamentation of the women over Gilgamesh's misuse of these also makes sense. The literature documents the sorrow of maidens, affianced husbands, and their families when Gilgamesh misuses procreative powers associated with life.

89. Dominique Collon, *The Queen of the Night Plaque* (London: British Museum Press, 2005), 7. For Queen of Night Plaque illustration, see page 6.

90. Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 38. Slanski does not explain why the Burney Relief makes a "deep and lasting impression." Any attempt to analyze her statement or determine her reasons for not including the Burney Relief in her study would be mere conjecture. It is likely, however, that the question of authenticity was not a factor in Slanski's decision to mention this relief only in passing. On page 38 of her article, Slanski said the acquisition of the Burney Relief by the British Museum was "justly celebrated." This implies approval of the artifact as a valuable part of the museum's collection.

91. Collon, *Queen of the Night*, 9. Collon rehearses the early authenticity debate between scholars. In volume XI of *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Opitz challenges the plaque's

iterated her 1970 challenge of forgery based on the lack of precise provenance, the uniqueness of the iconography, and the need for a more thorough chemical analysis of the artifact.⁹² It is not the scope of this study to define the plaque as genuine or not. The possibility of authenticity warrants its inclusion here.

A greater controversy than the plaque's authenticity seems to be the identity of the female figure holding a rod and ring set in each hand. Three conclusions have emerged. She could be the demon Lilith, the queen of the underworld Ereshkigal, or Ishtar in another persona. Why would any of these beings hold the rod and ring? Also, what is the significance of the bent rod? Could it indicate a twist on the powers associated with temporal life?

Lilith

H. W. Janson defines the Queen of Night as "Lilith, goddess of death."⁹³ Lilith is also the "dark maid of desolation" who inhabited Inanna's *huluppu*-tree before Gilgamesh expelled her.⁹⁴ Lilith is associated with the maiden demon, *ardat-lili* who cannot be a mother so takes out her frustration by causing "impotence in men and sterility in women."⁹⁵ Lilith, goddess or demon, could not hold the emblems associated with justice or righteous kingship. If the rod and ring represent life, however, she could be depicted as not just holding but also withholding these powers.

Ereshkigal

The Burney relief highlights bird imagery. The female figure wears a winged cape. Her feet are talons, and owls accompany her. An Akkadian text, "The Descent of Ishtar to the Underworld," describes the inhabitants of that realm as "clothed like birds, with feathers."⁹⁶ While relating his dream about the underworld to Gilgamesh, Enkidu confirms this description of bird-like beings.⁹⁷ Gilgamesh himself exhibits surprise when finally meeting Utnapishtim, the one mortal granted eternal life by the gods: "Thy appearance is not changed."⁹⁸

authenticity. In volume XII of this same journal, Henri Frankfort argues that the plaque is genuine. In the same issue of the journal, Opitz "accepted Frankfort's conclusions and withdrew his objections" Collon, *Queen of the Night*, 9.

92. Pauline Albenda, "The 'Queen of the Night Plaque'—A Revisit," *JAOS* 125.2 (April–June 2005): 171, 186–87.

93. H. W. Janson, *History of Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), 85.

94. Wolkstein and Kramer, *Inanna*, 6, 142; Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology*, 33.

95. Black and Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols*, 118.

96. "The Descent of Ishtar to the Underworld," Stephanie Dalley, (*COS* I.108:381).

97. "The Gilgamesh Epic," *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, trans. Robert William Rogers (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 83

98. "The Gilgamesh Epic," Rogers, 90. The observation of Gilgamesh about Utnapishtim's "unchanged appearance" may refer to the idea that, unlike the bird-like

Apparently, existence in the netherworld is not the same as the eternal life enjoyed by the gods and Utnapishtim. The pair of rings and bent rods held by the bird-like female, possibly Ereshkigal, of the Burney Relief could signify a continued eternal existence unlike both former mortality and Utnapishtim's existence sought by Gilgamesh.

Ishtar

Van Buren proposes that the female figure could be Ishtar in her "chthonic," underworld role.⁹⁹ This is not likely. When Inanna/Ishtar visited the underworld, she lost her powers there. She became a "corpse that hung on a spike."¹⁰⁰ Jacobsen suggests that the Burney Relief hung in an "ancient bordello" and depicts Inanna/Ishtar as "goddess of harlots."¹⁰¹ If this is the case, Ishtar could display the bent rod to suggest the warping nature of harlotry on both the quality and perpetuation of life. At his pending death, Enkidu cursed the harlot who had civilized him. When Shamash rebuked Enkidu for berating the woman, Enkidu called back the personal curse yet left consequences for the harlot's victims: men would lose treasure to her; wives with children would lose husbands to her.¹⁰²

As in the case of Lilith, emblems representing justice or righteousness do not work in the hands of a harlot goddess. Such a being, however, would hold certain powers over life.

Second Millennium B.C.E. Summary

Traditional theories of a righteous king measuring justice do not fit all depictions of this millennium, particularly in the absence of Shamash. The rod and ring as aspects of temporal and eternal life explain problematic pieces like the Burney Relief and Mari painting. While a king may touch these emblems in a warrior or fertility context, the deity keeps them. The god Enlil told Gilgamesh that kingship, not everlasting life, was his destiny.¹⁰³ This parameter between divinity and even a deified king changes with the first millennium B.C.E. Neo-Assyrians.

inhabitants of the underworld, Utnapishtim looks and moves like a normal mortal.

99. Van Buren, "Rod and Ring," 431.

100. "Inanna's Journey to Hell," Sandars, 140-42.

101. Jacobsen, "Pictures and Pictorial Language," 5-6.

102. N. K. Sandars, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 90-91.

103. Sandars, *Epic of Gilgamesh*, 118.

The Rod and Ring of the First Millennium B.C.E.

Most rod and ring depictions of the first millennium B.C.E. appear in Neo-Assyrian art. The 870 B.C.E. tablet from Sippar, predating most of these, depicts a trio approaching a relatively large Shamash who holds the rod and ring. The priest in an intercessory role leads the king to Shamash while a worshipping goddess follows.¹⁰⁴ Shamash does not give the rod and ring emblems to the king. This seems, rather, more a case of Shamash showing emblems of perpetuity to the foremost figure, the priest.

According to the tablet's inscription, Shamash's "appearance and his attributes had vanished beyond grasp" of kings who sought him, resulting in the sun disk image rather than Shamash himself shown for worship.¹⁰⁵ The priest Nabu-nadin-sumi discovered a model of Shamash's anthropomorphic form, allowing for a cult statue to be made and thus pleasing both the deity and the Babylonian king.¹⁰⁶ The king granted goods to his priest, "and, to prevent any future claims (against this endowment) he placed it under seal and thereby granted it for perpetuity."¹⁰⁷ Slanski emphasizes that the "entitlement for all time" to the priest and his heirs was "the main purpose of the monument."¹⁰⁸

Neo-Assyrian Art: A Change of Iconography

Some rod and ring representations maintain the traditional form under Neo-Assyria, such as the Maltai Procession of Deities, the Sennacherib Relief at Bavian, and the ca. 680 B.C.E. Seal of Esarhaddon. Changes also occur. According to Van Buren, "Seals of the 9th–7th centuries B.C. almost invariably represent divinities who hold the ring without the rod."¹⁰⁹ The solitary ring is often depicted as a beaded chaplet, as in the 9th–7th century painting of the Assyrian national deity Ashur holding a scepter along with the chaplet.¹¹⁰ A reconstructed painting from Dur Sharrukin, the capital of Sargon II who ruled ca. 705 B.C.E., shows the god Ashur holding the traditional-style rod and ring.¹¹¹ A small deity figure resides inside the ring.

The most startling change occurs in context with a monument known as the "Broken Obelisk." This structure, erected by a successor of Tiglath-pileser I

104. Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 202.

105. Christopher E. Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet of Nabu-apla-iddina Revisited," *JCS* 56 (2004): 83.

106. Woods, "Sun-God Tablet," 49, 85.

107. Woods, "Sun-God Tablet," 87–88.

108. Slanski, "Mesopotamian Rod and Ring," 57.

109. Van Buren, "Rod and Ring," 447.

110. See Assyrian King with Chaplet illustration: Parrot, *Nineveh and Babylon*, 71.

111. See Dur Sharrukin Painting illustration: Parrot, *Nineveh and Babylon*, 99.

who ruled 1110 B.C.E., shows a deity extending a bow from a cloud while vassals honor the king.¹¹² The king holds both a scepter and a beaded chaplet in his hand. How could a king hold the ring formerly displayed only by deities?

The Akkadian king Naram-Sin set a precedent in Mesopotamia for assuming divine regalia. Sargon II indicated respect for this particular empire by taking on the same name as the first Akkadian ruler, Sargon. The best answer, however, comes from within the concepts of Neo-Assyrian kingship. During this era, kings were more than representatives of the gods. Peter Machinist points out that while the divine determinative was never placed before the king's name, it was placed before the phrase "image of the king" because the king was considered "the image of a particular god . . . an exalted man . . . someone with a place in the divine world."¹¹³ The deity of the "Broken Obelisk" has been deanthropomorphized and related to the sky with other astral symbols while the Assyrian king has taken on the emblems of divine power.

The assumption of power over life is demonstrated by the challenge of the Rabshakeh, Assyrian emissary, to the Jews prior to the 701 B.C.E. siege of Jerusalem: "Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered its land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" (2 Kgs 18:33). The Rabshakeh does not credit the Assyrian state deity Ashur with victory. Rather, he credits the king with power formerly attributed to deity.

First Millennium B.C.E. Summary

Both traditional and changing forms of the rod and ring occur during this millennium. The Sippar Tablet shows increasing distance between king and deity with the priest as mediator and beneficiary of goods in perpetuity. The Assyrians distance deity further, and kings take on divine power. Not only do they spill the blood of life, they change lifestyles through their deportation and assimilation policies. In the first millennium B.C.E. examples, the rod and ring maintain associations with life for both time and eternity.

Conclusion

The rod and ring are separate objects with unique characteristics that complement each other when combined. Whether conjoined or in solitary form, the rod and ring are emblems of divinity. Deities occasionally allow kings to touch the powers associated with the rod and ring.

112. Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 134.

113. Peter Machinist, "Kingship and Divinity in Imperial Assyria," in *Text, Artifact, and Image* (ed. Gary Beckman and Theodore J. Lewis; Providence, R.I.: 2006), 184–85.

Unlike other definitions, the rod and ring motif as explained in this article has remained consistent throughout the presentation of a variety of artifacts. Life-sustaining imagery is especially apparent in the 3rd millennium Ur-Nammu Stele and the Mari palace painting of the 2nd millennium. The “measurement of justice” theory fits the Hammurabi Stele but does not coincide with other 2nd millennium artifacts that exclude Shamash, especially the Queen of Night Plaque. The 1st millennium Sippar Shamash Tablet lends itself to multiple theories, including the new time and eternity proposal. Neo-Assyrian art, depicting both tradition and change in ideas of kingship, supports the interpretation of life powers in the hands of deities and, in that era, kings.

The rod represents the temporal measurement of life that begins and ends. The ring represents the eternal aspect of life, a concept familiar to Mesopotamians as indicated by the story of eternal life bestowed by deity upon the mortal Utnapishtim.

The conjoined rod and ring signify the power to create, maintain, and end life. Together, they are emblems of time and eternity.

DECONSTRUCTING GENDER OPPOSITIONS IN THE MINOAN *HARVESTER VASE* AND *HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS*

EMILY LARSEN

Beginning with Sir Arthur Evan's descriptions of Minoan civilization, scholars have discussed the rituals, labor, and spaces of Minoan religion in strict binary terms of male and female. Gender has become one of the most important aspects in discussing the art of the Minoans, and scholars have continued to read the art and artifacts of the Ancient Aegean as supporting a civilization with a strict separation of gender.¹ Those discussing two artifacts from the excavations at Hagia Triada, *The Harvester Vase*, 1500–1450 B.C.E. (fig. 1) and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, ca. 1400 B.C.E. (fig. 2), have used the figural imagery depicted on these objects to support this polarized reading of gender in Minoan society.² However, a closer look at the scenes depicted on the vase and sarcophagus reveals that Minoan religious rituals were not so easily separated into male and female spheres. In fact, the imagery indicates that the distinction of gender in Minoan religion is much more ambiguous than has previously been given credit. An analysis of the lack of distinctly sexed bodies, the ambiguity of male and female dress and the depiction on the *Harvester Vase* and *Sarcophagus from Hagia Triada* indicate that both objects could actually depict men and women participating in the same religious rituals. Furthermore, connections between the rituals depicted on the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* signify that the rituals, and spaces of ritual, were not divided into distinct gender classifications.

1. Another important aspect of Minoan art and civilization that is talked about often by scholars is the Minoan connection to nature. For further information, see Vesa-Pekka Herva, "Flower Lovers, after All? Rethinking Religion and Human-Environment Relations in Minoan Crete," *World Archeology* 38.4 (Dec. 2006): 586–98.

2. For a basic description of the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* and *The Harvester Vase*, see Sinclair Hood, *The Arts in Prehistoric Greece* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 70–71, 144–45.

The *Harvester Vase* is a carved stone rhyton. The lower part of the vase is lost and would have come to a blunt point. It is the type of vase used in libations—religious rituals involving the pouring of liquids.³ The vase depicts twenty-seven figures involved in a procession. Because of the high skill level of the depiction, the rarity of making vases out of stone, the formality of the figures, and the fact it is carved on a rhyton, used in libations, the procession is no doubt a religious ceremony or ritual.⁴ An older man, interpreted as a priest by some and wearing a cuirass, a known ritual garment, leads the procession.⁵ Twenty-one of the figures are holding long sticks with a fork like apparatus at the end. These instruments have been interpreted by various archeologists as winnowing forks, weapons, and hoes.⁶ In the middle of the procession is a figure shaking a rattle. He wears a kilt similar to the hide skirts seen in the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*.⁷ The figure is followed by three or four figures, all of which are singing with mouths wide open.⁸ Toward the end of the procession, one figure turns around and shouts at the figure behind him. Some of the figures are in a combination frontal/profile pose, but all have large frontal eyes and are carved with a rare naturalistic detail.

The *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* is a limestone sarcophagus 137 cm long. The front of the sarcophagus depicts two processions. The procession on the right includes three figures: the two leading the procession hold rhytons, and the leader of the procession is pouring the liquid from the rhyton into a ritual area between two labrys. The leader wears a hide skirt and has fair skin, as does the second figure holding two rhytons. The third figure is playing a musical instrument, is wearing a long cloak, and has dark skin. The procession to the left of the sarcophagus shows four figures with dark skin. They are all

3. John Forsdyke, "The 'Harvester' Vase of Hagia Triada," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 17.1/2 (1954): 1.

4. For more information on the skill of the artists and the rarity of stone vase carving, see Rodney Casteldon, *Minoans: Life in Bronze Age Crete* (London: Routledge, 1990), 90. For more information on the argument that the procession is a religious scene, see Nanno Marinatos, *Minoan Religion* (Charleston, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993). A few art historians and archeologists who have written solely on the *Harvester Vase* have questioned its depiction of a religious ceremony; however, all who write on Minoan religion accept it as a religious ritual.

5. For further information on the cuirass, see Forsdyke, "The 'Harvester' Vase of Hagia Triada," 1; and Nanno Marinatos, *Minoan Kingship and the Solar Goddess* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

6. The most central question in scholarship surrounding the *Harvester Vase* has been, what are the purposes of these instruments? This question does not directly relate to my thesis, but for the history of the debate see R. C. Bosanquet and M. N. Todd, "Archeology in Greece 1901–1902," *JHS* 22 (1902): 378–94; Forsdyke, "The 'Harvester' Vase of Hagia Triada," 1–9; Dieter Rumpel, "The 'Harvester' Vase Revised," *Anistoriton Journal* 10.4 (2007): 1–13.

7. Forsdyke, "The 'Harvester' Vase of Hagia Triada," 1.

8. For more information on music and musicians in Minoan society, see John G. Younger, *Music in the Aegean Bronze Age* (Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, 2007).

wearing a hide skirt, though the figure furthest to the left wears a longer cloak of the same material. The three figures are moving toward the figure on the far left, and each carry offerings. The opposite side of the sarcophagus depicts three figures. A fair skinned figure wearing a hide skirt performs a ritual on a table while a dark skinned figure wearing a long cloak plays an instrument. A final figure is light skinned and also wears a long cloak. A bull is lying on a table, presumably about to be sacrificed as an offering. The short sides of the sarcophagus depict figures being pulled in chariots by griffins. Both the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* and the *Harvester Vase* were found by archeologists at the Hagia Triada villa.⁹ Consequently, archeologists were the first to write about these objects and their significance to Minoan religion and society.

Archeologists and art historians writing about Minoan religion have problematically constructed Minoan rituals and practices in strict binary terms of male and female. Like many other archeologists, they have imposed a timeless, stable, and universal idea of gender onto the Minoan civilization and have failed to deal with gender in historically specific terms or account for ambiguity.¹⁰ One such scholar, Evangelos Kyriakidis, has argued there was a strict gender division in religious rituals. He states that the segregation is an important aspect of the ritual and that this segregation indicates significant religious rules being followed, as well as showing the exclusion and distinction of individuals within the religious rituals.¹¹ Nanno Marinatos, who has written multiple texts on Minoan religion, has also championed a strict division of gender within Minoan society.¹² She argues that the iconography of Minoan objects and artifacts reveals that the sexes almost never associate in religious

9. For more information on the site at Hagia Triada, see Marina L. Moss, *The Minoan Pantheon: Towards an Understanding of its Nature and Extent* (Oxford: John and Erica Hedges, 2005); and Livingston V. Watrous, "Aya Triada: A New Perspective on the Minoan Villa," *AJA* 88.2 (Apr. 1984): 123–34.

10. For more information about gender archaeology theory and those who have discussed these problematic constructions of gender see Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London: Routledge, 1999); Kelley Hays-Gilpin and David S. Whitley, "Introduction: Gendering the Past," in *Reader in Gender Archaeology* (eds. Kelley Hays-Gilpin and David S. Whitley; London: Routledge, 1998), 1–11; Margaret W. Conkey and Janet D. Spector, "Archaeology and the Study of Gender," in *Reader in Gender Archaeology* (eds. Kelley Hays-Gilpin and David S. Whitley; London: Routledge, 1998), 11–45; Ruth Whitehouse, "Gender Archaeology in Europe," in *Handbook of Gender Archaeology* (ed. Sarah Milledge Nelson; Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2006): 733–85.

11. Evangelos Kyriakidis, *Ritual in the Bronze Age Aegean: The Minoan Peak Sanctuaries* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 2005).

12. See Nanno Marinatos, *Minoan Kingship and the Solar Goddess* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010); Nanno Marinatos, *Art and Religion in Thera: Reconstructing a Bronze Age Society* (Athens: D&I Mathioulakis, 1984); Nanno Marinatos, "Minoan Religion," *The Classical Review* 42 (1992): 85–87; Nanno Marinatos, "Role and Sex Division in Ritual Scenes of Aegean Art," *Journal of Prehistoric Religion* 1 (1987): 23–34; Nanno Marinatos, *Minoan Religion* (Charleston, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993).

rituals. She states that women and men performed separate activities during rituals, evidencing distinct roles in the religious sphere. Other scholars, such as Rodney Casteldon and Marija Gimbuta, have supported and expanded on the ideas of Marinatos in their writings on Minoan society and gender, maintaining that Minoan society was distinctly separated into gendered spheres.¹³ For the most part, Minoan religion has been discussed in strict binary classifications: male and female are separate, and there is no intersection.

In the past fifteen to twenty years, a few scholars have begun to challenge this binary view of Minoan religion. One of the most important of these scholars is Benjamin Alberti. Alberti argues that although Minoan art rarely depicts distinct physical sexual characteristics, the figurative art of Minoan society has been placed into a “rigid binary framework of male/female.”¹⁴ Alberti asserts that Arthur Evans constructed this polarized view of gender in Minoan society by reading the Minoan religion as matriarchal, situating women in the divine sphere while concurrently placing men as the important political leaders.¹⁵ Alberti argues that Evan’s view of gender in Minoan society has been left largely intact.¹⁶

Priscilla Field has also begun to deconstruct some of the rigid binary oppositions used to describe gender in Minoan society. She has argued that archaeologists and scholars have described the overwhelming amount of depictions of women by giving women power as deities and priestesses.¹⁷ Women’s power in Minoan society was placed in the religious sphere, while men as priest-kings held the political power. She argues this is problematic, as scholars have looked at the Minoan civilization through a twentieth-century lens, imposing modern ideas of gender onto this ancient society. Consequently, the frequent images of women in Minoan art have been accounted for but rationalized as “primitive, natural, sexual, and maternal” goddesses and priestesses in the religious sphere.¹⁸ Field’s analysis of these shortcomings in the scholarship furthers Alberti’s criticism of a constructed polarization of gender in Minoan society. Women were given power in the religious sphere, men in the political, but neither crossed over. This separation of power constructed another gender opposition in scholars’ view of Minoan religion.

13. Casteldon, *Minoans*, 139–40; Marija Gimbutas, *The Living Goddesses* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999).

14. Benjamin Alberti, “Gender and the Figurative Art of Late Bronze Age Knossos,” *Labyrinth Revisited: Rethinking ‘Minoan’ Archaeology* (ed. Yannis Hamilakis; Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 98.

15. *Ibid.*, 100.

16. *Ibid.*, 101.

17. See Priscilla Field, “Is Divinity a Gender Issue? The Case of the Minoan ‘Goddess,’” (master’s thesis, University of Oslo, 2007).

18. *Ibid.*, 10.

Specifically these gendered oppositions have been used to describe the religious processions on both the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*. Scholars, such as Marymay Downing and Nanno Marinatos, have emphasized the separate roles of men and women on the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*. They have delineated the roles of women as performing the altar rites and sacrifices while men act as musicians and bear offerings.¹⁹ Significantly, Marinatos has used the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* as one of her main examples evidencing the strict and distinct roles of each gender in Minoan ritual. She emphasizes that the men and women on the sarcophagus do not intermingle. Likewise, she discusses the *Harvester Vase* as a male-only religious procession, and uses its similarity to a Thera fresco to explain the fresco's imagery as an all male religious procession.²⁰ In her most recent publication, Marinatos maintains her view of strict gender division in Minoan rituals. The main argument of her most recent book is that men have the main political power as priest-kings, while the imagery of women is explained by the idea of a solar goddess. Like previous scholars, she has given women importance in the religious sphere, and men power in the political. Interestingly, in her conclusion, Marinatos praises Evans for the work he has done, and all the things he "correctly" assumed about Minoan religion—including how he divided the labor and roles of the sexes.²¹ Marinatos uses imagery from both the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* and the *Harvester Vase* to support her claims. Dieter Rumpel, Rodney Casteldon, and Marija Gimbutas also champion gender specific readings of these artifacts.²²

Although a gendered reading of the rituals on the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* has been the most prevalent, there is substantial evidence that the assumptions made about gender in these readings need to be questioned. The gender of the figures on the vase and sarcophagus is ambiguous at best, and the ambiguity signifies that the gender, and delineation of gender, is not the most important aspect of Minoan ritual.

For example, Marianna Nikolaidou has argued that in Minoan art hair, dress, movements, and accessories are the most important aspects in determining roles within Minoan art, and furthermore, these characteristics are much more important than the assumed gender of the figures to delineating

19. Marymay Downing, "Prehistoric Goddesses: The Cretan Challenge," *JFSR* 1.1 (Spring 1985): 7–22.

20. Marinatos, "Role and Sex Division," 24.

21. Marinatos, *Minoan Kingship and the Solar Goddess*, 193–96.

22. See Rumpel, "The 'Harvester' Vase Revised," 1–13; Casteldon, *Minoans*, 139–40; and Gimbutas, *The Living Goddesses*, 147–48.

roles in rituals.²³ This is especially significant for the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, as the same types of clothing are shown on both genders. If one maintains the idea that dark skin is used to portray males and fair skin to portray females, a common belief about Minoan imagery, then the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* becomes problematic as both men and women wear the long ceremonial cloak, as well as the hide skirt. Therefore, if, as Nikolaidou convincingly argued, the dress, stature, and accessories of a figure identify its roles and place in a ritualistic setting more so than other factors, than it seems that the figures on the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* are not rigidly polarized by their genders, but instead share similar places and roles in the ritualistic setting.

Dress also reveals gender ambiguity on the *Harvester Vase*. Benjamin Alberti has argued that the loincloth cannot be taken as a sign of masculinity. He argues there is no original connection between a male physical sexual characteristic and the loincloth in Minoan art.²⁴ This is problematic for previous readings of the *Harvester Vase* as the figures wearing loincloths on the vase have been assumed to be men and their loincloths have been understood partially to signify their male gender. Significantly, one of the first scholars to write about the *Harvester Vase*, John Forsdyke, recognized at least in the group of singers, an uncertainty in gender and dress. He describes the dress of these three figures as similar to the long cloaks on the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* and writes, “the drapery makes it impossible to be sure about the sex.” Future scholars have failed to recognize this ambiguity in dress and gender that Forsdyke significantly pointed out in 1954, as they have always described the *Harvester Vase* as a procession of twenty-seven males.

Furthering the ambiguity of the figures’ gender, Benjamin Alberti has also argued that because of the lack of physical sexual characteristics in Minoan art in general, it is hard to firmly identify sex or gender for any figure. He boldly states, “Only figures with breasts, in any medium, can be confidently sexed.”²⁵ Therefore, Alberti argues, a lack of breasts cannot be assumed to signify a male figure. Consequently, the figures on the *Harvester Vase* with their lack of breasts cannot clearly be identified as male, and this procession cannot be assumed to be an exclusively male religious ritual. This concept holds true for the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* as well: the figures are not clearly depicted with breasts or other physical sexual characteristics; they cannot be confidently

23. Marianna Nikolaidou, “Palaces with Faces in Protopalatial Crete: Looking for People in the First Minoan States,” *Labyrinth Revisited: Rethinking ‘Minoan’ Archaeology* (ed. by Yannis Hamilakis; Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002), 74–97.

24. Alberti, “Gender and the Figurative,” 106.

25. *Ibid.*, 109.

identified as male or female, making the assertions that the sarcophagus depicts two distinct, gendered rituals inconclusive.

Additionally, Alberti has asserted that even the well accepted distinction in Minoan art that white skin signifies a female figure and that red skin signifies a male figure is a constructed assumption. He has argued that there are many exceptions to this rule and that there are too many inconsistencies to confidently assign red skin to the male gender and white skin to the female.²⁶ Without being able to use color of skin, dress, or physical sexual characteristics to identify gender in Minoan imagery, the gender of the figures in the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* is uncertain. Thus, the sarcophagus offers no conclusive evidence of gendered rituals. This further complicates our understanding of Minoan gender and particularly how gender has been used as a distinction in Minoan ritual.

Further blurring this distinction is the fact that the Linear B tablet lists religious functionaries as one of only a few occupations held by both men and women at Knossos.²⁷ This indicates that both men and women would participate in religious rituals, and most likely the same religious rituals, as there are not two different gender specific titles for religious functionaries. In addition, at the most simplistic level, the fact that the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* and the *Harvester Vase* depict both men and women indicates that both men and women were involved in the same ritual activities.²⁸ Even if one believes that there are very specific roles for each gender within Minoan rituals, the fact that both genders are represented as participating in the same ritual activities shows that despite whether there were distinct roles for each gender, there were not two separate spheres of Minoan religion according to gender.

A final evidence that Minoan religion and rituals, especially those depicted on the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, are not strictly polarized according to gender is the connections and similarities between the ritual depicted on the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*.²⁹ These connections evidence that instead of distinct gendered spheres in

26. Benajmin Alberti, "Bodies in Prehistory: Beyond the Sex/Gender Split," *Global Archeological Theory: Contextual Voices and Contemporary Thought* (eds. Paulo Funari, Andrés Zarankin, and Emily Stoval; New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2005), 113–14.

27. Barbara A. Olsen, "Women, Children and the Family in the Late Aegean Bronze Age: Differences in Minoan and Mycenaean Constructions of Gender," *World Archeology* 29 (Feb. 1998): 383.

28. If you accept my arguments, and Forsdyke's assertions for the *Harvester Vase*.

29. I acknowledge that the *Harvester Vase* and the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus* are from 50 to 100 years apart, and are therefore, not directly related. However, I think the connections between the types of rituals shown on each vase show a broader connection within the Minoan religion where the rituals are not distinct and separate, but interconnected and therefore the separation of gender in religion is not so distinct but more interconnected.

Minoan religion, the ritual activities and duties of both Minoan genders are interconnected.

The first connection between the religious rituals depicted on the vase and the sarcophagus is that the sarcophagus depicts a ritual that uses a rhyton in a libations ceremony. This is significant as the *Harvester Vase* is a rhyton, and vases like the *Harvester Vase* could have been used in the ritual depicted on the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*. Therefore, the imagery depicted on the vase could be directly related to the ceremonies on the sarcophagus. Moreover, even if the artifacts, or other objects like these, are not directly related, then the connection between rhytons and funerary sarcophaguses indicates that the spaces and objects of Minoan religion are not conclusively gendered. There is interplay, an area of intersection between the roles of the figures on the rhyton, and the role of the figures who pour the rhyton on the sarcophagus. Rhytons, like the *Harvester Vase*, are not completely separate from the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, and therefore the gendered oppositions of these objects are not completely separate either.

Furthermore, the ritual procession depicted on the *Harvester Vase* could be a ritual that preceded a religious ceremony like the one depicted on the sarcophagus. This idea is further supported by the fact that musicians accompany both processions, indicating a shared aspect of both ceremonies. Also supporting this idea, the musicians on the *Harvester Vase* wear the same long cloak as the musicians on the *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*. This is significant for two reasons. First, the same clothing is depicted in two different Minoan rituals indicates it is an article of clothing specifically related to ritual activity, and second, it indicates that those wearing the cloak on the sarcophagus and those wearing the cloak on the vase are performing similar roles, perhaps even the same religious roles in the two ceremonies. Again the shared aspect of musicians and ceremonial dress indicates that these two ceremonies, one considered male and one female, are not mutually exclusive, they share important aspects and practices and therefore are not distinctly gendered.

A final evidence for a shared connection between the vase and the sarcophagus is that, the site where both objects were found, the villa at Hagia Triada, was a center for rituals, indicating that the rituals of both artifacts, and consequently both genders, took place in the same general space. Robert Koehl who has written on the villa extensively stated that the villa's function was most likely to be a center for the performance of important religious rituals.³⁰ That both the vase and the sarcophagus were found at Hagia Triada

30. Robert B. Koehl, "The Chieftain Cup and a Minoan Rite of Passage," *JHS* 106 (1986): 109.

evidences that the rituals they depict were performed at this religious center. This is significant because it shows that the *Harvester Vase* procession, a religious event read as male, and the *Hagia Triada* ritual, a ritual read as female were performed at the same site. If there had been as strict of gender polarizations in the Minoan religion as some scholars have emphasized, these events would not be taking place at the same religious site. The distinctions would have gone beyond role and rituals and would have extended into place. There would have been separate sites for the female and male processions. Thus, the mutual site of the processions evidences that they were more closely related than has so far been given credit.

In conclusion, Minoan art and religion has been read as strictly gendered. Since Evans began discussion concerning the Minoan civilization, males and females were cast into separate spheres of religion, with separate duties, roles, and rituals. Until recently, this polarized view of gender had been unquestioned; however, scholars like Benjamin Alberti and Priscilla Field have begun to deconstruct the gendered binary oppositions archeologists and scholars have placed on Minoan society. The *Harvester Vase* and *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, both found at the villa at Hagia Triada, have particularly been used to support a distinct gendered reading of Minoan society. However, on closer investigation, both the sarcophagus and the vase are ambiguous in terms of gender. The lack of distinctly sexed bodies and the gender ambiguity of dress and depiction on both the vase and sarcophagus reveal that we cannot clearly identify any figures on the vase or sarcophagus as male or female. Furthermore, connections between the rituals depicted on the vase and the sarcophagus, evidence that the Minoan religion was not strictly polarized according to gender, there is far more intersection between these "gender specific" rituals than has been given credit, and in fact both men and women participated together in important religious rituals. This investigation into Minoan gender constructions is important because it sheds light onto assumptions that have been made, and accepted about Minoan society which need to be analyzed more closely and questioned. A deconstruction of the gendered Minoan society can lead scholars to a more significant and specific understanding of the Minoan religion, people, and civilization, and an investigation into areas and distinctions of Minoan society that have thus far been overlooked.



Fig. 1, *Harvester Vase*, 1500–1450 B.C.E.

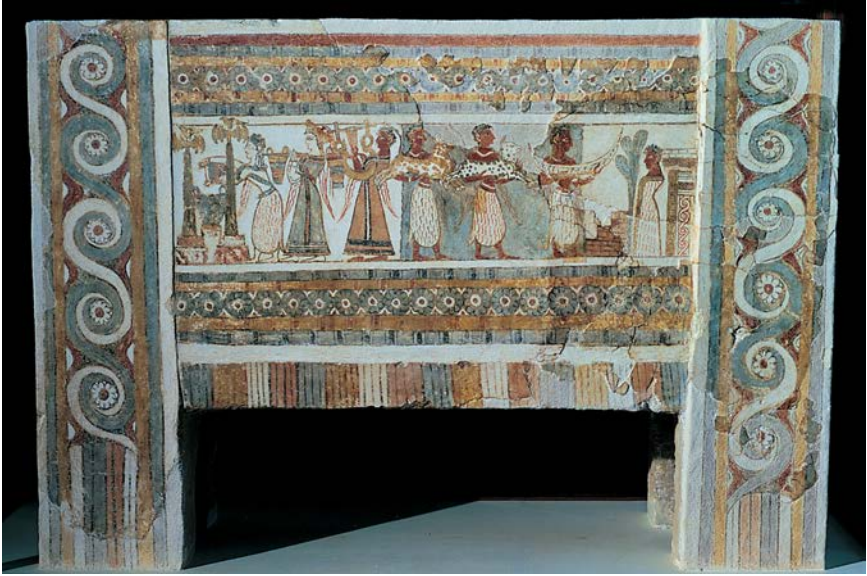


Fig. 2, *Hagia Triada Sarcophagus*, ca. 1400 B.C.E.

HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY, HISTORICITY, AND THE HEBREW BIBLE

JOSHUA J. BODINE

Most historians today are acutely aware that premodern history writing efforts—including those of the biblical text—were far from objective undertakings to record history “as it really happened.”¹ This comment alone

1. The phrase “as it actually happened” or “how it really was” (“wie es eigentlich gewesen”) comes from the influential nineteenth-century German historian, Leopold von Ranke, who believed that the historian’s role was not to judge the past to instruct the future but to aim for an accurate reconstruction of how it really occurred. See Leopold von Ranke, *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1885), vii. Yet, for ancient historians this was “neither an important consideration nor a claim one could substantiate.” Rather, “the study and writing of history” for ancient historians was “a form of ideology.” On this see, respectively, Moses I. Finley, *Ancient History: Evidence and Models* (New York: Viking, 1986), 4, and Moses I. Finley, *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York: Viking, 1975), 29. Even most modern historians do not espouse the approach of von Ranke and recognize that such objectivity simply cannot be achieved. Today, for example, more than simply cataloguing and presenting objective knowledge about events as they occurred in the past, historians connect with and “generate a discourse about the past” that is as much a cultural and literary construction as anything else. See Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: Norton, 1994), 245. See also Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Vintage, 1961); Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988); and others. As it relates to reconstructing history in the Hebrew Bible, see, for example, the various articles in Lester L. Grabbe, ed., *Can a “History of Israel” Be Written?* (JSOTSup 245; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997). For other relevant discussions that touch upon these issues in relation to biblical scholarship, see, for example, Jens Bruun Kofoed, *Text and History: Historiography and the Study of the Biblical Text* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), especially 1–33, and John J. Collins, *The Bible after Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 1–51. (For further references, see note 30 below.) While complete objectivity is impossible, there is no need to go the way of postmodernism and dismiss the efforts of the modern historical-critical enterprise entirely. Postmodernism has provided many useful course corrections, but that doesn’t necessitate that any interpretation is as valid as another. Despite the flaws of the genre of modern history, this study maintains the belief that when sufficient data is available, it is still possible to interact with and interpret all of the available data to determine what *essentially* may have

is, of course, somewhat pedestrian and nowadays met with a yawn by most scholars. However, the details and implications behind such an assertion are more nuanced and complex than simple acknowledgement and, when discussing the Hebrew Bible or the history of Israel, are also difficult to appreciate and be embraced by traditional/lay readers. Indeed, history writing, historicity, and historical reliability are perennial topics when discussing the texts of the Bible. For even among some of its most “history-like” sections, there are numerous difficulties and details that raise questions about the Bible as history. Thus, with an introductory (and pedagogical) perspective in mind, the following threefold approach will be pursued with respect to the values and limitations of reading and using the biblical text as history: (1) as models of Israelite historiography,² briefly comment on the production of Kings and Chronicles as they factor into a discussion of historical reliability; (2) provide a concise evaluation of a few passages in Kings with comparative data in Chronicles; and (3) offer some general observations about history, history writing, and historicity in the Hebrew Bible and in general.

A PORTRAIT OF KINGS AND CHRONICLES

Kings and Chronicles arguably represent the most characteristically “historical-looking” sections of the Hebrew Bible, texts that portray the Bible in its best historical light as it were.³ Yet, they are nonetheless similar to any other piece of ancient literature (and even some modern histories for that matter) in their ideological motivations and content—political, social, theological, and otherwise. In this, although Kings and Chronicles might contain what can be considered authentic historical content, and while the author(s) may have de-

happened, and be able to create a reasonable interpretation that is useful for understanding and explaining the past for the present. This, however, should not be confused with the historical idealism of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries akin to von Ranke.

2. Depending on the scholar, the term “historiography” can mean different things. In this paper it is used to convey both the act of history writing itself along with the method and shape the writing of history took—specifically, the writing of history within the Bible and among its neighbors.

3. The term “historical looking” is meant to convey the idea that it conforms to the expectations, traits, and characteristics of modern popular understandings of history as a record of events, and history writing as the apparent gathering and presentation of authentic and unworked historical sources to recount the events of the past in a relatively chronological order. In other words, it looks and smells like “history writing,” in contrast to the other more mythic, folkloric, legendary, or story-like biblical texts; or the prophetic books which are more a collection of oracles given in specific historical situations rather than attempts at history writing. While the present study is limited to passages in Kings and Chronicles, various biblical texts fall under the term “historical books” and usually include Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and Ezra and Nehemiah. For a useful survey of this and other elements see Richard D. Nelson, *The Historical Books* (Interpreting Biblical Texts; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

picted situations and elements of the past somewhat accurately in their general contours, determining their historical value and whether they can be used to reconstruct the histories of Israel and Judah is a complex matter that is not comforting for those seeking certainty.

Comments on the Production of Kings and Chronicles

With respect to the content, social setting, dates, themes, and so on behind the books of Kings and Chronicles, some careful selectivity is in order. To survey such elements in their entirety would be well beyond the scope of this paper and would demand the interrogation of all the pertinent textual, archaeological, and historical remains, not to mention the important secondary literature on the subject. Here, it will be enough to cover a few broad and commonly-accepted generalities.

At its most basic level, the book of Kings is a narrative account structured around the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah (including the united Israel under Solomon). It contains a variety of material, such as annalistic data for monarchical reigns, speeches, prayers, legendary stories, and miracles, reflections on personalities and characters, descriptions of building activities, long narratives of important events, and more. It also appears to have been made up of a variety of sources, the nature and extent of which is debatable.⁴ Its

4. Kings itself refers explicitly to several "sources" for its information, among those the "Book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kgs 11:41), the "Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah" (e.g. 1 Kgs 14:29; 15:7, 23; 22:45; 2 Kgs 8:23; 12:19; 14:18; 15:6, 36; 16:19; 20:20; 21:17, 25; 23:28; 24:5), and the "Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel" (e.g. 1 Kgs 14:19; 15:31; 16:5, 14, 20, 27; 22:39; 2 Kgs 1:18; 10:34; 13:8, 12; 14:15, 28; 15:11, 15, 21, 26, 31). Other unmentioned sources could also be postulated for material such as the popular stories of Elijah and Elisha, or for long narrative sections such as the story of Hezekiah and Sennacherib. However, assessing any one of these "sources" is problematic as they have to be reconstructed and cannot be assured (e.g. the continued debate as to the directional influence between parallel passages in Isa 36–39 and 2 Kgs 18–19). Even those sources that are explicitly mentioned are not available for consultation; there is no compositional data, their nature and extent is unknown, and even surety as to their existence is unavailable. Even then, how would it be known which material in Kings is quoted from those sources? Or, how does it explain significant passages that are much more than one would find in annals? Moreover, parallel passages in Chronicles seem to conflate what Kings mentions as the separate annals of Israel and Judah and calls them the "Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel" (e.g. 2 Chr 16:11; 25:26; 27:27; 28:26; 32:32; 35:26–27; 36:8). Are these references to the current book of Kings or something else? Another passage has a reference to simply a "Book of the Kings" (2 Chr 24:27). Is Chronicles freely altering or creatively recording sources, and if so, what are the implications for the book of Kings? Even more problematic is the passage mentioning the "Book of the Acts of Solomon" that implies some sort of royal biography when such writings were unlikely to have been produced so early. However, using these sources to assume or buttress the claim to the historical reliability of Kings is suspect in its methodology. Sources or not, each historical claim made by Kings needs to be examined individually and carefully. For a recent volume discussing the sources and composition of Kings among other elements, see the various articles in Baruch Halpern and

composite nature is rightly ascribed to various sources of some kind, but not much should be made of this as the text is so much more than a compilation of potential sources. It is a remarkable achievement in its final compilation that betrays itself as a work of sustained editing by Israelite scribes. For this reason, seeking a date of composition is difficult. Its *terminus a quo* is obviously sometime after the “thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah” in the sixth century B.C.E. (2 Kgs 25:7), but this may only represent a later stage of its development. However, a first edition of Kings should likely not be sought before the latter eighth century B.C.E.⁵ Its *terminus ad quem* is even more difficult.⁶

Andre Lemaire, eds., *The Book of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

5. The largest factor in this determination is the evidence for the rise and spread of writing and literacy in ancient Israel and Judah and the origin of its literature. See, for example, Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age* (Archaeology and Biblical Studies 11; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 127–35 who sees justifiable context for allowing the possibility of the creation of Israelite literature to reach back to the ninth century B.C.E., or David W. Jamieson-Drake, *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archaeological Approach* (JSOTSup 109; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1991) who maintains a date in the late eighth century B.C.E. Other considerations should include the combination of Israelite material of a northern provenance with Judahite material which would make sense after the fall of Samaria in 722/721 B.C.E. 2 Kgs 18:5 could be a possible demarcation of a first “edition/version” of Kings commissioned in Hezekiah’s time in a nationalistic effort to resurrect the glory days of David and Solomon as it were, now that the northern kingdom was gone. For this line of reasoning and the view that much of the literature in the Bible originated in Hezekiah’s time, see, for example, William Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 64–90; for an overview of the dating of Kings specifically see 77–81. Hezekiah is certainly portrayed as a model Davidic king and said to be like none other before or after; a perfect leader that all Israel could unite together under. The mention of Hezekiah in 2 Kgs 18:5 seems to be at odds with the note about Josiah in 2 Kgs 23:25, lending itself as potential evidence of an early edition of Kings begun in the days of Hezekiah. In the context of the larger so-called *Deuteronomistic History* Kings is a part of, the date of the beginning of a book of Kings is likely somewhat later during Josiah’s time. For a useful discussion of multiple views from various scholars on the Deuteronomistic History that has bearing on the book of Kings, see Raymond F. Person, Jr., ed., “In Conversation with Thomas Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2005),” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9.17 (2009): 1–49. This is not a denial that Kings is based on sources of an earlier date, but that even if a limited, core book of Kings was created and then edited/updated over the centuries, its creation should not be sought before the latter eighth century B.C.E.

6. Unfortunately, the earliest extant manuscript fragments are from the Hellenistic-period province of Yehud. To postulate its creation at this time is, of course, drastic and unnecessary. Yet, this is a significant obstacle for determining the editorial history of Kings with absoluteness. On the issue of the extant manuscripts, the lateness of the text, and an informed response as to why this should not *a priori* remove Kings from the “pool of reliable evidence” about the period it describes, see Kofoed, *Text and History*, 33–112.

As for Chronicles, though a large portion is dedicated to the monarchical reigns of the kings of Judah akin to the book of Kings,⁷ it is more of a condensed history that begins with an extensive genealogy starting with Adam and traced down to David, at which point significant attention is devoted to the Judean kings up through the exile into Babylon, with brief mention of the royal Persian decree for the Jews to return and rebuild the temple. Not only does the last verse indicate that its current form did not occur before Cyrus the Great's decree in 539 B.C.E., based on other clues it is likely that its compilation occurred even later.⁸ Once again, a *terminus ad quem* is difficult for much the same reasons as for Kings. With respect to Chronicles, it is generally agreed that the Chronicler relied on earlier portions of the Hebrew Bible—particularly the book of Kings—and was probably a scribe associated with the Jerusalem temple.⁹

Since both Kings and Chronicles are extended narrative texts, brief mention of their general themes, interests, and ideologies is important for elucidating their own internal purposes, as well as the purpose to which readers might use each text as reliable history. Both emphasize acceptable and unacceptable forms of worship, the cult and the Jerusalem temple, theological elements more than political, which center on the Judean monarchy and its covenantal promise with Yahweh established with the model ruler David, as well as an evaluation of each king based on theological considerations. More themes and characteristics could be mentioned, and in many instances Kings and Chronicles come across as quite different, but the similarities above bring attention to a distinction that should be made. What is important here is that, first and foremost, both Kings and Chronicles are religious/ideological histories.

In sum, Kings and Chronicles are late, ideologically-biased, and heavily edited texts. This alone should be enough to give a reader pause about their

7. The northern kings are omitted entirely.

8. For details see Ralph W. Klein, "Chronicles, Book of 1–2," *ABD* 1:994.

9. Internally, Chronicles references sources much like Kings does and comes with similar criticisms (see note 4 above). Aside from this, there have been noticeable attempts to argue for the idea that Kings and Chronicles were parallel histories that had common sources at their disposal, and not that Chronicles is reliant on Kings. For example A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994). Notwithstanding, there is still good reason to believe that Chronicles was reliant on a Samuel–Kings text as well as other biblical material. See, for example, Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 20–47 or Steven L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985). See also the varied opinions expressed in Patrick M. Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Historian* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

historical value. However, before exploring this and similar questions, a look at a few particular parallel passages in Kings and Chronicles is in order, so as to offer a context for illuminating the general discussion of biblical history writing and historicity reserved for the end. The passages that will be given attention are from the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, found in 2 Kgs 18:1–20:21 and 2 Chr 29:1–32:33.¹⁰

Hezekiah in Second Kings: A Brief Analysis

For purposes here, the portion of Second Kings devoted to Hezekiah can be divided into the following large units: an introduction, summary, and reflection upon Hezekiah (vv. 18:1–8); a recapitulation of the fall of Samaria (vv. 18:9–12); recounting of the Assyrian invasion of Judah and Jerusalem’s miraculous deliverance (vv. 18:13–19:37); mention of Hezekiah’s illness and recovery (vv. 20:1–11); reference to Hezekiah’s visit by Babylon (vv. 20:12–19); and a concluding summary (vv. 20:20–21). Each one of these units (excepting the concluding summary for obvious reasons) begins with some sort of reference to a period of time;¹¹ the summary in 2 Kgs 20:20–21 then concludes the reign of Hezekiah with a formulaic reference to the “Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah” and how the rest of his deeds are recorded there. These blocks of individual episodes, coupled with the summary reference, give the story its history like character and the appearance that the author¹² of these passages was using an annalistic source for material. Yet, a close reading of the text along with other biblical passages and extra-biblical evidence indicates that the author was doing much more than simply presenting the deeds and details of Hezekiah’s reign from available sources. In fact, each one of these units contain details that play a part in presenting several interpretational problems—chronological, literary, historical, and archaeological—for anyone trying to reconstruct a “history” of Hezekiah’s reign.

Problems of Chronology

To begin with, one is immediately confronted with inconsistencies in the chronological details presented as well as the chronological arrangement of the

10. Rather than focus on the accounts of kings from a much earlier period, those dealing with the reign of Hezekiah will be considered as potentially close in time to the actual events described (see note 5 above), thus serving as an illustration that even close proximity (let alone the distant past) is not necessarily an indicator of historical accuracy.

11. For example: “In the third year . . .” (2 Kgs 18:1); “In the fourth year . . .” (2 Kgs 18:9); “In the fourteenth year . . .” (2 Kgs 18:13); “In those days . . .” (2 Kgs 20:1); and “At that time . . .” (2 Kgs 20:12).

12. The term “author” is used here in the singular for sake of convenience, with recognition that multiple authors likely had a hand in the text as it stands.

individual units. Regarding the chronological details, it is known from fairly accurate external dating that Samaria fell in 722/721 B.C.E. and Sennacherib invaded Judah in 701 B.C.E. However, as the former is said to have occurred in Hezekiah's sixth year (2 Kgs 18:9–10) and the latter in his fourteenth year (2 Kgs 18:13), we are confronted with problematic time spans for various periods of Hezekiah's life, leading scholars to figure his reign differently.¹³ This is, of course, compounded by the presentation of the units in the order they appear.¹⁴

Problems of a Literary Nature

The chronological problems mentioned above do pose problems of a literary nature in the sense of how they fit and flow together; yet, there are additional issues that arise when reading in a literary-critical manner. For example, there are theological concerns that seem to override attention to exactness in historical reporting.¹⁵ There are signs of literary shaping that

13. While the external dates for Samaria's destruction and Sennacherib's invasion of Judah are generally accepted, depending on which date is used as the reference point, scholars come up with different years of Hezekiah's reign. There are, of course, other details that figure into each dating scheme, but the basics come down to (1) if Samaria's destruction and Hezekiah's sixth year are synchronized, then Hezekiah's reign is figured as 727/726–699/698 B.C.E. (e.g., Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 11; Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1988], 228); or (2) if Sennacherib's invasion is correlated with Hezekiah's fourteenth year, then Hezekiah's reign is figured as 715/714–687/686 B.C.E. (e.g., Nadav Na'aman, "Hezekiah and the Kings of Assyria," *TA* 21 [1994]: 235–54). In either case, at least one external synchronism has to be ignored and many other problems are caused with the internal chronology in Kings. It must be admitted, then, that either literary concerns superseded accurate chronological ordering, or the author was separated from the events enough in time that mistakes were made in creating the various units that make up Hezekiah's reign. For a summary, as well as details on the possible chronological ordering of certain events see, for example, J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2d ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 403–04.

14. Tensions in chronology, history, and other details have led some to suggest that the position of some passages is out of order chronologically. For example, the mention of the fourteenth year in 2 Kgs 18:13 may have originally been associated with the episode of Hezekiah's sickness beginning in 2 Kgs 20:1–11 and in a roundabout way associated with Sennacherib's invasion. Or, that the following verses (2 Kgs 18:14–16) may have been originally associated with the payment of tribute, not to Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E., but to Sargon II as part of an earlier campaign in Hezekiah's reign. For an example of the former see Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 228; for the latter see Jeremy Goldberg, "Two Assyrian Campaigns Against Hezekiah and Later Eighth Century Biblical Chronology," *Bib* 80 (1999): 360–90.

15. An example of this can be seen in the mention of Sennacherib's death in 2 Kgs 19:37, wherein the impression is given that Sennacherib died soon after his "defeat" at Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. Sennacherib, however, died roughly two decades later. But the reporting of his death in such a way serves the function of fulfilling the comment in 2 Kgs 19:6–7—literarily telescoping the intervening time dramatizes the reasons for Sennacherib's death in a much more meaningful way than simply reporting that he died two decades later, but also draws tenuous connections between his death as a result of a run in with

affect the presentation of Hezekiah with the Judean kings who come before and after.¹⁶ Even in the case of the story of Hezekiah and Sennacherib in 2 Kgs 18:13–19:37, one of the most lengthy narrative passages and one that can be compared to external sources, we can see that we are dealing with a literary creation. The attention this narrative receives in the text is evidence of the importance of this episode and its impact on Judean ideology. It is not a simple reporting of the events of 701 B.C.E. when the Assyrian king ravaged the Judean countryside and threatened Jerusalem, but a powerfully crafted narrative overlaying a historical core. Unpacking the historical tidbits, the

the God of Israel decades before. For an interpretation that the murder of Sennacherib, coupled with other elements of the story, is literarily fashioned in such a way as to highlight that Sennacherib's death is due to his blaspheming of Yahweh, "in line with the 'logic' of the time" where murder or some other terrible fate was a "sign of divine wrath" (118–19), see Arie van der Kooij, "The Story of Hezekiah and Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18–19): A Sample of Ancient Historiography," in *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets* (ed. Johannes C. de Moor and Harry F. Van Rooy; OtSt 44; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 107–19.

16. It is simply a fact of life that all people have both virtues and vices, and if the biblical evidence is examined critically, such a reality didn't preclude the kings of Judah. Even so, the biblical portrayal of the Judean kings are not necessarily realistic reconstructions of such persons, more than they are oversimplified portraits that hint to the underlying motivations of the author to create a pattern of "good" or "bad," when the underlying details in reality demonstrate a mixture of both. On this see, for example, Peter R. Ackroyd, "The Biblical Interpretations of the Reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah," in *In The Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honour of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 247–59.

An example of this is how Hezekiah is portrayed as an ideal king, despite the existence of some historical and textual considerations that this may be a glorification. The mention of Hezekiah's revolt in 2 Kgs 18:7 seems to be a righteous action in that Hezekiah would not serve Assyria and had Yahweh's approval of rebellion. Yet it was this that precipitated Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, and even though Jerusalem was eventually spared, the rest of Judah was utterly devastated. And this is not to even mention the fact that although Hezekiah retained the throne, Judah remained a vassal of Assyria for many years to come. Hezekiah's revolt could, then, be characterized as a disaster economically and politically. This is just one example among others that the events and details of Hezekiah's reign were idealized depictions. In fact, if one were to remove 2 Kgs 18:14–16 in which Hezekiah capitulates to Sennacherib and pays him a hefty tribute for his rebellious pretensions, as well as 2 Kgs 20:13–19 where Hezekiah opens the treasure-house to Babylonian envoys and is chastised by Isaiah—both arguably later insertions to tone down Hezekiah's image in order to glorify Josiah's—the remaining verses dedicated to Hezekiah are entirely laudatory of him (and even those that are—such as the one-verse mention of his cultic reform—are questionable data). On the possibility that 2 Kgs 18:14–16 is a later insertion and only makes sense in relation to the larger work of Kings (hence, why it does not exist in the parallel account in Isaiah) see Christopher R. Seitz, "Account A and the Annals of Sennacherib: A Reassessment," *JSOT* 58 (1993): 47–57 and his fuller treatment in Christopher R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36–39* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1991). Regarding 2 Kgs 20:13–19, with its clear overtones and foreshadowing of the Babylonian exile, it is a passage inserted much later and not a prophetic utterance of the eighth-century prophet Isaiah. For problems with Hezekiah's cultic reform, see note 18 below.

obvious narrative seams and sources, the parallel accounts, the language and literary style, the linguistic elements, textual variations, the context and content of various speeches and prayers, and a host of other details, has given rise to a vast amount of secondary literature by scholars trying to understand the story both literarily and historically.¹⁷

Problems of History (and Archaeology)

Unfortunately, the problems do not end with chronological and literary difficulties, as these merely feed into issues of a historical nature (with archaeology playing an important part in places). A few historical problems arising from chronological inconsistencies and literary shaping could include the

17. In addition to the literature referenced in other notes herein, and excluding the relevant biblical commentaries, treatments of this particular passage include the following (this list is by no means exhaustive): Bernhard Stade, "Miscellen. Anmerkungen zu 2 Kö. 15–21," ZAW 6 (1886), 156–92; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis* (SBT Second Series 3; London: SCM Press, 1967); John B. Geyer, "2 Kings XVIII 14–16 and the Annals of Sennacherib," VT 21, no. 5 (1971): 604–06; Ronald E. Clements, *Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem: A Study of the Interpretation of Prophecy in the Old Testament* (JSOTSup 13; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980); Alan R. Millard, "Sennacherib's Attack on Hezekiah," TynBul 36 (1985): 61–77; William H. Shea, "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign," JBL 104.3 (1985): 401–18; Hayim Tadmor, "The War of Sennacherib Against Judah: Historiographical and Historical Aspects," Zion 50 (1985): 65–80; Danna Nolan Fewell, "Sennacherib's Defeat: Words at War in 2 Kings 18.13–19.37," JSOT 34 (1986): 79–90; Francolino J. Gonçalves, *L'Expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine dans la littérature hébraïque ancienne* (EBib NS 7; Paris: Gabalda, 1986); Arie van der Kooij, "Das assyrische Heer vor den Mauern Jerusalems im Jahr 701 v. Chr.," ZDPV 102 (1986): 93–109; Christopher Begg, "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign: An Additional Indication," JBL 106.4 (1987): 685–86; Iain W. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Book of Kings: A Contribution to the Debate about the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History* (BZAW 172; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988); Paul E. Dion, "Sennacherib's Expedition to Palestine," EgT 20 (1989): 5–25; Klaas A. D. Smelik, "Distortion of Old Testament Prophecy: The Purpose of Isaiah xxvi and xxvii," OTS 24 (1989): 70–93; Christof Hardmeier, *Prophetie im Streit vor dem Untergang Judas. Erzählkommunikative Studien zur Entstehungssituation der Jesaja- und Jeremia-erzählungen in II Reg 18–20 und Jer 37–40* (BZAW 187; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990); August H. Konkel, "The Sources of the Story of Hezekiah in the Book of Isaiah," VT 43.4 (1993): 462–82; Raymond F. Person Jr., *The Kings—Isaiah and Kings—Jeremiah Recensions* (BZAW 252; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997); William R. Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies* (SHANE 18; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999); Richard S. Hess, "Hezekiah and Sennacherib in 2 Kings 18–20," in *Zion, City of Our God* (ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999), 23–41; the various articles in Lester L. Grabbe, ed., *'Like a Bird in a Cage': The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE* (JSOTSup 363; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); Yoo-Ki Kim, "In Search of the Narrator's Voice: A Discourse Analysis of 2 Kings 18:13–16," JBL 127.3 (2008): 477–89; Paul S. Evans, "The Hezekiah—Sennacherib Narrative as Polyphonic Text," JSOT 33.3 (2009): 335–58.

depiction of cult reformation,¹⁸ possible anachronistic references,¹⁹ differing accounts of the same event,²⁰ issues in determining cause and effect,²¹ reliability of the recreation of various speeches,²² and questions of contemporary witnesses and material. In brief, if Kings is a creative working of sources and past

18. Regarding cult reformation, whether Hezekiah actually instituted a religious reform is debated both on archaeological and historical grounds. For arguments from various standpoints, see, for example, Lowell K. Handy, "Hezekiah's Unlikely Reform," *ZAW* 100.1 (1988): 111–15; Oded Borowski, "Hezekiah's Reforms and the Revolt against Assyria," *BA* 58.3 (1995): 148–55; Nadav Na'aman, "The Debated Historicity of Hezekiah's Reform in the Light of Historical and Archaeological Research," *ZAW* 107.2 (1995): 179–95; Lisbeth S. Fried, "The High Places (Bāmôt) and the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah," *JAOS* 122.3 (2002): 437–65; Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology," *JSOT* 30.3 (2006): 259–285; and Diana Edelman, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cult Centralization," *JSOT* 32.4 (2008): 395–434.

19. Many have dealt with the anachronistic reference to the Egyptian King Tiharka in 2 Kgs 19:9 and have tried to explain it in various ways. As an example, a recent proposal can be found in Il-Sung Andrew Yun, "Different Readings of the Taharka Passage in 2 Kings 19 and the Chronology of the 25th Egyptian Dynasty," in *From Babel to Babylon: Essays on Biblical History and Literature in Honour of Brian Peckham* (ed. Joyce Rilett Wood, John E. Harvey and Mark Leuchter; New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 169–81.

20. For example, there are clear tensions between the portrayals of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in the biblical account when compared to the Assyrian record. It is a given that the biblical text is being written with a clear ideology that is not above sacrificing historical accuracy for its story. Assyrian annals are somewhat different. Yes, they are prone to exaggeration and propaganda to serve their own ideology (on this see Antti Laato, "Assyrian Propaganda and the Falsification of History in the Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib," *VT* 45.2 [1995]: 198–226), yet one cannot assert that they are both of equal historical value, first and foremost for reasons of genre.

21. What is meant by this is that the author of Kings interprets various episodes as having specific causes that are either historically unverifiable, or explainable by other historical means. For example, was Yahweh the ultimate cause of Sennacherib's death (indicated by 2 Kgs 19:6–7, 37) or was it due to internal political happenings in the Assyrian homeland? Was it the rumor of Tiharka's approach that caused Sennacherib to withdraw from Palestine (if one accepts the source-critical reading that isolates 2 Kgs 18:17–19:9b, 36–37, this is indicated by the flow from verses 7–9 to 36) or the angel of Yahweh striking the Assyrian army down (2 Kgs 19:35–36)? Or, did the payment of tribute in 2 Kgs 18:14–16 have anything to do with it as its current placement might suggest? This list could be multiplied to the same effect.

22. How historically reliable are the various speeches in these verses? Did Isaiah and Hezekiah really say the words that are placed on their lips, or are they simply dramatic recreations for the sake of the story (akin to what many ancient authors did in order to demonstrate what the character would have said in a given situation)? It might also be asked, as has been done, whether the speeches of the Rabshakeh are historically reliable words from an Assyrian official (that an Assyrian official did come to Jerusalem with a message is not in question), or creations of a Judean author, whether partly or in whole? On this, see Ehud Ben-Zvi, "Who Wrote the Speech of the Rabshakeh and When?" *JBL* 109.1 (1990): 79–92. See also Chaim Cohen, "Neo-Assyrian Elements in the First Speech of the Biblical Rab-Šāqē," *IOS* 9 (1979): 32–48; Dominic Rudman, "Is the Rabshakeh Also among the Prophets? A Rhetorical Study of 2 Kings XVIII 17–35," *VT* 50.1 (2000): 100–110; and Peter Machinist, "The Rab Šāqēh at the Wall of Jerusalem: Israelite Identity in the Face of the Assyrian 'Other,'" *Hebrew Studies* 41 (2000): 151–68.

events both chronologically and literarily, then what really happened in exact detail and time? Further, can such historical ambiguities and inconsistencies be completely resolved?

Hezekiah in Second Chronicles: A Comparison

For purposes of comparison with Second Kings, the relevant passages in Second Chronicles dealing with Hezekiah's reign can be broken out as follows: an introduction (2 Chr 29:1–2); a recounting of Hezekiah's religious reform and celebrations with summary praise for Hezekiah (2 Chr 31:20–21); a narration of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah and the deliverance of Jerusalem (2 Chr 32:1–23); mention of Hezekiah's illness and recovery (2 Chr 32:24–26); a recounting of Hezekiah's riches and deeds (2 Chr 32:27–31); and a conclusion (2 Chr 32:32–33). It is clear from the above breakdown that there is a similar framework in comparison with Second Kings but also some radical differences.

One need only follow the organizational units to briefly unpack the comparative details and explore their commonalities and divergences. In both Kings and Chronicles there are similar introductions to Hezekiah and his reign, but where in Kings there is only a passing reference to Hezekiah's religious reforms as part of the introduction, in Chronicles those religious reforms and the activities associated with them receive extended attention. In this case, there is a clear focus on Hezekiah and his religious achievements in favor of political and military details, among which is the absence from Chronicles of the entire next unit in Kings referring to the fall of Samaria.²³ Following this there is the narration of the story of Hezekiah and Sennacherib with Chronicles being a noticeably more condensed version that highlights Hezekiah's exceptionalism and omits potentially negative material.²⁴ Then, there is Hezekiah's illness and recovery receiving attention in both texts, but with marked differences in the material included.²⁵ Lastly, mention of the visit from the envoys of the

23. This unit was simply a synchronism with the fall of the northern kingdom and the material in 2 Kings directly preceding the account of Hezekiah. Nevertheless it is entirely missing in Chronicles. Other examples of missing political and military details include the lack of mention of Hezekiah's revolt against Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18:7) and the absence of reference to Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18:14–16).

24. For example, it was all Hezekiah's "faithful deeds" (2 Chr 32:1) and his leadership that prepared him for his victory over Assyria, not potentially his capitulation hinted at in 2 Kgs 18:14–16 (if this is to be associated with tribute to Sennacherib; see note 14 above). Even Isaiah has no significant role here as the person and leadership of Hezekiah is highlighted.

25. Even in the episode of Hezekiah's illness, Isaiah is absent in Chronicles since Hezekiah's recovery is a result of his humbling of himself and not because of Isaiah's help. Associated with Hezekiah's sickness is the visit of the envoys from Babylon and even here

Babylonian King and Hezekiah's opening and tour of the treasury as seen in Kings, is contrasted with Chronicle's recounting of Hezekiah's riches and deeds and a later reference to officials of Babylon with the two not clearly connected. To be sure, then, there are noticeable and important differences between the two. Still, there is an overarching similarity in the pattern of the chronological ordering of events that carries with it certain implications.²⁶

On Comparing Kings and Chronicles

Admittedly, a comparative approach to the specific passages in Kings and Chronicles relating to Hezekiah could be reflected on much more. As well, akin to the brief analysis of Hezekiah in Kings, Chronicles could have been given its own treatment.²⁷ In this regard, it is important to note the following. First, an analysis of the Hezekiah material in Chronicles leads to chronological, literary, historical, and archaeological issues of the same magnitude as those adumbrated for Kings. Hence, for purposes here, the brief analysis of Second Kings should be enough to provide a general framework with which to answer questions of historical reliability. Second, the similarities and differences between the Hezekiah passages in Kings and Chronicles are important only as they factor into a discussion of the *cumulative* value and limitations of the Bible's witness of the reign of Hezekiah.²⁸ In this regard, the comparison above is beneficial insofar as it offers an example of history writing in ancient Israel. In reality, each must stand on its own when addressing the larger question of historical reliability. It will not do to simply combine the two accounts together as many traditional readers do and imply a fuller historical account.

A PICTURE OF HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND HISTORICITY

Although only a cursory glance, the discussion above should provide enough reasons for a reader to proceed carefully when using Kings and

potentially negative material is missing when, for example, Chronicles does not mention Hezekiah showing the treasure-house to the Babylonian envoys or of Isaiah's scathing response, even though Chronicles does retain a memory of the envoys visiting Hezekiah in the context of a mention of his "riches."

26. Is Chronicles simply taking the basic Kings text and its structure and expanding and omitting material to suit the Chronicler's own purposes? If this is evidence of Chronicles reliance on Kings, and if Kings has problems with historical reliability, then how much more so is Chronicles unreliable?

27. Not to mention Isa 36–39 (= 2 Kgs 18–19) if talking about the biblical witness of Hezekiah as a whole.

28. In some senses, such comparanda leads to more questions of potential literary reliance on Kings by Chronicles, or the value of the scholar being able to witness the methods of the Chronicler as a historian at work on sources available to the scholar (i.e., Kings), than it does to the historical value of taking material from both *in toto*.

Chronicles (together or separate) in an effort to explain things “as they really happened” or to reconstruct an historically accurate picture of the Israelite past. Equally important, such details do not portend well for biblical texts beyond the so-called historical books.²⁹ Leaving the issue here, however, highlights only the limitations of reading and using the Bible as history, without much discussion of its value or the nuances involved in considering these issues in context.

History and History Writing in Ancient Israel

Inquiring as to the values and limitations of historical accounts in the Hebrew Bible such as Kings and Chronicles raises questions not only of their historical reliability but also of their nature as history writing. In other words, were the biblical authors in fact doing “history” and did they think they were (if can such even be determined), or were they doing something else and what might that something else be if not history in the modern sense? With respect to the history writing of ancient Israel, these questions and many more exist in abundance by numerous scholars who have taken up the task of analyzing the biblical text and other comparative data to get at questions of historiography and historicity.³⁰ The theoretical elements involved in such a discussion (e.g., the nature, status and classification of certain biblical texts as history writing) are well beyond the focus here; what is more important is how such definitions often influence opinions of historical reliability.

The brief review of Kings and Chronicles above demonstrates that even these two books—examples of probably the closest thing to history writing that the Hebrew Bible offers—are rooted in and shaped by theological and other concerns that often sacrifice historical details and accuracy. Still, is this reason to deny what was being done in Kings and Chronicles the title of history writing?³¹ At least in the case of Kings, while it is arguably not antiquarian

29. For the historical books, see note 3 above.

30. For the seminal work on this, see John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983; repr., Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997); see also Baruch J. Halpern, *The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History* (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988); Brettler, *Creation of History in Ancient Israel*; Grabbe, *Can a “History of Israel” Be Written?*; Kofoed, *Text and History*; and, for a more recent survey of the study of Israel’s past and the relationship of the Bible and history, see Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel’s Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011). For a valuable comparison and example of history writing from the perspective of Mesopotamia, see Marc van de Meiroop, *Cuneiform Texts and the Writing of History* (Approaching the Ancient World; New York: Routledge, 1999).

31. History and history writing means many things to many people: how does one define the terms; does history or history writing necessarily equate with historical reality

in its interests, it is typical of the literature of its time and should be credited as being an example of ancient historiography.³²

It must be made clear, however, that historical accuracy and reliability do not necessarily follow from the claim that Kings and other parts of the Hebrew Bible are history writing. All sorts of ideology and literary creativity played a part in Israelite historiography. As has been demonstrated, in the case of Kings and Chronicles, theological/religious concerns played an important part in the recording, interpretation, and even the structure and content of the act of history writing. Not surprisingly, ideological elements were often at work in the writing of Israel's neighbors as well.³³ What is seen by modern readers as clear theologizing and literary creativity that was free with its use of facts, the Israelites and other ancient peoples likely saw as historical reality. In contrast to the definition of history writing as objective reporting and reconstruction of the past, Israel and her neighbors appear to not have even conceptualized history this way nor was there even a precedent for them doing so. History was not archival reporting (although they were not incapable of this when they wanted to be); rather, it was a complex cultural construction and interplay

or is that reality in a sense created by it; are there different qualities to these terms in different cultures and different times; what issues should be considered and how do those issues affect historians? All of these (and more) are important questions that call attention to the difficulties in delineating how one should approach history, history writing, and questions of historical reliability, both in the Hebrew Bible and in general. Incidentally, even biblical scholars can't agree on what constitutes history/history writing (see note 30 above for examples).

32. While it is by no means "history writing" in the modern sense of the term, and it is ideologically and literarily shaped, there are compelling reasons why it should be considered one example of ancient history writing, albeit of a different kind than that of Mesopotamia, Greece, or wherever. I agree with Kofoed's assessment that "there is nothing on the explanatory and representational levels that prevents us from regarding [Kings] as history writing." See Kofoed, *Text and History*, 247, as well as additional details in his fuller discussion, synthesis, and approach to Kings in 235–47.

33. Perhaps a prime example of this is the so-called *Weidner Chronicle* whose structure and content are preserved within a theological framework (see "The Weidner Chronicle," translated by Alan R. Millard [COS 1.138:468–70]). While it is exponentially longer than the Weidner Chronicle, the Deuteronomistic History that the book of Kings is a part of shares the same basic feature. Taking the book of Deuteronomy as its rule of judgment, the "history" of the nation of Israel (later Israel and Judah) is evaluated based on a particular religious ideal. Each king is either "bad" or "good" based on how well they matched up to, and followed the decrees of, Yahweh according to Deuteronomic values and ideals. Similar to the Weidner Chronicle, then, based on its overall form and contents the Deuteronomistic History is by and large a religious interpretation of the past. As "religion" was something simply part of the fabric of culture and not conceived of as an individual actuality, it was an important component in many texts that sought to preserve and interpret the past through the genre of history.

among tradition, societal reality, historical memory,³⁴ ideology, collective understanding, and historical detail (real or imagined), often to create and shape an identity and reconnect the past with the present in a meaningful way.³⁵ In this way, historical details important to the author were included while those that did not fit with what the author wanted to say were not; moreover, the details that did find their way in were often modified, embellished, or even reworked as a new literary creation. For many legitimate reasons, then, a good dose of historical skepticism is necessary when reading and using Kings and Chronicles—and even more so other texts of the Hebrew Bible³⁶—as history

34. The notion of collective memory, cultural memory, and similar ideas, and the role they play in history (both ancient and modern) has had an enormous impact on sociological and historical research in general and in the Bible. For a useful overview of memory and its role in historical discourse, see Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of *Memory* in Historical Discourse," *Representations* 69 (2000): 127–50. For a sampling of notable general works, see Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (trans. Francis J. Ditter and Vida Yazdi Ditter; New York: Harper & Row, 1980); Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory* (trans. S. Rendell and E. Claman; New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1993); Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Historical Approaches; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008); Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies* (Cultural Memory in the Present; trans. Rodney Livingstone; Verlag C. H. Beck oHG: München, 2000; repr., Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); see also Steven Kapp, "Collective Memory and the Actual Past," *Representations* 26 (1989): 123–49. For several recent works on memory and the biblical recollection of the past, see, for example, Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Memory, Tradition, and the Construction of the Past in Ancient Israel," *BTB* 27 (1997): 76–82; repr., in *Treasures Old and New: Essays in the Theology of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 1–17; Marc Zvi Brettler, "Memory in Ancient Israel," in *Memory and History in Christianity and Judaism* (ed. Michael A. Signer; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 1–17; Mark S. Smith, *The Memoirs of God: History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2004), especially 124–40, 159–72; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "Israelite Ethnicity in Iron I: Archaeology Preserves What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten in Israel's History," *JBL* 122.3 (2003): 401–25; Ronald S. Hendel, *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and earlier literature.

35. What we are dealing with in the biblical text is a narrative retelling of the past that, while containing actual historical elements, is creatively shaped by its author(s) ideologies, biases, and motivations; it is not the unimpeded and unfiltered past itself, if such can even be obtained. The biblical text is something well beyond a compilation of unworked historical sources—in many ways a presentation of the past that is literarily "innovative" and "imaginative" as well (for an example from Kings see Burke O. Long, "Historical Narrative and the Fictionalizing Imagination," *VT* 35.4 [1985]: 405–16). When discussing historical reliability this should not be taken lightly. History is always, in a sense, a creation and interpretation in which "[e]vents transpire, [and] people record, select and reshape them [into] historical texts," thus making it difficult to use the Bible simply as a source or repository of historical details. See Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel*, 1.

36. It is not coincidence that, aside from conservative works, recent treatments of the history of Israel do not even begin until after the patriarchal history. For examples of conservative works, see, John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4th ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster

as it really happened. However, while each detail should be taken into account and carefully weighed, it does not follow that Kings, Chronicles, or other texts are historically worthless and devoid of any value.³⁷

History and History-writing in General

This leads to the fact that any written manifestation of the past—whether ideologically motivated or an honest attempt at objectivity—is an interpretation in some form. Indeed, interpretation is the basic element involved in the remembering and recording of history. Of course, other elements play their part as well: things such as the nature and extent of historical sources, the cultural differences in how peoples reflect critically on their past (if at all), human memory, epistemological issues, and others, are all factors involved one way or another in the remembering or recording of history. Still, all of these in their own way feed back into the issue of interpretation. Examples of this could be multiplied many times over.³⁸ In the end, whether in its remember-

John Knox Press, 2000); Iain Provan et al., *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003); and Kenneth Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003). From a moderate standpoint, see for example Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, especially their discussion from 79–82. It should also be noted that genre is important to the discussion of historicity, for those books that are outside of the so-called historical books are so for good reason (see note 3 above). For a good discussion of genre-recognition and its importance, see John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (rev. and enl. ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 8–19.

37. There are details in Kings that suggest a historical core and provide a generally reliable picture. For example, the general correlation of Egyptian data with the invasion of Shishak in 1 Kgs 15:25–27 (all the more remarkable when the composition date of Kings is considered), the interactions of Israel with Syria, Assyria, Egypt, and Babylonia all throughout their history, the parallels with the Moabite Stone, the mention of Israelite and Judean kings in Assyrian and Babylonian records that fit in the time period they are placed in the book of Kings, the striking similarities with the Hezekiah and Sennacherib incident from both sides, the general and for the most part correct ordering of the kings; the list could go on. These are all remarkable historical details that can be of value as long as it is recognized that the presentation of these details in their larger context are carried out by ancient historians with more in mind than reporting the cold, hard facts. Thus, they should be evaluated accordingly. It is up to each reader to determine what is of historical value—sometimes that value will exist, often it will not.

38. Memory, for example, whether collective or individual, affects what is remembered and what is forgotten about the past, but the memories themselves are always interpreted by those doing the remembering. This not only clearly affects the remembering of the past, but also the recording of it, as even the person who has experienced and is remembering a past, cannot write about that past without first interpreting it. The problem is only compounded when an individual (such as an historian, ancient or modern) is writing about such memories from a secondary point of view. With respect to historical sources, in some sense it doesn't matter how much or how little one has to reconstruct the past, because any source is already someone else's interpretation of that past which is now being used as part of a secondary interpretation. In this case, even first-hand sources are still interpretations at their root. To speak of cultural differences and the intellectual recording of history only

ing or recording, *all* history is an interpretation to one degree or another—it cannot be avoided.

CONCLUSION

The limitations of reading and using the Hebrew Bible as history are many. Through some comments on the production of Kings and Chronicles as they relate to historical reliability, as well as a review of the various chronological, literary, and historical problems in the biblical presentation of Hezekiah, the need for caution and careful scrutiny was demonstrated in some particulars. In addition, the observations about history and the genre of history writing in the Hebrew Bible and in general have provided a context that can be applied beyond Kings and Chronicles to the Bible as a whole. However, the historical value of the Bible is not entirely absent either. In the end, what this paper hopes to have emphasized is the complexities involved and the issues that need to be considered in order to offer a real, informed evaluation as to the value and limitations of reading the Bible as history. In sum, for questions related to history, historiography, historicity and the Hebrew Bible, conclusions need to be approached carefully and put in the appropriate context by each individual reader, for the answers are varied, nuanced, and complex.

leads to more issues of interpretation: whether it is an ancient historian who felt free to shape, embellish, and otherwise create their history for religious, political, or other purposes, or a modern historian who strives to be free of bias, both still interpret history rather than simply record things as they really happened. This leads to another important issue—whether or not anyone even has the ability to get at the truth or reality behind what really happened. For example, even something as simple as recording the day the second Iraq war started is an interpretation based on what the recorder believes constitutes the beginning of that war (e.g., is it the day America decided to invade Iraq, is it the actual day the invasion took place, is it the time that the first shot was fired, or is it events that occurred even before all these that set these events in motion and therefore is the “real” beginning of the war?). Or, as an example from Kings, what did cause Sennacherib to leave Jerusalem intact? Whatever reality was behind it (tribute, the rumor of Tiharqa’s approach, a “plague”), for the author *God* was the ultimate reason Jerusalem was spared. The reality behind any historical “event” evades complete objectivity and requires interpretation.

WHAT IS DEITY IN LXX DEUTERONOMY?

DANIEL O. MCCLELLAN

The book of Deuteronomy provides a number of valuable and unique insights into early Israelite perspectives on the nature of God, his relationship to other divine beings, and the diachronic development of both.¹ The Greek translation of Deuteronomy, understood to be the work of a single translator, redefines and harmonizes, to some degree, the nature of God and his relationship to the deities of the surrounding nations.² Whether as the result of dynamic equivalence, translator exegesis, or a variant *Vorlage*,³ the perspective offered is one of the earliest of developing Hellenistic-Jewish monotheism. This essay will examine some observations related to that perspective which arise from a comparison of the Greek translation to the Hebrew. It will first discuss deity in the Hebrew Bible in general, and Deuteronomy more specifically.

1. Major contributions to the study of the theology of Deuteronomy include Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972); J. Gordon McConville, *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); Duane L. Christensen, ed., *A Song of Power and the Power of Song* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1993); Georg Braulik, *The Theology of Deuteronomy: Collected Essays of Georg Braulik*, O.S.B. (Ulrika Lindblad trans.; N. Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal, 1994); Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Alexander Rofé, *Deuteronomy: Issues and Interpretations* (London: T&T Clark, 2002); Nathan MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of Monotheism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

2. For an overview of the relationship between LXX Deuteronomy and its Hebrew *Vorlage*, see John W. Wevers, "The LXX Translator of Deuteronomy," in *IX Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. Bernard A. Taylor; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1997), 57–89.

3. The dynamics which bear on the investigation of the Greek's variations from the Hebrew are discussed in Anneli Aejmelaeus, *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 71–106, 205–22; W. Edward Glenny, *Finding Meaning in the Text: Translations Technique and Theology in the Septuagint of Amos* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Bénédicte Lemmelijn, *A Plague of Texts? A Text-Critical Study of the So-Called 'Plagues Narrative' in Exodus 7:14–11:10* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

Then it will discuss the dynamics that bear on a comparison of the Greek and Hebrew versions and compare portions of the translation to its parent text and discuss what insights can be garnered from the comparison. Finally, it will discuss what those insights suggest about monotheism in the Hellenistic Period, at least for the translator and some portion of the community of which he was a part.

Deity in Ancient Israel

The ancient Israelite concept of deity was not static by any means, but there is a general consensus regarding its earliest recoverable shape. Research supports the conclusion that Israel drew general outlines of their theology from an ideological matrix shared by surrounding cultures. Cultural and authorial traditions, expediencies, and idiosyncrasies contributed to the uniqueness of each local perspective. A conceptually related textual corpus from outside Israel which has informed our study of early Israelite religion is that of Ugarit, a city on the northern end of modern Syria.⁴ It would be inaccurate to call the relationship shared by the Hebrew Bible and the Ugaritic texts linear, or genetic, given the distance between the two, but there are clear affinities. This has been the conclusion of all recent scholarship which addresses the question, and it was a primary concern for the recent publication *Lesser Deities in the Ugaritic Texts and the Hebrew Bible*.⁵

As a result of the contextualization provided by this cognate literature, recent scholarship has supported viewing the organization of the early Israelite pantheon according to a three or four-tiered hierarchy.⁶ El and his consort

4. For discussion of Ugarit and its impact on the study of early Israel, see Gordon D. Young, ed., *Ugarit in Retrospect: 50 Years of Ugarit and Ugaritic* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981); K. Lawson Younger, ed., *Ugarit at Seventy-Five* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007). For an English translation of Ugarit's religious texts, see Nicolas Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit* (London: Continuum, 2002).

5. Sang Youl Cho, *Lesser Deities in the Ugaritic Texts and the Hebrew Bible: A Comparative Study of Their Nature and Roles* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007). A great introduction to the issues and early scholarship is Frank Moore Cross Jr., *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 3–75. More recently, see Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson and S. Dean McBride, Jr., eds., *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period. Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1994); Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (Louisville, Kent.: Westminster John Knox, 2000); Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001); Mark S. Smith, *God in Translation: Deities in Cross-Cultural Discourse in the Biblical World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010).

6. Lowell K. Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 65–178; Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic*

inhabit the top tier of this hierarchy. El represents the high god and the father of the other deities. The בני אלהים, or “sons of Elohim,” inhabit the second tier. Cho is certainly correct in concluding the sons of Elohim were viewed as sharing a filial relationship with El;⁷ that is, they were the procreated offspring of El and his consort, not simply members of the אלהים taxonomy. A third tier comprising craftsmen or artisan deities is proposed but is not well attested in the Hebrew Bible. The bottom tier comprises messenger deities who were servants to the other tiers. These are the “angels” of the English Bible, although the same underlying Hebrew word can be used in reference to human messengers. Originally it was a functional designation, not a taxonomic one.⁸

The first, second, and fourth tiers are well attested in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew לַאֵל is frequently used in its generic as well as its personal sense in reference to Israel’s high god. That the Israelite El had a consort is supported by textual and archaeological evidence.⁹ Genesis, Deuteronomy, Job, and two psalms refer to the בני אלהים (ה) בני אלים—the sons of God (Gen 6:2, 4; Deut 32:8–9 [LXX and 4QDeut^l], 43 [4QDeut^a]; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1; 89:7). Divine messengers, or angels, are also referenced frequently. All three of these tiers were populated by anthropomorphic deities according to both the Ugaritic literature and the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰ The word אלהים can render divinity, deity, God, or gods, and covers all the tiers discussed, showing a rather broad semantic range.¹¹ Moses, Samuel, and David are also referred to in the biblical texts with the word אלהים. The lines that delineated the divine taxonomy, and its metaphorical or rhetorical usage, have not been clearly preserved, if they were ever clearly defined in antiquity.

Texts with multiple historical layers show that these lines were also manipulatable insofar as they served theological expediencies. In Judg 13, when Manoah and his wife are visited by what the text at first calls a מלאך יהוה—the messenger, or angel, of Yahweh—they conclude their discussion with the statement, “We will surely die, for we have seen אלהים.” This fear is an allusion to Exod 33:20, where God warns that no human can see him and live. This

Background and the Ugaritic Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 45–60.

7. See the second chapter of Cho, *Lesser Deities in the Ugaritic Texts and the Hebrew Bible*.

8. Dorothy Irvin, *Mytharion: The Comparison of Tales from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East* (Germany: Verlag Butzon & Berker Kevelaer, 1978), 91–93; Samuel A. Meier, “Angel I מלאך,” *DDD* 44–50.

9. Tilde Binger, *Asherah: Goddesses in Ugarit, Israel and the Old Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Judith M. Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah: Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); William G. Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005).

10. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 27–40.

11. Joel S. Burnett, *A Reassessment of Biblical Elohim* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 2001).

reinforces the identification of the מלאכים with the אלהים for many, but Exod 33:20 makes no mention of dangers involved with seeing מלאכים. The injunction is explicitly on seeing God himself, and specifically his face. At this point there was no threat involved with seeing angels. In Judg 13 the מלאך is most likely an interpolation meant to obscure the notion that Yahweh himself came down and visited humanity.¹² As theological developments pushed God's nature further and further from that of humanity, his visibility and corporeality became problematic, and in many areas were mitigated (see also Exod 14:19–20 [cf. Exod 13:21]; Gen 16:13; 32:30; Judg 6:22–23). The מלאך became, and has remained, a useful literary tool in this regard.

Deity in Deuteronomy

The Hebrew book of Deuteronomy makes no mention of divine messengers, although it does contain multiple historical layers and responds to and renegotiates earlier theological positions in its own way. Deuteronomy 32 is widely recognized as having been composed or compiled by different and earlier authors from the rest of the book. One source of disparity is the Song of Moses' view of deity. In vv. 8–9, as found in 4QDeut¹ and retroverted from the Septuagint, Elyon is said to have divided up the nations according to the number of the בני אלהים, with Israel falling to Yahweh.¹³ This statement is said by the preceding verses to come down from years long past and points to an archaic distinction between Yahweh and Elyon, or El. That distinction is undermined by Deut 4:19, which anticipates Deut 32:8 but imposes a different interpretive lens. That verse places Yahweh in the role of distributor and has the gods assigned to the nations rather than the nations to the gods. The gods of the nations are rhetorically demoted and are astralized. In placing Yahweh in the position of making the assignments, the author influences the reader toward the desired understanding of Deut 32:8 without having to alter the text itself.

In Deut 32:8–9 the gods are divine stewards over the nations. In v. 43, however, and again from the scrolls, they are called upon to fall down before

12. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis בראשית: The Traditional Hebrew Text with New JPS Translation* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 383; Marjo Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine* (Muenster: Ugaritic-Verlag, 1990), 296; and Meier, "Angel I מלאך," 48.

13. Eugene Ulrich, Frank Moore Cross, S.W. Crawford, J.A. Duncan, P.W. Skehan, E. Tov, and J.T. Barrera. *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy to Kings*. DJD XIV. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 90. See also Paul Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 156–59; Michael Heiser, "Deuteronomy 32 and the Sons of God," *BSac* 158.1 (2001): 52–74; Innocent Himbaza, "Dt 32,8, une correction tardive des scribes Essai d'interprétation et de datation" *Bib* 83.4 (2002): 527–48; Jan Joosten, "A Note on the Text of Deuteronomy xxxii 8" *VT* 57.4 (2007): 548–55.

Yahweh. Still elsewhere, the author levels fierce polemic against these deities. In v. 37 the author has Yahweh remark, "Where are *their* gods? The rock in which they took refuge, who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine of their libations? Let *them* rise up and help you! Let *them* be your protection!" The gods of the nations are painted as powerless and inconsequential. Vv. 16–17 read, "They made him jealous with *strange things*; with *abominations* they angered him. They sacrificed to *demons*, rather than God; to gods they never knew; new ones recently arrived, whom your fathers, did not revere." The author rejects any degree of relevance for the gods of the nations, even though they are treated as simple divine subordinates in v. 8. Verse 7 may provide a key. In it the author tells Israel to ask their fathers and to hear from their elders the story of Yahweh's acquisition of Israel. What follows is likely a piece of communal memory predating the Song of Moses. This story ends at v. 14, following which the focus shifts to Israel's negligent behavior vis-à-vis their God. This is where the perspective changes. God is referred to as Israel's "Rock," as he was before the interjection, and the other gods are demeaned and marginalized. There is likely a literary seam here, which indicates an additional textual layer.

Outside of Deuteronomy 32 the tone is more nuanced. While Israel is forbidden from worshipping the other gods, the polemic is against the mode of their worship, not the deities themselves. Repeatedly Israel is told that they must not worship Yahweh in the same manner. Deut 12:31 is representative: "You shall not do thus for Yahweh, your God, for every abomination which Yahweh hates, they have performed for their gods." In Deut 29:26 Israel is warned about their ancestors' transgressions: "They went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods which they had not known, and whom he had not allotted to them." They are forbidden to worship the other deities, with two reasons given: (1) the deities of the nations were unknown to their fathers, and (2) the deities of the nations were not allotted to Israel. Again, the Song of Moses is anticipated. The author seems to be trying to reconcile a view of the other deities as Elyon's divine subordinates with the injunction against their veneration. In other places he employs completely different rhetoric, referring to other gods as idols. He is understood by many scholars to be rationalizing Israel's lost autonomy by rearranging the divine hierarchy, with Yahweh at the top and the astralized deities at his feet.¹⁴ Israel's exile is punishment for her infidelity. The author appeals to an important tradition in communal memory,

14. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 16–63; Joel Kaminsky and Anne Stewart, "God of All the World: Universalism and Developing Monotheism in Isaiah 40–66" *HTR* 99.2 (2006): 140.

but recasts it to render it useful to his rhetoric, as many texts from this time period do, particularly in their promotion of Yahweh's universalization.

The Theology of the Septuagint

In recent decades Septuagint scholars have moved away from a view of the translation of the Septuagint as rife with ideological manipulation. More careful text-critical methodologies have contributed to a perspective which sees the Septuagint (and specifically the Pentateuch) as a largely faithful rendering of its *Vorlagen*.¹⁵ As a result, the possibility of isolating the translators' unique worldviews, and specifically their theology, has been called into question. This discussion is ongoing, but scholars are generally in agreement that when translation technique is carefully considered, we can, in limited areas, draw some conclusions regarding theological motivations.¹⁶

The books of the Pentateuch, in their Greek translations, move from less literal to more literal along their canonical order, in which they roughly seem to have been translated. The earlier books tended in more places toward idiomatic Greek at the cost of formal equivalence, while the later books more often sacrificed fluid Greek in favor of Hebraic constructions. The translation of Deuteronomy is demonstrably more literal than Genesis and Exodus. One measurement of this is the ratio of omissions to retentions of resumptive pronouns like οὗ . . . ἐκεῖ, the equivalent of the Hebrew אֵשׁ . . . שָׁם, which is not found in compositional Greek. LXX Genesis omits the Hebraic use of the pronoun, indicating a more idiomatic Greek rendering, in 45% of the cases, Exodus in 36%, Leviticus in 25%, Numbers in 13%, and Deuteronomy in 19%.¹⁷ Anneli Aejmelaeus points to another illustration of this trend in "the

15. Robert Hanhart, "The Translation of the Septuagint in Light of Earlier Tradition and Subsequent Influences," in *Septuagint, Scrolls, and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings*, Manchester, 1990 (George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars eds.; Septuagint and Cognate Studies 33; Atlanta, Ga: Society of Biblical Literature, 1992), 341–42; Aejmelaeus, "What Can We Know about the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Septuagint?" 92; Lemmelijn, *A Plague of Texts?* 103.

16. See, for instance, Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 270–71; Olofsson, *The LXX Version*, 17–19; Rösel, "Theologie der Griechischen Bible zur Wiedergabe der Gottesaussagen im LXX-Pentateuch"; Joosten, "Une théologie de la septante?"; Anneli Aejmelaeus, "Von Sprache zur Theologie: Methodologische Überlegungen zur Theologie der Septuaginta" in *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 265–94; Martin Rösel, "Towards a 'Theology of the Septuagint,'" in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden, eds.; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 239–52.

17. Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen, "The Rendering of the Hebrew Relative Clause in the Greek Pentateuch," in *Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen. Studien zur Septuaginta-Syntax* (Anneli Aejmelaeus and Raija Sollamo, eds.; AASF B.237; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1987, 60.

sharp divergences in the use of δὲ and in the omission of the apodictic conjunction between the first and the latter part of the Greek Pentateuch.”¹⁸ In support of the same conclusion Wevers points to “the much larger number of Hebraisms found in Deut as over against Gen-Exod.”¹⁹ This trajectory may mirror a developing sense that the shape of the biblical text was as authoritative, or more so, than its message.

Space does not permit a more thorough analysis, but this ideal is in play, to some degree, in the translation of Deuteronomy. The translator goes to greater lengths than the translators of Genesis and Exodus to preserve the shape of the *Vorlage*. Most of the texts already discussed are translated with more or less fidelity to the Hebrew. Deuteronomy 32:17, for instance, represents a relatively tight translation:²⁰

Deut 32:17	LXX Deut 32:17
יִבְחֻ לְשִׁדִּים לֹא אֱלֹהִים	ἔθυσαν δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶν
אֱלֹהִים לֹא יִדְעוּם	θεοῖς οἷς οὐκ ᾔδεισαν
חֲדָשִׁים מִקֶּרֶב בָּאוּ	καινοὶ πρόσφατοι ἤκασιν
לֹא שַׁעֲרוּם אֲבֹתֵיכֶם	οὐς οὐκ ᾔδεισαν οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν

The instances of textual manipulation are few, but divergences in a translation as faithful as Deuteronomy are often indicative of some exegetical concern, and some of the more significant divergences are directly relevant to our topic. For instance, where Deuteronomy 4:19 makes reference to the “sun, the moon, and the stars—all the host of heaven,” LXX renders, “the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and any ornament of the sky (τὸν κόσμον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). From an atomistic point of view this falls within the semantic range of the *Vorlage* (it is the same word used to render צִבְיָא in Gen 2:1), but it also shows the complete de-deification of the entities involved.”²¹ Deuteronomy 17:3 has

18. Anneli Aejmelaeus, *Parataxis in the Septuagint: A Study of the Renderings of the Hebrew Coordinate Clauses in the Greek Pentateuch*, (Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 31; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1982), 183.

19. Wevers, “The LXX Translator of Deuteronomy,” 59.

20. The clearest divergence is the addition of καὶ in the first colon, which may have been in the *Vorlage*. The same verb renders יִדְעוּם and שַׁעֲרוּם, but the latter is a *hapax legomenon*. For more on the interpretation of this verse, see Michael Heiser, “Does Deuteronomy 32:17 Assume or Deny the Reality of Other Gods?” *BT* 59.3 (2008): 137–45.

21. This process begins well before the Hellenistic Period, however. On de-deification in the Hebrew tradition of Deuteronomy, see Hadley, “The De-deification of Deities in Deuteronomy.”

the same equivalent, speaking of that person who might serve “other gods and do obeisance to them, whether the sun or the moon or any of what belongs to the adornment of the sky.” They are no longer viewed as deities. The text now seems to reference the worship of non-sentient astral bodies. Where the original author sought to provide a framework for understanding the identity of the “sons of God” nearer the end of Deuteronomy, the Septuagint translator simply presented them as astral bodies. The translator did leave references to divine beings in the Song of Moses, however, indicating little concern for the harmony of the allusion with its antecedent.

Most significant among the divergences is LXX Deut 32:43, cola a–d, which have recently received a lot of attention.²²

4QDeut ^a	LXX Deut 32:43	MT Deut 32:43
הַרְנִינוּ שָׁמַיִם עִמוֹ	εὐφράνθητε, οὐρανοί, ἅμα αὐτῷ,	
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לוֹ כָּל אֱלֹהִים	καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ Θεοῦ	
	εὐφράνθητε, ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ,	הַרְנִינוּ גּוֹיִם עִמוֹ
	καὶ ἐνισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ	

MT only preserves one colon. 4QDeut^a has two, which are widely accepted as more original. והשתחוּ לוֹ כָּל אֱלֹהִים, “Let all the gods worship him,” is also found in Ps 97:7. The Greek of Deut 32:43 adds two additional cola to the reading from the scrolls. The Greek rendering of Ps 97:7 is similar to LXX Deut 32:43d, but alters the order a bit, conflating cola b and d, thus προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, “let all the angels of God worship him.” This is the version found in *Odes* 2:43. Heb 1:6 has this order, but does not have the added definite article.²³

22. Arie van der Kooij, “The Ending of the Song of Moses: On the Pre-Masoretic Version of Deut 32:43,” in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honour of C.J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, (F. García Martínez, A. Hilhorst, J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, A. S. van der Woude, eds.; Leiden: Brill, 1994); Alexander Rofé, “The End of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:32)” in *Deuteronomy: Issues and Interpretations* (London: T&T Clark, 2002), 47–54; Martin Karrer, “The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint,” *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden, eds.; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 349–53.

23. Some LXX manuscripts have this order and include the article.

The divergences from 4QDeut⁴ in the Septuagint version are unlikely to derive from the *Vorlage*. υἱὼν θεοῦ likely renders אלהים. While בני אלהים may seem a more simple retroversion, two considerations mitigate that conclusion. (1) We have good textual evidence for אלהים, and (2) the expansion in translation is easily explained.²⁴ It harmonizes the colon with the translation of Deut 32:8: ἀριθμὸν υἱὼν θεοῦ, “the number of the sons of God,” and it skirts the invective aimed at the θεοί in other portions of the Song of Moses. בני אלהים seems to have been more palatable to the translator and his expected readers than simply אלהים.

The additional cola are also likely exegetical. Deuteronomy is devoid of any mention of divine messengers. The only use of the Hebrew מלאכים refers to human messengers (2:26). The association of angels with the בני אלהים is not found in the Hebrew Bible. As mentioned earlier, the בני אלהים were a distinct tier from the מלאכים, who were divine servants. Their conflation first occurs in exegetical translations within the Greek, like Job 1:6; 2:1; and 38:7. LXX Genesis, likely the first book translated, has υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ at Gen 6:2 and 4 in early manuscripts but ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ replaces it in later manuscripts. While υἱὼν θεοῦ is the earliest rendering of Deut 32:8, most witnesses render ἄγγελων θεοῦ.²⁵ “Angels” is the reading preserved in almost all subsequent allusions to these texts. Jub 15:31–32 explains that God set “spirits” over the nations of the earth in order to lead them astray from following him, but he set no “angel or spirit” over Israel, his special possession.²⁶ Dan 10:20–21 refer to the guardians of the nations of Persia and Greece as “princes,” calling the angel Michael one of the “chief princes” (v. 13). Enoch’s *Animal Apocalypse* (1 En. 10–12) recasts Deuteronomy’s divine stewards as angelic shepherds over the nations who serve to punish Israel. In Clement of Alexandria’s *Stromata*, he asserts “the patronage of angels is distributed over the nations and cities.”²⁷ Similar readings are also found in the Pseudo-Clementine texts and in a number of rabbinic texts.²⁸ What is rare is a reference to these stewards as “gods” or “sons of God,” and where they occur, the context clearly defines them as angels. After the translation of the Septuagint, the vernacular seems to have shifted.²⁹

24. This is also the contention of van der Kooij, “The Ending of the Song of Moses,” 99–100.

25. υἱὼν θεοῦ is found in a papyrus from Cairo (848) and in an Armenian manuscript. See John W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy*, (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1995), 513. Others render ἄγγελων θεοῦ, υἱὼν Ἰσραὴλ, or some slight variation.

26. These “spirits” are the offspring of the Watchers (cf. Jub 10:2–9; Gen 6:2, 4).

27. *Stromata* 6.17.157.5.

28. A few examples are *Recognitions* 2.42; *Homilies* 18.4; *Deuteronomy Rabba* 6:4.

29. For a full discussion, see Darrell D. Hannah, “Guardian Angels and Angelic National Patrons in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity,” in *Angels: The Concept of Celestial Beings—Origins, Development and Reception* (Friedrich V. Reiterer, Tobias

It would seem the translator of Deuteronomy manipulated the phrase toward a contemporaneous identification of the בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים with angels. The fact that the translator felt it necessary to actually alter the text indicates the identification was not something that would be presupposed by his readership. This may help explain the expanded cola at v. 43. In the early Septuagint manuscripts, Deut 32:8 still read $\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$, but at v. 43 the translator added two parallel cola that provided a lens for identifying the $\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. The author likely introduced the parallelism to impose a specific interpretive framework on Deuteronomy's references to the $\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. He wanted to make it clear where they fit into the divine hierarchy.

This identification is carried over to Deut 33:2, which is widely agreed to have referred originally to אֱלִים, or "gods," appearing parallel to קִדְשֵׁי, or "Holy Ones." Ps 89:6–7 creates the same parallelism between קִהְלֵ קִדְשִׁים, "Congregation of Holy Ones," and בְּנֵי אֱלִים, "Sons of El," explicitly identifying the קִדְשִׁים with the deities of the Israelite pantheon's second tier.³⁰ V. 8 even references a סוּד קִדְשִׁים, "Council of Holy Ones." In the Ugaritic texts the word appears parallel to *'ilm* and is a clear reference to second tier deities. LXX Deut 33:2 transliterates קִדְשֵׁי with $\kappa\alpha\delta\eta\varsigma$, perhaps because of confusion with the singular form, and renders the reference to אֱלִים with $\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omicron\iota$. This reading is also found in later literature. *1 Enoch* eschatologically recasts Deuteronomy 33 and refers to the "Holy Ones" who would accompany Yahweh at Sinai as "angels."³¹ These angels are frequently called "watchers" in *1 Enoch* and other apocalyptic literature, where they also take the place of the בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים from Gen 6:2 and 4.³² The narrative involving their marriage to human women is expanded in *1 Enoch* and in *Jubilees*.³³ 4Q180 1.7, entitled "The Ages of Creation," references "Azaz'el and the angels" who sired children with the daughters of humanity. *Genesis Rabba* 26.5 renders Gen 2:4 with "sons of nobles" and actually curses anyone who transmits "sons of God." The marriage of angels and human women is also referenced in Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4; and perhaps 1 Cor 11:10.

Niklas, Karin Shöpfung, eds.; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 413–35. See also John J. Collins, "Powers in Heaven: God, Gods, and Angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (John J. Collins and Robert A. Kugler, eds.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 11–14.

30. אֱלִים may be the singular אֵל with an enclitic *mem*, which would be directly parallel to the Ugaritic *'ilm*.

31. *1 En.* 1:9; 60:4; Jub 17:11 (cf. Dan 4:13, 17, where the "Watchers," another epithet for angels, are described as "Holy Ones").

32. See Andy M. Reimer, "Rescuing the Fallen Angels: The Case of the Disappearing Angels at Qumran," *DSD* 7.3 (2000): 335–40.

33. See, for instance, *1 En.* 6:2; Jub 5:1; *2 En.* 29:4–5.

Some authors leave this monolatrous vernacular untouched. Aquila renders οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν θεῶν in Gen 6:2. *Deuteronomy Rabba*'s discussion of the Shema uses the word "god" in reference to the portioning out of the nations in Deut 32:8, but those gods are also identified as the angels Michael and Gabriel, and even the sun and the moon. *Deuteronomy Rabba* alludes to Deut 4:19 when it warns, "Do not go astray after one of these angels who came down with me; they are all my servants."

Monotheism in the Hellenistic Period

While it is widely recognized that the "sons of God" became identified with angels at some point in early Judaism, the significance or dating of this process is rarely addressed.³⁴ For the translator of LXX Deuteronomy, there was the God of Israel, and there were his angels, which were subdivided into functional categories. The various tiers of the Israelite pantheon were conflated into the bottom tier. This exalted God far above the other divine beings and asserted his "species uniqueness," to borrow a phrase.³⁵ It also consolidated the gods of the nations and other divine beings into a harmless and inferior taxonomy. I would suggest that it is at this conflation that we find the threshold of Jewish monotheism.

Many scholars today view the crisis of the Babylonian Exile as the catalyst for monotheism.³⁶ Deutero-Isaiah, according to this model, contains the first real explicit rejection of the existence of other deities. Scholars who see intimations of monotheism in earlier periods often see Deutero-Isaiah as the culminating expression of the ideal of only one God. Recently, however, the argument has been made that Deutero-Isaiah's rhetoric functions not to deny the ontological existence of other deities, but only to deny their efficacy and relevance to Israel.³⁷ This rhetoric is little different, qualitatively, from the rhetoric of the book of Deuteronomy. Additionally, we still find numerous references to other gods in later literature. If Deutero-Isaiah is consciously rejecting the existence of any other divine beings, it does not seem to have caught on. Job

34. For instance, Smith, *God in Translation*, 196–97.

35. Michael Heiser, "The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Second Temple Jewish Literature" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 2004).

36. Robert K. Gnuse, *No Other Gods: Emergent Monotheism in Israel*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 131–44, 206–08; Ronald E. Clements, "Monotheism and the God of Many Names," in *The God of Israel* (Robert P. Gordon, ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 47–59; and, to a more nuanced degree, Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 149–66.

37. See, particularly, Michael Heiser, "Monotheism, Polytheism, Monolatry, or Henotheism? Toward an Assessment of Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible," *BBR* 18.1 (2008): 9–15. Against this reading, see Hywel Clifford, "Deutero-Isaiah and Monotheism," in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel* (ed. John Day; New York: T&T Clark, 2010).

refers on a few different occasions to the “sons of God.” The Greek translators of Genesis and Exodus took no issue with references to other gods, nor did the Greek translators of Psalms 29 or 82; nor does Aquila at Gen 6:2. The אֱלִים are mentioned numerous times in the Qumran literature, often parallel to the “Holy Ones.”³⁸ Rabbinic literature also occasionally retains references to the gods.³⁹

These authors cannot be said to be operating under a rubric that did not allow for the existence of other deities. Other deities are found throughout Israel’s scriptural heritage, and they can hardly be asserted to be rejected as idols in cases such as Deut 32:8–9, where Elyon gives them stewardship over the nations of the earth. The authors and editors of Second Temple Judaism were comfortable enough with that scriptural heritage to perpetuate and even expand on motifs involving other gods. This comfort likely derives from a view of the sons of God as angelic beings and thus ontologically distinct from God. The first clear hint of this conflation is found in the Greek translation of Deuteronomy and is likely an innovation of the Hellenistic Period.

Conclusion

To answer the question posed in the title of this paper, “What is deity in LXX Deuteronomy?” the translator displays a two-tiered vertical hierarchy of deity. At the top was the God of Israel, fully universalized and uniquely superlative in all his defining characteristics. Far below God in the translator’s hierarchy were the angels, created beings existing to serve administratively between God and humanity. LXX Deut 32:17 refers to “demons, gods which [Israel’s ancestors] did not know.” Demons were fallen angels in the cognate literature, which is likely the perspective here, indicating a dualistic view of this subordinate class of divinity.⁴⁰ This provided for malicious divine beings but also protected God from that dualism.

Deut 32:39’s statement, אֲנִי אֱנִי הוּא, “I, I am he,” is altered a bit in translation. LXX simply reads, ἐγώ εἰμι, “I am.” As Wevers has pointed out, whereas the Hebrew statement is a matter of identification, the Greek is a matter of existence.⁴¹ The verse continues, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν ἐμοῦ, “and there is no god except me.” The Hebrew has אֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי, “there is no God besides me,” which should be read as a reference to Yahweh’s exclusive relationship with Israel rather than his ontological uniqueness. The Greek is more absolute.

38. It occurs 78 times in the scrolls. A few examples are: 1Q22 4.1; 1QM 1.10–11; 14.15–16; 15.14; 17.7; 18.6; 1QH-a 3.8; 15.28; 18.8; 2.1.3, 10; 24.11; 27.3.

39. For instance, see *Deut R.* on 6:4.

40. See Reimer, “Rescuing the Fallen Angels,” 335–40.

41. Wevers, “The LXX Translator of Deuteronomy,” 89.

Wevers calls it “a clear affirmation of monotheism.” And yet the translator deals twice in this same chapter with “sons of God,” after altering one reference to “gods.” His monotheistic affirmation only holds if he demotes the “sons of God” far enough below Yahweh to be an entirely separate and derivative class of divine being, which is precisely what his expansion in Deut 32:43 seems to accomplish.

SMOKED TUNAS AND TALKING DOGS: PROBING THE MOTIVES FOR THE ROMAN PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS AS FOUND IN THE *ACTS OF PETER*

E. ODIN YINGLING

The Apostle Peter is looked upon as one of the greatest figures in budding Christianity. As a result, legends of his death by Roman persecution were circulated in the post–New Testament period in the form of apocryphal gospels. The earliest and most detailed apocryphal gospel describing Peter’s martyrdom is the *Acts of Peter* (*Acts Pet.*). In the face of Roman persecution, Peter’s death is looked upon as one of the great enigmas of early Christianity. Are the Roman motives for persecuting Christians mentioned in *Acts Pet.* historically accurate? Is there truth mingled with the stories of talking dogs and smoked tunas coming back to life?¹ The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether the martyrdom mentioned in *Acts Pet.* is both an accurate portrayal of Peter’s death as well as the Roman motives which lay behind the Christian persecution. I will argue that in *Acts Pet.* the Roman incentives for Peter’s martyrdom are a product of late second-century Christian apologetics, and have little bearing on first-century history. This thesis is based on the following propositions. First, the original composition of *Acts Pet.* is dated to the late second century and is thus probably neither an accurate historical source for Neronian persecution nor a reliable account of Peter’s martyrdom. Second, the motives for persecuting Christians mentioned in *Acts Pet.* are sufficiently different from established historical sources as to call into question the historical validity of the persecution mentioned in *Acts Pet.* The persecution mentioned in *Acts Pet.* is important in understanding a crucial moment in the life of one of Christianity’s most celebrated figures—namely, the apostle Peter.

1. Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (New York: Oxford, 2003), 135.

Although, most commentators have focused more on Peter's "acts" rather than his martyrdom,² I believe that much more could be learned specifically about this text, and how Christians viewed Roman persecution by analyzing the martyrdom. While, select passages in the New Testament allude to Peter's death by crucifixion they are somewhat unclear in their meaning and mention few details (John 21:18–19, 2 Pet 1:13–14).³ Additionally, none of these passages from the New Testament explicitly say that it was the Romans who executed the apostle Peter, although both the gospel of John and 1 Peter hint that Peter will die the same death as Jesus by crucifixion. In order to see a detailed Christian portrayal of the Roman motives for the martyrdom of Peter we must turn to *Acts Pet.* which includes a detailed account of Peter's execution. First, however, the dating of *Acts Pet.* must be ascertained before one can make claims about the life of the "historical Peter"

Dating the Original Composition of the *Acts of Peter*

In dating *Acts Pet.* Schneemelcher brings up the fact that *Acts Pet.* is first mentioned by Eusebius (circa 314–339 C.E.), who condemned it as uncanonical.⁴ However, other scholars such as Schmidt and Vouaux have sought to find an earlier attestation to *Acts Pet.* by searching for it in the Muratorion Canon (hereafter MC).⁵ The MC is believed to have been composed around the lat-

2. Though the martyrdom and the "acts" are now part of one and the same document, source critics believe that they were originally separate. This is due to a lack of homogeneity in philosophical issues and stylistic tendencies. See, for instance, Christine M. Thomas, *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel* (New York: Oxford, 2003), 30.

3. Jesus told John, "Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me." (John 21:18) Though the passage in John seems relatively clear that Peter would die by crucifixion, the passage is still subject to scrutiny. Because John appears to have already finished his record in John 20:31, some scholars believe that John chapter 21 is a later redaction. Because, questions on Johannine authorship and redaction criticism of John's record are beyond the scope of this paper I will assume that John 21 was written by the same author as the previous chapters of John. Also, the question of authorship as it relates to 2 Peter is complicated. Can this passage be relied upon for an historical account of Peter's death? For example, Bart Ehrman states that "yet other books are pseudonymous—forgeries by people who explicitly claim to be someone else. Included in this group is almost certainly 2 Peter" Ehrman continues by saying, "critical scholars are fairly unified today in thinking that Matthew did not write the First Gospel or John the Fourth, that Peter did not write 2 Peter and possibly not 1 Peter." Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew* (New York: Oxford, 2003), 127. For simplicity, I will treat the question of authorship in 2 Peter in the same way as in the Gospel of John.

4. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha: Writings Related to the Apostles: Apocalypses and Related Subjects* (London: John Knox, 2003), 272.

5. Ibid.

ter half of the second century, and is the earliest attested list of books which comprised the New Testament.⁶ While, the MC does not mention *Acts Pet.* specifically, some scholars still believe that *Acts Pet.* dates to the time of the MC. Both Schmidt and Vouaux cite a very important passage from the MC to support their opinion of an early dating for *Acts Pet.* in which the writer of the Canon says the following: "Moreover, the acts of all the apostles were written in one book. For 'most excellent Theophilus' Luke compiled the individual events that took place in his presence—as he plainly shows by omitting the martyrdom of Peter."⁷ Schmidt believes that the passage in the MC is meant to convey that Luke not only had oral tradition of the death of Peter, but also that Luke had written records of Peter's martyrdom which he chose not to record.⁸

However, both Elliot and Schneemelcher think that Schmidt is reading too much into this short passage because of the MC's non-explicit reference to *Act Pet.*⁹ Whether by oral or written sources, however, it is clear that by the time of the late second century stories of Peter's martyrdom were already in circulation. In the end, it seems wise to conclude with Schneemelcher, Ehrman and Elliot that *Acts Pet.* was written circa 180–190 C.E.¹⁰ This late date is important because if *Acts Pet.* was first written down over a hundred years after the events of Peter's martyrdom, then many historical elements were probably distorted.

Roman Motivations for Christian Persecution in the *Acts of Peter*

Kereztes has listed a number of different causes for Christian persecution. Among the reasons for the persecution he mentions Christians supposedly starting the fire in Rome in 64 C.E., their having a hostile attitude toward the state, the law itself branding Christians as criminals and corrupt people, a desire to appease the demands of the mob which fed off the idea that if Christianity was illegal it must be immoral, and finally the fact that the Christians were atheists.¹¹ Janssen supports Kereztes' evidence for Christian "atheism" by saying that Christians were superstitious and threatened to disturb the peace in Rome and that the introduction of a "new" religion into the Roman Empire would produce national apostasy from traditional religion.¹² It is understandable that pagans saw Christians as having a hostile attitude

6. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures*, 331.

7. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 272.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.; J. K. Elliot, *The Apocryphal New Testament: a Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 390.

10. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures*, 135; Elliot, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 392.

11. Paul Kereztes, "Law and Arbitrariness in the Persecution of the Christians and Justin's First Apology," *VC* 18 (1964): 206–10.

12. L. F. Janssen, "'Superstitio' and the Persecution of the Christians," *VC* 33 (1979): 132–33.

toward the state. If pagans believed that the success of the empire was based on the favor of the gods, then it would be natural to see monotheistic Christians as contributors to an increasing disfavor with the gods. However, in contrast to the previously mentioned motivations for persecution mentioned in established historical sources, *Acts Pet.* gives us a more apologetic, and at times entertaining answer to why pagans persecuted Christians. One of the reasons mentioned for Christian persecution in *Acts Pet.* can be seen in the story of King Agrippa and a friend of the emperor named Albinus. After the wives of Agrippa heard Peter's message they refused to consort with him. Agrippa then told his consorts that he would "destroy [them] and burn him (Peter) alive" (*Acts Pet.* 33). Also, a friend of the emperor named Albinus loses his wife Xanthipe, who takes on vows of absolute chastity due to the preaching of Peter. His reaction is similar to Agrippa's for he began "raging like a beast" (*Acts Pet.* 34) and intending to kill Peter. According to the text multitudes of newly converted non-cohabiting women were added daily to the Christian congregation. In the end, the text says that the "official" governmental reason Peter is condemned to death is for being an atheist. In general, the author of *Acts Pet.* appears to be trying to convince their audience that the real reasons for persecution has nothing to do with law, but rather the lechery of Roman leaders. Virtually all these reasons mentioned in *Acts Pet.* seem to be different from other more historically reliable sources.

Conclusions

Thus, it appears that the Roman motivations for Christian persecution portrayed in *Acts Pet.* have more to do with early Christian apologetics and miracles stories, and less to do with actualities. The only reason for Christian persecution mentioned in *Acts Pet.* which is similar to other sources is the crime of "atheism", which *Acts Pet.* portrays as a false motivation. Likely, because of *Acts Pet.*'s late date and divergent "historical" details, its information about the motives for the Roman persecution of the Christians are probably about as reliable as its accounts of talking dogs and smoked tunas being raised from the dead. However, in a sense, these fanciful events were real. They really did exist in the minds of those who believed them. They existed in a real cultural memory. They were events in the memories of second-century Christians who cherished *Acts Pet.*

BOOK REVIEWS

LÓPEZ-RUIZ, CAROLINA, *When the Gods Were Born: Greek Cosmogonies and the Near East*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010. Pp xii + 302. Hardcover. \$39.95. ISBN: 9780674049468.

This most recent work of Dr. López-Ruiz of the Ohio State University investigates the intellectual diffusion of Near Eastern cosmogonic motifs into Greek thought. On an even greater scale, it represents the dismantling of the divide between Indo-European and Semitic scholarship, and aims to mitigate the proclivity of scholars to treat these geographical areas as separate and self-contained regions. While remaining hospitable to general and academic audiences alike, the author, well acquainted with the culture and literatures of both civilizations, is able to adroitly advance existing scholarship—skillfully building upon the foundation laid by previous scholars, most notably the distinguished historian of Ancient Religion, Walter Burkert. Demonstrating impressive knowledge of both Classical and Near Eastern scholarship, languages and myth, López-Ruiz engages the reader in a discussion of three main themes: (1) Thematic parallels between Greek and Near Eastern Cosmogonies, (2) the temporal and geographic origins of these correlations, and (3) the nature and area of their transmission. She chooses to focus on the literary material from the Archaic Age, and thus the thrust of the book is, quite naturally, aimed at an examination of Hesiodic and Orphic cosmogonic literature.

The author begins with a study of Hesiod's *Theogony*, the earliest known Greek account of the origin of the world and of the gods. After explaining several important thematic similarities between the proem of the *Theogony* and Northwest Semitic literature, López-Ruiz launches into a detailed and technical investigation of a peculiar Hesiodic phrase. Examining, in an unprecedented

degree, *Theogony* (35), she compares the “tree and the stone” motif with a wide variety of literatures from the Levant, including the Hebrew Bible, Ugaritic texts, the Koran, the Gospel of Thomas, and Orphic epigraphical sources. Consistent with her views of Greek-Levant intellectual transmission, she argues that the “tree and the stone” parallels do not spring from literary dependence, but rather they exemplify one of the “common threads and features that made the fabric of these Mediterranean literatures and mythologies” (73). The origins of these “common threads and features” are also explained in her book. Clearly, this is one of the works most valuable contributions, and further information is offered in a helpful supplement in the back matter.

Having demonstrated the limitations and artificiality of the scholastic division between the Levant and Greece, López-Ruiz constructs a more concrete and nuanced theory of exchange between the two. Rather than contenting herself with further corroborating the generic link between the Greek and Near Eastern worlds—which, as she says, brings no greater conclusions than the “fact of the comparison itself” (18)—she attempts to link individual cosmogonic motifs with a specific place and time of transmission. This more precise method is a fruitful one, leading the author to the conclusion that the majority of Near Eastern-Hesiodic parallels can be further distinguished as coming from a “Greco-Levantine tradition, with a strong Northwest Semitic component (Canaanite or Syro-Phoenician)” (128). The preceding examination of elements shared between Levantine and Hesiodic succession myths is fascinating. Having pointed out the known similarities in the extant literature, in this section, López-Ruiz carefully and realistically works her way back to their intellectual source.

In the segment covering the Orphic material, the newly discovered Derveni Papyrus—imaged by the Ancient Textual Imaging Group here at Brigham Young University—played a major role. Greatly augmenting the Orphic corpus, the author indicates that this document presents “numerous analogies with the Hesiodic cosmogony, while also attesting important divergences in the use of Near Eastern motifs” (131). The information found in the Orphic cosmogonic material, most importantly in the Derveni Papyrus, provides further reinforcement to López-Ruiz’s theory of Greek cultural exchange with Northwest Semitic societies.

As previously indicated, the scope of the work is mainly focused on literary tradition, and therefore the author’s arguments are naturally drawn from the available literary sources. However, considering the importance of material culture in demonstrating cross-cultural relations, archeological evidence is, of necessity, taken into some consideration. In many places López-Ruiz

shares significant archaeological insights, having a great corroborative effect. In order to further support her argument, however, Dr. López-Ruiz could have cited scholarship on the long-recognized link between the sixth/fifth century Aegean “striding Zeus” motif, and the “smiting god” figurines, found throughout the Near East—prominently in Northwest Semitic regions.¹ This, as well as other archeological evidence, may well have served to solidify the authors proposed theories of “long-lasting cultural contact” between the two regions (99). Such sustained contact between regions would indeed affect all areas of culture, and noticeable overlap would be expected in modern archeological research.

Though overall impressed by the breadth of texts used in this study, I was hoping to read more concerning the pre-Socratic usage of the cosmogonic genre. Excepting a few general comments, there was little said concerning the tradition of natural philosophers, many of whom produced their work in the structure of cosmogony, and published it during the time period which this book investigates. Because these texts seem to fit within the appropriate parameters, a more complete investigation of pre-Socratic texts would have been of great value in precisely detailing the transmission of cosmogonic motifs. I was pleased, however, that evidence of pre-Socratic participation within Orphic and Pythagorean circles (discussed throughout the work) was not exploited. For it has been noted that these ties had little influence on pre-Socratic philosophical theories. An analysis of this subject, however, could have been included without exceeding the scope of the study.

On the whole, this work is of great value for the study of Near Eastern influences on Greek intellectual culture. The author maintains that these two peoples must not be viewed as entirely distinct nor as self-contained societies. With sensitivity to the excesses in the arguments of previous scholars, she manages to expound upon culturally ‘orientalizing’ influences while respecting the peculiarity, uniqueness and creative character of Greek civilization. Dr. López-Ruiz represents well the kind of scholar necessary to effect a lasting influence in her field, and implements the sort of methodology requisite for producing a more precise link between the Near Eastern and Greek worlds.

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1. Robert H. Smith, “Near Eastern Forerunners to Striding Zeus,” *Archaeology* 15.3 (1962): 176–83.

WITHERINGTON, BEN III. *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2009. Pp. x + 274. Paperback. ISBN: 9781556359293.

Ben Witherington is professor of New Testament at Ashbury Theological Seminary. In *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament*, Witherington addresses the methods of composition and persuasion illustrated in the New Testament texts. Witherington's work relies on the premise that the vast majority of documents in antiquity were not in fact intended for "silent reading," and that only a few were intended to be read by individuals (2). Rather, the documents were "simply necessary surrogates for oral communication" (2). Thus, it behooves the serious historian to approach the study of New Testament texts from a rhetorical-critical standpoint given that "they were composed with their aural and oral potential in mind" (2).

Addressed to an uninformed but educated audience, the book is intended as a guide for the rhetorical study of the New Testament and is divided according to the genre of the New Testament texts (i.e., "Gospels of Persuasion," "Early Christian Homilies," "Paul the Rhetor and Writer," "The Elementary Rhetoric of the Pastorals," and "The Rhetoric of the General Epistles"). Witherington's style is straightforward and coherent. He first illustrates the problematic nature of interpreting specific texts independent of rhetorical analysis. Then, he briefly treats the contemporary scholarly approaches to the issue. Finally, he demonstrates the advantages and insights that can be gained from rhetorical analysis. Witherington concludes each chapter with a short "Questions for Reflection" section intended to solidify the material just presented. Moreover, the final chapter of the book is titled "The Difference Rhetoric makes to NT Interpretation," making explicit Witherington's thrust throughout the book—namely to show how rhetorical analysis is necessary to correctly evaluate the meaning of the New Testament texts.

After the introductory chapters in which the author provides background for the rhetorical/literary culture of the Greco-Roman world (1–2), Witherington begins his analysis of the "Gospels of Persuasion—Mark and Luke" (ch. 3). Springboarding from the thoroughly Hellenized literary culture in which both authors wrote, and drawing upon several examples from both gospels, he concludes the following. First, Luke demonstrates the ability to shape not only brief narratives and parables in rhetorical ways but both volumes (Luke and Acts) are formed in a macro-rhetorical structure. Second, Mark's gospel is actually an ancient biography and Mark is able to draw upon

his knowledge of rudimentary rhetorical exercises to form *χρεῖα*,² edit parables, and make rhetorical comparisons, or *συγκρίσις* (24). In chapter four Witherington tackles the rhetorical speech summaries in Acts (see Acts 2:14–42; 4:8–12; 6:8–8:3; 13:13–52; 15:13–21; 17:22–31; and 20:17–38). He concludes that the predominantly forensic and deliberative rhetoric therein work to portray Peter and Paul as able rhetoricians. This reflects Luke's good rhetorical strategy both "to represent the truth about Paul's life and ministry" and "to convince a high status Gentile that Christianity was intellectually respectable, and could even persuade the high and mighty" (93).

Chapter 5 focuses more on Paul and the literary context in which he wrote and spoke. Witherington concludes that Paul drew upon his vast knowledge of the Jewish and Greco-Roman rhetoric of the time in accordance with the literary and oratory culture of his audience. Moreover, the author also addresses the role of secretaries in early letter writing and specifically Paul's letters. Finally, Witherington demonstrates how the much-debated meaning of Romans 7:7–25 can be better understood if viewed in light of the rhetorical device referred to as "impersonation."³ Paul utilized this tool to rhetorically impersonate Adam and was not referring to his own personal experiences as many have argued (132).

Chapter 6 discusses the fairly elementary rhetoric in the pastorals. Witherington shows that rather than "examples of miscellanies, random collection of traditions with no order or organization, and having no real literary finesse," the pastorals employ comparisons, paradigms, and enthymemes to effectively "preach to the choir" as it were, and to address issues which arose in the transition to the post-apostolic era (174–75).

Chapter 7 treats the rhetoric of the general epistles (Peter, John, and Hebrews). After discussing the peculiarities of Asiatic rhetoric and the futility of studying the pastoral documents through the lens of epistolary analysis, Witherington demonstrates the following. First Peter is a work of deliberative rhetoric, "presented as an authoritative word from Peter, presumably to his various converts (183). Also, 2 John and 3 John are deliberative discourses while 1 John is epideictic in character. Moreover, 1 John was prompted by a schism and was intended to be circulated in the Johannine churches. Finally,

2. *χρεῖα* are "short, pithy character-revealing and character-forming anecdotes from the life of the subject of the biography that we regularly find in Plutarch, Tacitus, and yes, in Mark's Gospel as well." See Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric*, 24.

3. Impersonation involves the "the assumption of a role; sometimes the role would be marked off from its surrounding discourse by a change in tone, inflection, accent, or form of delivery, or an introductory formula signaling a change in voice" Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric*, 132.

Witherington argues that the letter to the Hebrews was an epideictic text and a homily, and that “epistolary features are added because this sermon had to be sent to an audience rather than delivered orally to them by an author (195). Finally, the rhetoric therein suggests that author of Hebrews was most likely Apollos of Alexandria.

The present reviewer holds the last chapter of Witherington’s book to be the most concise and helpful. Titled “The Difference Rhetoric Makes to NT Interpretation,” the chapter addresses ten common mistakes which can lead to misinterpreting a text and provides examples of each (214–35). The mistakes are worth noting here: (1) Failure to recognize a *proposito* (thesis statement) or peroration leads to misunderstanding of the character and themes of a document. (2) Failure to identify the species of rhetoric in a discourse leads to false conclusions. (3) Failure to recognize “impersonation” as a rhetorical device. (4) Failure to recognize the way a rhetorical comparison works. (5) Failure to see the difference between modern and ancient persuasion. (6) Failure to recognize enthymemes (and their implied missing premise) leads to misunderstanding NT arguments. (7) Overlooking the way personifications work in a rhetorical discourse. (8) Mistaking amplification either for redundancy or for saying more than one thing. (9) Mistaking Asiatic rhetoric for mere verbal excess. (10) Failure to recognize the importance of micro-rhetoric or recognizing a *gradatio*.

The thesis of Witherington’s book is both accurate and apt. Understanding rhetorical conventions is essential to understanding the New Testament for “form shapes the very substance and meaning of the discourse (216). Witherington concisely elucidates the Greco-Roman literary context in which the NT authors wrote and explains rhetorical practices as laid out by Aristotle and Quintilian. Moreover, this work serves the New Testament student as a stepping stone to the more complex and pioneering rhetorical-critical studies of scholars like Margaret Mitchell, Francis Young, and Averil Cameron. All in all, Witherington’s book is a competent defense of the necessity of New Testament rhetorical-critical analysis, offering new and plausible interpretations of knotty and enigmatic New Testament passages.

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BLINKINSOPP, JOSEPH. *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1–11*. London: T&T Clark, 2011. Pp. 190. Paperback. \$29.95. ISBN: 9780567372871.

Blenkinsopp's book bravely addresses what is arguably the most studied text in the Hebrew Bible as an overture towards developing a biblical theology of creation. He argues that the story of creation (how a sphere was opened for human existence and development) cannot be separated from the first humans, the flood, or postdiluvian development, but is rather to be found throughout the entirety of Genesis 1–11, maintaining that the text is preoccupied with one central question: how evil infiltrated a creation which God declared to be "very good" (Gen 1:39).

The book is organized into eight chapters followed by a lengthy epilogue. The first chapter addresses Blenkinsopp's overall project and argues for isolating Genesis 1–11 as a distinct literary unit, structured around five *toledot* formulas ("these are the generations"). The next six chapters each address a specific pericope (creation, Eden, Cain and Abel, Enoch, the flood, and Noah's descendants), followed by a brief eighth chapter that introduces the transition from myth to a historical age beginning with Abraham. The following epilogue then briefly traces Hebrew creation theology and its reception in early Christianity through the Gospels and the writings of Paul.

Supplementing his overall project, Blenkinsopp never forgets that this volume is also intended as a commentary. Like any good other commentator, Blenkinsopp remains extremely cognizant of the Mesopotamian literary tradition behind Genesis 1–11. This awareness begins on page 2 and continues throughout the book. When discussing Noah's ark, in addition to wrestling with the obscure vocabulary, the author notes the likelihood that the ark was intended to be a kind of sanctuary based on its parallels in the ancient epic *Gilgamesh*. Just as Gilgamesh's vessel resembled a seven-story ziggurat, Noah's craft has dimensions that parallel Moses' wilderness tabernacle and Solomon's temple (138). Similarly, Noah's use of birds to observe the subsiding flood waters also has strong parallels in *Gilgamesh*. The hero Utnapishtim makes use of a dove, a swallow, and a raven. Although the Bible omits use of the swallow, the exploration of the birds is still told in a triadic literary pattern (141). Although it is generally well known that many ancient cultures had a deluge tradition, Blenkinsopp expands his ancient near eastern comparisons to include the parallels between the Tree of Life in Eden and Adapa's near brush with immortality in *Adapa and the Food of Life* (74–75), as well as the possibility that the image of "sin . . . crouching at [Cain's] door" may refer to ancient

Mesopotamia's *rābišum*, threshold demons who guarded entrances to buildings and ambushed their victims (94).

Equally pervasive is Blenkinsopp's nuanced approach to source criticism. Beginning on page 6, he credits the priestly writer with the main narrative line of Genesis 1–11, frequently appended by the less liturgical comments of the Yahwist. Although he usually assigns certain elements of the text to one author or the other according to general modern consensus, he acknowledges other possibilities and does his best to steer away from deconstruction. The author gives just enough information for the reader to be familiar with the discussion, but also gives voice to the other side of the debate. For example, as early as page 7 he admits, "That Genesis 1–11 results from the combination of these two sources [P and J] is still the ruling assumption in academic commentary, but like all such assumptions it leaves space for a hermeneutic of suspicion." Fifty pages later, after associating J with the Garden of Eden narrative, he also acknowledges that this conclusion "looks rather less assured on closer inspection" (55) and reminds us that "repetitions need not imply a combination of sources" (56).

For all of his obvious familiarity with the current academic debate on various topics, Blenkinsopp largely keeps his references to contemporary scholarship to the footnotes and reserves room in the text itself for lengthy discussions of ancient commentary. When treating Genesis 5, Blenkinsopp liberally sprinkles references to later Enochian tradition throughout. Here he obviously has an eye toward the development of the Watcher myth that will occur in conversation with Genesis 6, but he also mentions specific traditions about Enoch himself. Some authors questioned why it is mentioned that Enoch walked with God *after* the birth of Methuselah, but not before. The solution for many commentators, including ben Sira and Philo, was a period of personal wickedness before becoming a father and repenting (115). For others, Enoch's rebellious stage was cultivated under the influence of the wicked angels who fraternized with human women during his father's lifetime (119). He notes the association that grew between Enoch and Elijah due to their miraculous disappearances, a theme that developed in later texts including Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, 1–3 *Enoch*, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, and *Genesis Rabbah* (119–20). Blenkinsopp also keeps an eye on Wisdom traditions, especially since they address the question of an invisible creation in addition to the visible creation described in Genesis 1–2 (46–52).

The final conventional feature of Blenkinsopp's approach regards historical criticism. References to the date and circumstances of Genesis' composition are sparing, but the author clearly favors a Neo-Babylonian context (24).

He finds echoes of Solomon's accession to the throne in the Cain and Abel pericope, identifying such parallels as a sexual act with tragic consequences (Nakedness and shame in Eden, David's adultery with Bathsheba), fratricide (Cain/Abel, Absalom/Amnon, Solomon/Adonijah), and "wisdom" resulting in death (the serpent, wise woman of Tekoa) (58–60). Blenkinsopp also identifies numerous parallels between Genesis 1–11 and Deutero-Isaiah in both theme and vocabulary and draws further evidence from the contemporary events mentioned in Isaiah 40–48 (178–80).

As I read this book, I found myself frequently checking to make sure that I hadn't accidentally picked up a volume in a commentary series. Blenkinsopp's writing style is extremely concise and efficient. He is more interested in commenting on the text than emphasizing the poetic and/or emotional content of Genesis 1–11. He includes lexical notes, Mesopotamian and Greek parallels, ancient commentary, literary-critical observations, and ambiguities surrounding interpretation. This approach necessarily causes the book to feel choppy and can obscure the thesis in some ways, but it can also be extremely valuable as long as the reader doesn't lose sight of Blenkinsopp's larger project.

Overall, the book has little value in terms of learning new facts about ancient context or later interpretive traditions. Blenkinsopp didn't break any new ground that hasn't been thoroughly explored elsewhere, but he has produced a concise and handy reference to these topics and the academic research surrounding them. In all, I find this book to be useful to those interested in a user-friendly approach to the interpretive issues surrounding Genesis 1–11. Whether one is a scholar well versed in the Hebrew Bible or a layman who merely dabbles, Blenkinsopp's book is worth personally owning and makes a versatile addition to any bookshelf.

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SHIPP, R. MARK. *Of Dead Kings and Dirges: Myth and Meaning in Isaiah 14:4b–21*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002. Pp. 197. Paperback. \$116.00. ISBN: 9781589830387.

R. Mark Shipp's *Of Dead Kings and Dirges: Myth and Meaning in Isaiah 14:4b–21* is an ultimately valuable read and contains a fascinating exegesis of Isaiah 14:4b–21. While this exegesis is, at times, clouded by scattered data, the brilliance of Shipp's ideas yet shines through.

Shipp's essential argument is that Isaiah 14:4b–21 is a complex dirge form—a *mashal*, proverb, or taunt that is also a parody of a royal dirge. Shipp posits that it uses the mythological motifs of the Mesopotamian tradition to further taunt the living king (perhaps Sargon II). The use of myth connects the dirge to the world of Isaiah's day. Shipp says of the pericope, "its intent is to point away from the ritual and myth to political, social, and religious realities. It is an indictment and condemnation of an arrogant king who tyrannized the world and whose actions and hubris suggested divine pretensions" (165). He proceeds to support this thesis in six chapters: one surveys the interpretation of myth and the Isaiah passage; one discusses the literary genre of the Isaiah passage; one investigates the phrase *Helel ben Shachar*; one reviews ascent, descent, and other mythological motifs in Isaiah 14, one presents an exegesis of Isaiah 14:4b–21, and the final chapter is a two-page conclusion.

First, Shipp conducts a literature review of commentaries and interpretations of the Bible with myth in view. He outlines several approaches, evaluates these approaches and concludes with his own definition of "myth" to outline his approach. He argues that to deny or minimize myth in Isaiah is a faulty approach because of the abundance of cosmological imagery in Isaiah and throughout the Hebrew Bible. Rightly, he defines myth, recognizing that this definition is an essential springboard from which to begin his analysis. He associates his approach most closely with the myth and ritual approach, and defines myth as "a story about the inbreaking of Eternity into history with implications for the future" (31). Generally, this section is well done, though he fails to explain how his definition fits into the context of the approaches he has cited. Most importantly, he does not explain how he reached his definition. He simply explains several approaches and then states his own.

Next, Shipp examines the literary genre of the Isaiah passage. He briefly reviews the historical interpretations of its Gattung and then proceeds to discuss his own analysis of the genre, moving from general features to specific ones. He begins with discussing the term *mashal*, which is used in Isaiah 14:4 to describe the poem itself, and proceeds to examine the *mashal* as a parody or "taunt song." He uses two texts to support this interpretation: an Assyrian parody of a memorial stele (K 1351) and Ezekiel 32:18–32, also a parody of a dirge ("what makes this passage a parody is that its form is that of the dirge, with the commandment to 'wail' over him, yet the content does not reflect the intent of the form" [46]). He then establishes the form of the dirge in biblical and extra-biblical texts and points out consistent elements: the command to go down, the lament, the rousing of underworld dwellers, the greeting of the rephaim or dead kings, the sacrifice for/by a king (what, he argues, relates

this genre to ritual), and the proclamation of a new king (65). What I think is missing from this section is a final synthesis: Shipp fails to then emphasize that each of these elements exist in Isaiah 14. He does not do this until the final section, some 100 pages later.

The third chapter is an examination of *Helel ben Shachar* ("How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!" Isa 14:12). This section seems more of a response to previous literature than a supportive aspect of Shipp's main argument. Through the examination of several texts, Shipp concludes that *Helel ben Shachar* refers to a star connected with Ishtar constellations, and by extension, connected to Enlil. This conclusion is a bit of a stretch, especially considering that he only provides one text which shows that, though *Helel ben Shachar* seems to be clearly connected to Ishtar, Ishtar is in close constellational proximity with Enlil. Shipp also doesn't explain how this particular finding assists in supporting his book's overall thesis. Instead, it seems to be a topic of interest that happens to be in Isaiah 14:4–21 but apparently has little to do with the dirge, ritual, or mythical aspects of the passage—at least, no connections that are thoroughly explained. If this were done, or even if this lengthy examination were presented as a byproduct of Shipp's unique approach, then I think its inclusion would be justified. However, its placement is distracting and presentation is puzzling. Shipp does not make this examination relevant to his overall argument and does not connect it with the preceding or following chapters.

The fourth chapter examines the mythological elements attested in Isaiah 14: ascent, descent, the cedar forest of Lebanon, and the dead kings in Sheol. Shipp does an excellent job of establishing each of these elements as mythological ideas with specific connotations throughout the Near East. When kings die, they are always described as ascending or descending, and oftentimes doing both. Shipp points out that ascent and descent should not be interpreted as respectively positive or negative evaluations of the dead king. He cites the myth of Re, who ascends every morning and descends every evening as the sun. He argues that there is often a cycle of ascent through the sky and descent through the underworld. He also shows that cedars are often associated with death and myth. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, for example, the domain of the gods was in the cedar forest and the hubris of entering these woods as a mortal was deadly. Finally, he clearly shows the dead kings in Sheol, or *rephaim*, as underworld aristocrats through an examination of several biblical and extra-biblical texts.

The fifth chapter is clearly the most important one in the book. Its purpose is clear and its support is immediate and evident. In it, Shipp conducts an

exegesis of Isaiah 14:4b–21 with each of the previous chapters in mind (chapter 3 is mentioned only very briefly, however). He provides a translation, an outline of the text, and a brief analysis of each segment of the passage. Here, Shipp references many of his previous arguments. He finally draws on his earlier discussions to explain how the mythological imagery in Isaiah 14:4b–21 relates to kingship, especially dirges for dead kings, and “was borrowed and significantly transformed by the *mashal* in order to mock the tyrant and expedite him to the lowest possible pit in Sheol, where he would enjoy neither position, nor authority, nor even royal regalia or comfort” (166). In Isaiah, the king is described as attempting to ascend (like the myth of Etana), commenting on his presumption and arrogance, and contrasting with his descent to the lowest part of the underworld where the rephaim only stare instead of welcoming him. Instead of lamenting for the king, the people and trees rejoice. The king is described as not being buried and instead of a new king being appointed, the kings’ sons are sacrificed. Shipp systematically addresses the layout and mythological elements of a dirge and how each is parodied in Isaiah 14:4b–21. He is, in this point, successful and persuasive.

Shipp’s contribution to our understanding of this text seems to be in viewing the passage as an interaction between myth, *mashal*, and dirge. While the passage has been examined as a *mashal* and as a dirge and some of the mythological motifs within it have been recognized, no analysis of the text has recognized each of these components and their coalescence within the text. Shipp’s analysis helps to clarify this complicated text’s meaning. For example, viewing the text as the parody of a dirge makes the mythological elements within it more clear: the rejoicing of the cedars of Lebanon becomes significant historically (several Assyrian kings record hewing cedars or receiving cedars in tribute), politically (cedars are representative of the leaders of nations), and mythologically (by transforming an image commonly used in lament and praise of a dead king to rejoice over and mock a living king) (142–49). This proves to be an extremely valuable and compelling approach.

While I found this book an ultimately valuable read, both the disorder of the overall argument and the presentation of specific data made it a difficult one. In every section, Shipp introduced texts, cited them, and then moved on—often without any synthesis of the data whatsoever. I would have found this extremely helpful. Without commentary on his evidence, his specific arguments were sometimes almost incoherent (see, e.g., 49–50, 70, 78, 84–85, 93, 114, etc.).

Also, Shipp doesn’t adequately address the issue of transmission or proximity. What is the significance of the Mesopotamian evidence without an

established, or at the very least assumed, framework for their interaction? He remains largely silent on this point, with a sentence on page 97 the only real reference: "The Legend of Etana itself may provide some startling parallels to the text of Isa 14 and mythopoeic imagery from which Isaiah or one of his disciples could have drawn, parallels which have gone largely unnoticed." It is unclear what he means by Isaiah or his disciples "drawing on parallels" and how he proposes this would have occurred. In order to accept his argument, this point must somehow be addressed.

While the bulk of it lacked a certain care for the reader, the bookends of the piece—the introduction and exegesis—were excellent and insightful. I would recommend the first, fifth, and sixth chapters as great reading for anyone interested in this passage or myth in the Bible.

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BRAKKE, DAVID. *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010. Pp. ix + 164. Hardcover. \$29.95. ISBN: 9780674046849.

Amidst a sea of spilt ink, stemming from scholars of drastically disparate opinions over the validity of the category "Gnosticism," author David Brakke has sought to make method out of the madness by taking a middle positioned approach in his *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity*. Up until now, this "middle of the road" approach has been the road less traveled. On the one hand, he neither concludes that the Gnostics were an unwieldy conglomerate of groups that were typologized by believing in a lower creator God, salvation by *gnosis*, or anthropological dualism (42), and on the other hand, he does not conclude that the category of the "Gnostic school of thought" should be dismantled entirely. Rather, the group that has traditionally been labeled as "Sethian Gnosticism" is in fact the only sectarian group that can be properly labeled "Gnostic"—thus the superfluous qualifier "Sethian" should be abandoned. Brakke comes to this conclusion through a careful criticism of the evidence as given by Irenaeus and Porphyry. Because these sources identify the texts of *The Secret Book According to John*, *Zostrianos*, *The Foreigner*, the *Book of Zoroaster*, and the *Gospel of Judas* as belonging to the Gnostics, Brakke has used the former and latter types of evidences to reconstruct a universal Gnostic myth, rather than a typology. It is a "sacred story," which includes details "of

origins, fall, . . . salvation” and a “shared ritual”(44). The shared Gnostic myth and its accompanying ritual become both the dovetail and the touchstone for identifying and linking other Gnostic texts together. For Brakke, it is the myth that matters—the texts always trump the typologies.

The original ideas which later evolved into Brakke’s *The Gnostics* resulted from an article which he wrote for the *Cambridge History of Christianity* called “Self Differentiation among Christian Groups: The Gnostics and Their Opponents.” He acknowledges that many of the ideas presented in his book have been highly influenced by Bentley Layton, as well as the approaches used by Mark Edwards, and Alastair Logan (x–xi).

Brakke initially begins his study by providing the reader with a useful survey of how scholars have approached the diversity of early Christianities in the past. In particular, he illustrates how they have dealt with the category of Gnosticism, and how this understanding has evolved to the present state of scholarship (ch.1). It is pointed out that when scholars put many diverse groups under the same category of “Gnosticism,” and even argue for it being a separate religion, they both pass on Irenaeus’ categorization, and surpass his generalizations (4). Scholars should differentiate between modern constructs such as typologies and categories, and the ancient communities themselves (5). Brakke’s book handles this differentiation well. The book gets past rigid categorizations and shows the continual process of transformation and creation within early Christianities, while at the same time not leaving a picture of Christianity as a nebulous “soup of hybridity” (15). In this process Brakke cites statements from Irenaeus and Tertullian to show that the Valentinians and the Gnostics were two separate groups.

In chapter three Brakke begins explaining the Gnostic myth based on an evaluation of the relevant evidence which was mentioned previously. It is not meant to be an exhaustive study which grapples with all the issues scholars are currently seeking to understand, but rather seeks to illustrate what the general Gnostic myth entailed. Brakke describes the Gnostic myth as having less to do with “dualism, alienation, esotericism,” and more to do with the knowledge that Christ imparts which delivers the soul from the clutches of “evil forces” (53). His description of the myth which describes the origins of man, the aeons, the world, and the return of the soul follows the basic outline which has been previously attributed to the so called “Sethians” (ch. 3). In conjunction with the Gnostic myth, Brakke believes that these texts were accompanied by rituals of baptism and ascent. While these rituals cannot be proven, nor identified with any certainty, the texts do seem to indicate that these rituals were actually performed and had some generally identifiable features. Some of the rituals

which may have been used include the following: receiving the name of Seth upon the water of baptism, hymnic responses, stripping, washing, enrobing, anointing, enthroning, and being caught up into "the luminous places of that person's kinship" (74-75). There is also some debate over the meaning of the famous five Gnostic seals. Based on evidence from the *First Thought*, Brakke posits that the five seals might correspond to an anointing of the five senses of the "eyes, ears, hands, mouth, and nose" (75). Though the details of these rituals cannot be proven with certainty, Brakke demonstrates that the rituals of baptism and ascent were probably practiced by the Gnostics in conjunction with their sacred myth. Following this description of the Gnostic myth and rituals, Brakke gives a general overview of the history of early Christianities. In particular he describes the roles played by Justin Martyr, Valentinus, and Marcion. He states his conclusions pithily in the following manner, "there was no single 'Church' that could accept or reject anything, nor was there a multi-form heresy called 'Gnosticism' to be accepted or rejected"(113)

The final chapter (5) of *The Gnostics* brings the previous statement to fruition. In it Brakke compares and contrasts the beliefs and strategies of self-differentiation used by Irenaeus, Valentinus, and Clement of Alexandria. The several groups represented by these leaders used competitive modes of self-differentiation such as various appeals to "teaching authority," "embryonic canons," "allegorical methods of interpreting scripture", rules "of faith"/truth, "heresiology"/marginalizing opponents, and the "withdrawal of communion" as a means to "invent and reinvent Christianity" (132). Brakke is careful to show that each person, and by implication the groups they represented, had many similarities as well as dissimilarities. Even opponents such as Irenaeus and the "Gnostics" had much more in common than each would care to admit. Though these groups all considered themselves Christian, there was no universal church. Furthermore, Brakke argues that for the same reasons that a wide ranging modern category such as "Gnosticism" is flawed, so also the term "proto-orthodoxy" lacks nuance, and does not recognize the great dissimilarities that existed between the so-called "proto-orthodox" proponents such as Irenaeus and Clement (133).

The Gnostics should prove to be a useful tool to both experts and students in the field of Christianity. Because of the complexity and paucity of the available evidence, Brakke should be commended for his keen attention to detail, and his ability to create a perspicuous presentation of the Gnostics. The book is careful in its use of terminology, and demonstrates some of the problems which can be created when scholars broadly employ categorical terms such as "Gnosticism", "Sethianism" and "proto-orthodoxy," Indeed, the book's great

strengths may also be its weakness. The student is left to contemplate that history is so much more nuanced and less understood than our broad categories lead us to believe, yet the lacunae of history require historians to use categories. With the increased knowledge that comes from more narrowly and accurately defined categories (such as “Gnosticism”), other areas which were previously subsumed under these categories are now exposed and need further discussion. In this process, the old questions are answered but the new remain unanswered—producing a bewildering combination of joy and frustration. Credit is due for such a thought provoking and careful historical reconstruction of the “Gnostics.”

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BOOK NOTICES

BARBIERO, GIANNI. *Song of Songs: A Close Reading*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. This book puts forward an interpretation of the Canticle which is alert to the literal sense of the poem. The author thus distances himself both from the allegorical interpretation and from an interpretation that is purely secular. According to the author, the Song offers a theological vision of human love. Barbiero sees the Song as composed in the third century B.C.E., in the Hellenistic epoch, but also as hugely dependent on the love poetry of the Ancient Near East, particularly that of Egypt. Above all, however, the Song was composed in dialogue with the other books of the Old Testament, especially in contrast with the negative view of sexuality which they represent. The study pays particular attention to the structure of the poem and of the individual cantos: for Barbiero, the Song is a closely unitary work and is only to be understood as a whole.

BARCHIESI, ALESSANDRO and WALTER SCHEIDEL, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Over fifty distinguished scholars elucidate the contribution of material as well as literary culture to our understanding of the Roman world. The emphasis is particularly upon the new and exciting links between the various sub-disciplines that make up Roman Studies—for example, between literature and epigraphy, art and philosophy, papyrology and economic history. The Handbook, in fact, aims to establish a field and scholarly practice as much as to describe the current state of play. Connections with disciplines outside classics are also explored, including anthropology, psychoanalysis, gender and reception studies, and the use of new media.

BENTLEY, JERRY H., ed. *The Oxford Handbook of World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. *The Oxford Handbook of World History* presents thirty-three essays by leading historians in their respective fields. The chapters address the most important issues explored by contemporary world historians. These broadly fall into four categories: conceptions of the global past, themes in world history, processes of world history, and regions in world history. Those chapters on conceptions deal with issues of space and time as treated in the field of world history as well as questions of method, epistemology, the historiography of the area, and globalization as viewed from historical perspective. Themes present in the book include the natural environment, agriculture, pastoral nomadism, science, technology, state formation, gender, and religion. Chapters dealing with large-scale processes review current thinking on some of the most influential developments of the global past, including mass migrations, cross-cultural trade, biological diffusions, imperial expansion, industrialization, and cultural and religious exchanges. And finally, a set of chapters explores the distinctive historical development within the world's major regions, while also situating individual regions in the larger global context.

BREMMER, JAN N. and MARCO FORMISANO. *Perpetua's Passions: Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. *Perpetua's Passions* is a collection of studies about Perpetua, a young female Christian martyr who was executed in 203 C.E. Like her spiritual guide, Saturus, Perpetua left a diary, and a few years after their deaths a fellow Christian collected these writings and supplied them with an introduction and epilogue: the so-called *Passion of Perpetua*. The result is one of the most fascinating and enigmatic works of antiquity, which the present volume examines from a wide range of perspectives: literary, narratological, historical, religious, psychological, and philosophical viewpoints follow upon a newly edited text and English translation (by Joseph Farrell and Craig Williams). This innovative treatment by a number of distinguished scholars not only complements its unique subject, but constitutes a kind of laboratory of new approaches to ancient texts.

BYRON, JOHN. *Cain and Abel in Text and Tradition: Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the First Sibling Rivalry*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. The story of Cain and Abel narrates the primeval events associated with the

beginnings of the world and humanity. But the presence of linguistic and grammatical ambiguities coupled with narrative gaps provided translators and interpreters with a number of points of departure for expanding the story. The result is a number of well established and interpretive traditions shared between Jewish and Christian literature. This book focuses on how the interpretive traditions derived from Genesis 4 exerted significant influence on Jewish and Christian authors who knew rewritten versions of the story. The goal is to help readers appreciate these traditions within the broader interpretive context rather than within the narrow confines of the canon.

COOK, PAUL M. *A Sign and a Wonder: The Redactional Formation of Isaiah 18–20*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. While many studies on Isaiah are interested in the formation of the book, relatively few have addressed the development of the oracles concerning foreign nations. Like many other prophetic books, the book of Isaiah contains a section of foreign nations oracles (Isaiah 13–23), but within this collection is a smaller grouping of literary material that deals with the nations of Cush (Ethiopia) and Egypt (Isaiah 18–20). This book considers the formation of this smaller group about Cush and Egypt within the literary context of the growth of the larger collection and the development of these individual chapters. This book also contributes a fresh approach to the formation of foreign nations oracles in Isaiah 13–23.

DEUTSCH, ROBERT. *Biblical Period Hebrew Seals, Bullae, and Handles: The Joseph Chaim Collection, volume 2*. Tel Aviv: Archeological Center, 2011. The book is the second volume recording biblical period epigraphic material from the Josef Chaim Kaufman collection. The present volume includes 387 specimens: 88 seals, 248 bullae, and 51 stamped handles. Out of the 88 seals: 84 are Hebrew, one is anepigraphic (Judean), one is Hebrew Phoenician, one is Hebrew Aramaic and one is Moabite. Six seals were previously published and 82 seals are presented here for the first time. The Hebrew seals, including a Moabite example, are to be dated to the end of the eighth century B.C.E., through the beginning of the sixth century B.C.E., before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II in 586 B.C.E., while the Hebrew Phoenician and the Aramaic seals are dated to the post exilic period in the 5th century B.C.E. The bullae are all Hebrew except for three anepigraphic and two Hellenistic. The Hebrew bullae are to be dated also to the end of the eighth through the beginning of the sixth century

B.C.E. All are previously unrecorded. This group of bullae was collected in the last seven years, since the publication of the first volume. Their possible provenance is Khirbet Qe'ila, biblical Keilah (Josh. 15:44), located 13.5 km northwest of Hebron. Out of the 51 handles, seven are of the *lmk* type, impressed by seven different seals. The majority, 42 handles, are impressed by 33 different official seals with nine duplicates. They are to be dated to the end of the eighth century, before 701 B.C.E., in the time of Hezekiah king of Judah. The two remaining handles are from the Persian Period. All the items presented in this volume were meticulously examined by the author and were found genuine beyond any doubt. The recent tendency expressed by some scholars, to declare all unprovenanced epigraphic materials "questionable" and therefore worthless, is an approach which is to be unequivocally rejected.

DITOMASSO, LORENZO and CHRISTFRIED BOTTRICH, eds. *The Old Testament in the Slavonic Tradition*. Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 140. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011. Written by an international group of expert scholars, the essays in this volume are devoted to the topic of biblical apocrypha, particularly the "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha," within the compass of the Slavonic tradition. The authors examine ancient texts, such as 2 Enoch and the Apocalypse of Abraham, which have been preserved (sometimes uniquely) in Slavonic witnesses and versions, as well as apocryphal literature that was composed within the rich Slavonic tradition from the early Byzantine period onwards. The volume's focus is textual, historical, and literary. Many of its contributions present editions and commentaries of important texts, or discuss aspects pertaining to the manuscript evidence.

DUNN, JAMES D. G. *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2011. This compact theological primer from a widely respected scholar offers a well-integrated and illuminating approach to a variety of basic issues in the study of the New Testament:

- Where, why, and how the Gospels were written and what we should expect from them
- The reliability and historicity of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life and ministry
- The continuing significance of the apostle Paul and his teaching

- Points of continuity and discontinuity between the teaching of Jesus and of Paul—and how to bridge the two

In *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels*, James Dunn has gathered texts from three sets of lectures given in 2009 to Catholic and Jewish audiences in Italy, Spain, and Israel. The resulting book uniquely presents the Gospels to a Jewish audience and Paul to a Catholic audience—all from a scholarly Protestant perspective. Written to introduce well-informed people to topics that are perhaps new or unfamiliar to them, this book is ideal for readers and students of various backgrounds both within and beyond the Christian community.

EHRMAN, BART D. and ZLATKO PLESE, eds. *The Apocryphal Gospels: Texts and Translations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Bart Ehrman and Zlatko Plese here offer a groundbreaking, multi-lingual edition of the Apocryphal Gospels, one that breathes new life into the non-canonical texts that were once nearly lost to history. In *The Apocryphal Gospels*, Ehrman and Plese present a rare compilation of over 40 ancient gospel texts and textual fragments that do not appear in the New Testament. This essential collection contains Gospels describing Jesus's infancy, ministry, Passion, and resurrection, as well as manuscripts, including the Gospel of Thomas, and the most recently discovered Gospel, the Gospel of Judas Iscariot. These manuscripts are featured in the original Greek, Latin, and Coptic languages, accompanied by fresh English translations that appear next to the original texts, allowing for line by line comparison. Also, each translation begins with an examination of historical, literary, and textual issues that places each Gospel in its proper context. This volume will contain the following texts: Infancy Gospel of Thomas, Proto-Gospel of James, Gospel of Pseudo Matthew, Latin Infancy Gospels, Coptic History of Joseph the Carpenter, Jewish Christian Gospels, Gospel of the Nazareans, Gospel of the Ebionites, Gospel according to the Hebrews, Gospel of the Egyptians, The Diatesseron, Papyrus Berlin 11710, Papyrus Cairensis 10735, Papyrus Egerton 2, Papyrus Merton 51, P Oxy 210, P Oxy 840, P Oxy 1224, P Oxy 2949, P Oxy 4009, P Vindob G 2325, Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Thomas: Greek fragments, Agrapha, Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Judas, Abgar Legend, Gospel of Nicodemus A, Gospel of Nicodemus B, Report of Pilate, Handing over of Pilate, Letter of Pilate to Claudius, Letter of Pilate to Herod, Letter of Herod to Pilate, Letter of

Tiberius to Pilate, *Vindicta Salvatoris*, *Mors Pilati*, Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea, Gospel of Mary, and Gospel of Mary: Greek fragments.

EHRMAN, BART D. *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Victors not only write history but they also reproduce the texts. Bart Ehrman explores the close relationship between the social history of early Christianity and the textual tradition of the emerging New Testament, examining how early struggles between Christian “heresy” and “orthodoxy” affected the transmission of the documents over which many of the debates were waged. He makes a crucial contribution to our understanding of the social and intellectual history of early Christianity and raises intriguing questions about the relationship of readers to their texts, especially in an age when scribes could transform the documents they reproduced. This edition includes a new afterword surveying research in biblical interpretation over the past twenty years.

FAULKNER, ANDREW, ed. *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretive Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. This is the first collection of scholarly essays on the *Homeric Hymns*, a corpus of 33 hexameter compositions that were probably recited at festivals of the gods whom they honored and were often attributed in antiquity to Homer. After a general introduction to modern scholarship on the *Homeric Hymns*, the essays of the first part of the book examine in detail aspects of the longer narrative poems in the collection, while those of the second part give critical attention to the shorter poems and to the collection as a whole. The contributors to the volume present a wide range of stimulating views on the study of the *Homeric Hymns*, which, with the discovery of new fragments, have attracted much interest in recent years.

FERRARA, SILVIA. *Cypro-Minoan Inscriptions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 (anticipated publishing date). This volume offers the first comprehensive examination of an ancient writing system from Cyprus and Syria known as Cypro-Minoan. After Linear B was deciphered by Michael Ventris in 1952, other undeciphered scripts of the second millennium B.C.E. from the Aegean world (Linear A) and the Eastern Mediterranean (Cypro-Minoan) became the focus of those trying to crack this ancient and historical code. Despite several attempts for both syllabaries, this prospect

has remained unrealized. This is especially true for Cypro-Minoan, the script of Late Bronze Age Cyprus found also at Ugarit in Syria, which, counting no more than 250 inscriptions, remains poorly documented. Ferrara presents the first large-scale study of Cypro-Minoan with an analysis of all the inscriptions through a multidisciplinary perspective that embraces aspects of archaeology, epigraphy, and palaeography.

FREDERIKSEN, RUNE. *Greek City Walls of the Archaic Period, 900–480 BC*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. In this fully illustrated study, Rune Frederiksen assembles all archaeological and written sources for city walls in the ancient Greek world, and argues that widespread fortification of settlements and towns, usually considered to date from the Classical period, in fact took place much earlier. Frederiksen discusses the types of fortified settlement and the topography of urban fortification, and also the preservation of structures from early settlements. He also presents an architectural history of Greek fortification walls before the Classical period, and makes the intriguing observation that early monumental architecture developed just as much in fortifications as it did in early temples. This underlines the importance of the secular sphere for the development of early communities across the Greek world.

GIBSON, ROY and RUTH MORELLO. *Pliny the Elder: Themes and Contexts*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*—a brilliant and sophisticated encyclopedia of the scientific, artistic, philosophical, botanical and zoological riches of the ancient world—has had a long career in the footnotes of historical studies. This is a phenomenon born of the sense that the work was there to consult, or to "use" as a resource to aid investigation of specific technical issues or passages, of *Quellenforschung*, or of delimited topic areas. The contributors to the present volume both represent and join a new generation of critics who have begun to try to "read" this monumental text, and—by examining the dominant motifs which give shape and order to the work—to construct frameworks within which we may understand and interpret Pliny's overarching agenda.

GREER, ROWAN A. *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Commentary on the Minor Pauline Epistles*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. The most famous representative of the school of Antioch, Theodore of Mopsuestia penned a number of commentaries on biblical books in both Testaments. This volume offers not only an introduction to Theodore's life and work but also the first

modern-language translation of his commentaries on Paul's minor epistles (Galatians–Philemon). The English translation is accompanied by a facing Latin/Greek text based on H. B. Swete's 1880–82 critical edition of these early fifth-century commentaries. As a prime example of "Antiochene" exegesis and theology, they are of considerable interest, providing valuable evidence for Theodore's exegetical principles and practice, his Christology and doctrines of grace and free will, and his understanding of crucial developments in Christian ministry and church polity from the time of Paul to his own day.

HIEBERT, PIETER J.V. *"Translation is Required": The Septuagint and Retrospect and Prospect*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. This volume, which includes papers delivered at an international conference sponsored by the Septuagint Institute of Trinity Western University, addresses topics such as the nature and function of the Septuagint, its reception history, and the issues involved in translating it into other languages. The collection highlights the distinction between the Septuagint as produced (i.e., the product of the earliest attempt to translate the Hebrew Bible) and the Septuagint as it subsequently came to be received (i.e., as an autonomous text independent of its Semitic parent). It also reflects the kind of discourse currently taking place in the field of Septuagint research, celebrates the appearance of three modern-language translations of the Septuagint, and sets the stage for the next level of investigation: the hermeneutical/interpretative task associated with the production of commentaries.

HULL, ROBERT F., JR. *The Story of the New Testament Text: Movers, Materials, Motives, Methods, and Models*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. This volume tells the story of the New Testament text from the earliest copies to the latest scholarly editions in Greek. Using a cross-sectional approach, the author introduces those who have developed the discipline of New Testament textual criticism (the movers); the ancient sources for recovering the text (the materials); the aims that drove them (the motives); the criteria and techniques (methods); and the books and other examples of best practices (the models) of New Testament textual criticism. Written primarily for seminary students, the book will also interest clergy and graduate students in biblical studies, theology, church history, and religion.

HUME, DOUGLAS A. *The Early Christian Community: A Narrative Analysis of Acts 2:41–47 and 4:32–35*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum

Neuen Testament 2:298. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011. Douglas A. Hume offers a narrative ethical reading of the passages depicting the early Christian community in Acts (2:41–47 and 4:32–35). He begins with a methodological exploration of how contemporary scholars may examine the impact of biblical narratives upon reader's moral imaginations. Given the presence of friendship language in Acts, the work subsequently launches into an examination of this idiom in Greco-Roman philosophical and literary works by Aristotle, Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius, and Iamblichus. The author then proceeds to an exegetical examination of how friendship language is employed by Luke in the narrative summaries of Acts. This ethical reading of the Acts 2:41–47 and 4:32–35 incorporates multiple features of narrative criticism and asks such wide ranging questions as the use of emotion, point of view, and characterization to shape the reading audience's perception of God, the early Christian community, and other characters within the story of Luke-Acts. This study has implications for biblical studies, practical theology, and contemporary understandings of ecclesiology.

JOACHIMSSEN, KRISTIN. *Identities in Transition: The Pursuit of Isa. 52:13–53:12*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Isaiah 52:13–53:12 has occupied a special position within Jewish and Christian traditions, as well as within biblical scholarship. This book focuses particularly on different ways of reading this text. Historical-critical readings in the tradition after Bernhard Duhm are challenged. In Duhmian readings of Isa. 52:13–53:12, *Gottesknecht* has become a technical term, *Ebed-JahweLied* a genre, *Stellvertretung* an established theological concept and “servant song research” a separate discipline within biblical scholarship. After a critical presentation of the Duhmian readings, three other ways of reading Isaiah 52:13–53:12 based on variations of linguistic theory are presented: one linguistic, one narratological and one intertextual. These show in different manners how the text is unstable, heterogeneous and composite. In these readings, the trope of personification is central.

JOHNSON, WILLIAM A. and HOLT N. PARKER, eds. *Ancient Literacies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Recent advances in cognitive psychology, socio-linguistics, and socio-anthropology are revolutionizing our understanding of literacy. However, this research has made only minimal inroads among classicists. In turn, historians of literacy continue to rely on outdated work by classicists (mostly from the 1960s and 1970s)

and have little access to the current reexamination of the ancient evidence. This timely volume seeks to formulate interesting new ways of conceiving the entire concept of literacy in the ancient world, as text-oriented events embedded in particular sociocultural contexts. In the volume, selected leading scholars rethink from the ground up how students of classical antiquity might best approach the question of literacy in the past, and how that investigation might materially intersect with changes in the way that literacy is now viewed in other disciplines. The result will give readers new ways of thinking about specific elements of "literacy" in antiquity, such as the nature of personal libraries, or what it means to be a bookseller in antiquity; new constructionist questions, such as what constitutes reading communities and how they fashion themselves; new takes on the public sphere, such as how literacy intersects with commercialism, or with the use of public spaces, or with the construction of civic identity; new essentialist questions, such as what do "book" and "reading" signify in antiquity, why literate cultures develop, or why literate cultures matter.

KELLY, BENJAMIN. *Petitions, Litigation, and Social Control in Roman Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. This book examines the contribution that petitioning and litigation made to the maintenance of the social order in Roman Egypt between 30 B.C.E. and 284 C.E. Through the analysis of the many hundreds of documents surviving on papyrus, especially petitions, reports of court proceedings, and letters, Kelly focuses on how the legal system achieved its formal goals (that is, the resolution of disputes through judgments) and discusses in detail the contribution made by the litigation process to informal methods of social control. With particular emphasis on the roles that this process played in the transmission of political ideologies, such as the maintenance of family solidarity and the fostering of "private" mechanisms of dispute resolution, the book argues that although the legal system was less than successful when judged by its formal aims, it did have a real social impact by indirectly contributing to some of the informal mechanisms that ensured order in this province of the Roman Empire. However, arguing that, on occasion, one can also see petitioning and litigation being abused for the pursuit of feud and vengeance, Kelly also recognizes that the social impacts of petitioning and litigation were multifaceted, and in some senses even contradictory.

KENNEDY, ELISABETH ROBERTSON. *Seeking a Homeland: Sojourn and Ethnic Identity in the Ancestral Narratives of Genesis*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Sojourn is a *Leitwort* in the ancestral narratives of Genesis, repeatedly accentuated as an important descriptor of the patriarchs' identity and experience. This study shows that despite its connotations of alienation, sojourn language in Genesis contributes to a strong communal identity for biblical Israel. An innovative application of Anthony D. Smith's theory of ethnic myth utilizes the categories of ethnoscape, election, and communal ethics as analytical tools in the investigation of the Genesis sojourn texts. Close exegetical treatment reveals sojourn to strengthen Israel's ethnic identity in ways that are varied and at times paradoxical. Its very complexity, however, makes it particularly useful as a resource for group identity at times when straightforward categories of territorial and social affiliation may fail.

KVANIG, HELGE. *Primeval History: Babylonian, Biblical, and Enochic—An Intertextual Reading*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Most cultures have myths of origin. The Babylonians were the first to combine blocks of traditions about primeval time into primeval histories where humans had a central role. In the first millennium there were different versions that influenced the concepts of primeval history within Jewish religion, both in the Bible and in the parallel Enochic tradition. Atrahasis and the traditions of primeval dynasties had crucial impact on Genesis; the traditions of the primeval apkallus as cosmic guardians were lying behind the Enochic Watcher Story. The book offers a comprehensive analytic comparison between the images of primeval time in these three traditions. It presents new interpretations of each of these traditions and how they relate to each other.

LEICHTY, ERLE. *The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Eisenbrauns, 2011. *The Royal Inscription of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)* is the inaugural volume of the Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period Project. The volume provides reliable, up-to-date editions of all of the known royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon, a son of Sennacherib who ruled Assyria for twelve years (680–669 B.C.E.). Editions of 143 firmly identifiable texts (which mostly describe successful battles and the completion of building projects, all done *ad maiorem gloriam deorum*), 29 poorly preserved late Neo-Assyrian inscriptions that may be attributed to him, and 10 inscriptions commissioned by his mother Naqia (Zakutu) and his wife Esharra-hammat are included. To make this corpus more

user-friendly to both specialist and laymen, each text edition (with its English translation) is supplied with a brief introduction containing general information, a catalogue containing basic information about all exemplars, a commentary containing further technical information and notes, and a comprehensive bibliography (arranged chronologically from earliest to latest). The volume also includes: (1) a general introduction to the reign of Esarhaddon, the corpus of inscriptions, previous studies, and dating and chronology; (2) translations of the relevant passages of three Mesopotamian chronicles; (3) 19 photographs of objects inscribed with texts of Esarhaddon; (4) indexes of museum and excavation numbers and selected publications; and (5) indexes of proper names (Personal Names; Geographic, Ethnic, and Tribal Names; Divine, Planet, and Star Names; Gate, Palace, Temple, and Wall Names; and Object Names). The book is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing transliterations of selected inscriptions arranged in a "musical score" format. The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period (RINAP) series will present up-to-date editions of the royal inscriptions of a number of late Neo-Assyrian rulers, beginning with Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 B.C.E.). This new series is modeled on the publications of the now-defunct Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia (RIM) series and will carry on where its RIMA (Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods) publications ended. The project is under the direction of G. Frame (University of Pennsylvania) and is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

LEVINE, AMY-JILL and MARC Z. BRETTTLER. *Jewish Annotated New Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Although major New Testament figures—Jesus and Paul; Peter and James; Jesus' mother, Mary; and Mary Magdalene—were Jews, living in a culture steeped in Jewish history, beliefs, and practices, there has never been an edition of the New Testament that addresses its Jewish background and the culture from which it grew—until now. In *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, eminent experts under the general editorship of Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Z. Brettler put these writings back into the context of their original authors and audiences. And they explain how these writings have affected the relations of Jews and Christians over the past two thousand years. An international team of scholars introduces and annotates the Gospels, Acts, Letters, and Revelation from Jewish perspectives, in the New Revised Standard Version translation. They show how Jewish practices and writings, particularly the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible,

influenced the New Testament writers. From this perspective, readers gain new insight into the New Testament's meaning and significance. In addition, thirty essays on historical and religious topics—Divine Beings, Jesus in Jewish thought, Parables and Midrash, Mysticism, Jewish Family Life, Messianic Movements, Dead Sea Scrolls, questions of the New Testament and anti-Judaism, and others—bring the Jewish context of the New Testament to the fore, enabling all readers to see these writings both in their original contexts and in the history of interpretation. For readers unfamiliar with Christian language and customs, there are explanations of such matters as the Eucharist, the significance of baptism, and “original sin.” For non-Jewish readers interested in the Jewish roots of Christianity and for Jewish readers who want a New Testament that neither proselytizes for Christianity nor denigrates Judaism, *Jewish Annotated New Testament* is an essential volume that places these writings in a context that will enlighten students, professionals, and general readers.

LOADER, WILLIAM. *Philo, Josephus, and the Testaments on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Writings of Philo, Josephus, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2011. *Philo, Josephus, and the Testaments on Sexuality* is the fourth of five volumes by William Loader exploring attitudes toward sexuality in Judaism and Christianity during the Greco-Roman era. In this volume Loader examines three substantial and historically important sets of documents—the writings of Philo of Alexandria, the histories of Josephus, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. For each set of writings, he provides an in-depth introduction, detailed analysis highlighting each writer's position on a broad range of matters pertaining to sexuality, and a summary conclusion.

MARTIN, GARY D. *Multiple Originals: New Approaches to Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Textual criticism is in a period of change, as it seeks to account for an ever-growing body of textual data as well as the development of new methodologies. Since the older methodologies cannot simply be modified to meet our present needs, *Multiple Originals* seeks to build bridges between methods of traditional textual criticism and those of orality and formulaic analysis. Examining practices of textual criticism across a wide range of texts and disciplines, this book challenges the assumption that there can be only one correct reading and argues for the presence of multivalences of both meaning and

text. It demonstrates that in some cases multivalences were intended by the composer, while in other cases, during the periods from which our earliest extant manuscripts derive, they fell within the limits of variability acceptable to those who valued and transmitted those texts.

MENNEN, INGE. *Power and Status in the Roman Empire, AD 193–284*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. This book deals with changing power and status relations between the highest ranking representatives of Roman imperial power at the central level, in a period when the Empire came under tremendous pressure, 193–284 C.E. Based on epigraphic, literary and legal materials, the author deals with issues such as the third-century development of emperorship, the shift in power of the senatorial elite and the developing position of senior military officers and other high equestrians. By analyzing the various senior power-holders involved in Roman imperial administration by social rank, this book presents new insights into the diachronic development of imperial administration, appointment policies and sociopolitical hierarchies between the second and fourth centuries C.E.

METCALF, WILLIAM, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. This book attempts to make accessible to students, scholars, and the lay public annotated, up-to-date information regarding the major coinages of the Greco-Roman world. An international group of experts has been asked to treat their areas of expertise, and the result is a broadly illustrated introduction to the subject.

MONROE, LAUREN A. S. *Josiah's Reform and the Dynamics of Defilement: Israelite Rites of Violence and the Making of a Biblical Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Chapters 22 and 23 of 2 Kings tell the story of the religious reforms of the Judean king Josiah, who systematically destroyed the cult places and installations where his own people worshipped in order to purify Israelite religion and consolidate religious authority in the hands of the Jerusalem temple priests. This violent assertion of Israelite identity is portrayed as a pivotal moment in the development of monotheistic Judaism. Monroe argues that the use of cultic and ritual language in the account of the reform is key to understanding the history of the text's composition, and illuminates the essential, interrelated processes of textual growth and identity construction in ancient Israel. Until

now, however, none of the scholarship on 2 Kings 22–23 has explicitly addressed the ritual dimensions of the text. By attending to the specific acts of defilement attributed to Josiah as they resonate within the larger framework of Israelite ritual, Monroe's work illuminates aspects of the text's language and fundamental interests that have their closest parallels in the priestly legal corpus known as the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–26), as well as in other priestly texts that describe methods of eliminating contamination. She argues that these priestly-holiness elements reflect an early literary substratum that was generated close in time to the reign of Josiah, from within the same priestly circles that produced the Holiness Code. The priestly composition was reshaped in the hands of a post-Josianic, exilic or postexilic Deuteronomistic historian who transformed his source material to suit his own ideological interests. The account of Josiah's reform is thus imprinted with the cultural and religious attitudes of two different sets of authors. Teasing these apart reveals a dialogue on sacred space, sanctified violence and the nature of Israelite religion that was formative in the development not only of 2 Kings 23, but of the historical books of the Bible more broadly.

NARBONNE, JEAN-MARC. *Plotinus in Dialogue with the Gnostics*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. The point of view put forth in the following pages differs greatly from the common perspective according to which the treatises 30 to 33 constitute a single work, a *Großschrift*, and this single work, Plotinus' essential response to the Gnostics. Our perspective is that of an ongoing discussions with his "Gnostic"—yet Platonizing—friends, which started early in his writings (at least treatise 6), developed into what we could call a *Großzyklus* (treatises 27 to 39), and went on in later treatises as well (e. g. 47–48, 51). The prospect of an ongoing discussion with the Gnostics bears an additional virtue, that of allowing for a truly dynamic understanding of the Plotinian corpus.

PASTOR, JACK, PNINA STERN, and MENAHEM MOR, eds. *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. An International Josephus Colloquium met in Haifa on 2–6 July, 2006. It gathered scholars from Japan, Germany, France, Norway, Italy, Britain, Israel, and the USA who represented different disciplines: bible, history, Judaism, and archaeology. The connecting structure of all the participants was the ancient Jewish historian Flavius Josephus. The fruit of this meeting is presented in twenty four articles and an introduction. *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and*

History is a multidisciplinary collection of research on Josephus, the man, the historian, his era, and his writings.

POTTER, DAVID. *The Victor's Crown: A History of Ancient Sport from Homer to Byzantium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. *The Victor's Crown* brings to life the signal role of sport in the classical world. Ranging over a dozen centuries—from Archaic Greece through to the late Roman and early Byzantine empires—David Potter's lively narrative shows how sport, to the ancients, was not just a dim reflection of religion and politics but a potent social force in its own right. The passion for sport among the participants and fans of antiquity has been matched in history only by our own time. Potter first charts the origins of competitive athletics in Greece during the eighth century B.C.E. and the emergence of the Olympics as a preeminent cultural event. He focuses especially on the experiences of spectators and athletes, especially in violent sports such as boxing and wrestling, and describes the physiology of conditioning, training techniques, and sport's role in education. Throughout, we meet the great athletes of the past and learn what made them great. The rise of the Roman Empire transformed the sporting world by popularizing new entertainments, particularly gladiatorial combat, a specialized form of chariot racing, and beast hunts. Here, too, Potter examines sport from the perspectives of both athlete and spectator, as he vividly describes competitions held in such famous arenas as the Roman Coliseum and the Circus Maximus. The Roman government promoted and organized sport as a central feature of the Empire, making it a sort of common cultural currency to the diverse inhabitants of its vast territory. While linking ancient sport to events such as religious ceremonies and aristocratic displays, Potter emphasizes above all that it was the thrill of competition—to those who competed and those who watched—that ensured sport's central place in the Greco-Roman world.

RADNER, KAREN and ELEANOR ROBSON, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. The cuneiform script, the writing system of ancient Mesopotamia, was witness to one of the world's oldest literate cultures. For over three millennia, it was the vehicle of communication from (at its greatest extent) Iran to the Mediterranean, Anatolia to Egypt. *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture* examines the Ancient Middle East through the lens of cuneiform writing. The contributors, a mix of scholars from across the disciplines,

explore, define, and to some extent look beyond the boundaries of the written word, using Mesopotamia's clay tablets and stone inscriptions not just as "texts" but also as material artifacts that offer much additional information about their creators, readers, users and owners.

RAJAK, TESSA. *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. The translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek was the first major translation in Western culture. Its significance was far-reaching. Without a Greek Bible, European history would have been entirely different—no Western Jewish diaspora and no Christianity. *Translation and Survival* is a literary and social study of the ancient creators and receivers of the translations, and about their impact. The Greek Bible served Jews who spoke Greek, and made the survival of the first Jewish diaspora possible; indeed, the translators invented the term diaspora. It was a tool for the preservation of group identity and for the expression of resistance. It invented a new kind of language and many new terms. The Greek Bible translations ended up as the Christian Septuagint, taken over along with the entire heritage of Hellenistic Judaism, during the process of the Church's long-drawn-out parting from the Synagogue. Here, a brilliant creation is restored to its original context and to its first owners.

ROLLER, DUANE W. *Cleopatra: A Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Few personalities from classical antiquity are more famous—yet more poorly understood—than Cleopatra VII, queen of Egypt. In this major biography, Duane Roller reveals that Cleopatra was in fact a learned and visionary leader whose overarching goal was always the preservation of her dynasty and kingdom. Roller's authoritative account is the first to be based solely on primary materials from the Greco-Roman period: literary sources, Egyptian documents (Cleopatra's own writings), and representations in art and coinage produced while she was alive. His compelling portrait of the queen illuminates her prowess as a royal administrator who managed a large and diverse kingdom extending from Asia Minor to the interior of Egypt, as a naval commander who led her own fleet in battle, and as a scholar and supporter of the arts. Even her love affairs with Julius Caesar and Marcus Antonius—the source of her reputation as a supreme seductress who drove men to their doom—were carefully crafted state policies: she chose these partners to ensure the procreation of successors who would be worthy of her distinguished

dynasty. That Cleopatra ultimately lost to her Roman opponents, Roller contends, in no way diminishes her abilities.

SANDNES, KARL OLAV. *The Gospel 'According to Homer and Virgil': Cento and Canon*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. In the fourth century C.E. some Christians paraphrased the stories about Jesus' life in the style of classical epics. Imitating the genre of centos, they stitched together lines taken either from Homer (Greek) or Virgil (Latin). They thus created new texts out of the classical epics, while they still remained fully within the confines of their style and vocabulary. It is the aim of this study to put these attempts into a historical and rhetorical context. Why did some Christians rewrite the Gospel stories in this way, and what came out of this? On the basis of these Christian centos, it is natural to address the view held by some scholars, namely that New Testaments narratives are imitations of the epics.

SCHMELING, GARETH. *A Commentary on The Satyricon of Petronius*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. The *Satyricon* is a thrilling piece of literature, and rare example of the Roman novel, credited to Gaius Petronius which is as modern today as the time it was written under the Roman emperor Nero. This is the first comprehensive commentary on the whole of Petronius' *Satyricon*, and is an attempt to unify and comprehend, as much as possible, the fragmentary text by looking carefully at the bits and pieces which have survived. The *Satyricon's* unique nature as a historical document from the ancient world has meant that it has been vigorously studied by social historians as it provides an insightful look into the lives of ordinary Roman people, such as the story of Trimalchio the Roman businessman, as well as enacting the evolution of Latin into the various Romantic languages as we know them today. Petronius puts into the mouth of each of his characters a unique level of Latin, so that the world of the *Satyricon* is populated not by characters who speak a kind of Latin which made Latin a dead language, but by flesh and blood people who have made Latin live until today. Schmeling's commentary offers readers an insightful analysis of this historically important text through philological, linguistic, historical, and narratological discussions; while highlighting past doubts on Petronius' authorship of the *Satyricon*.

SIVAN, HAGITH. *Galla Placidia: The Last Roman Empress*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. The astonishing career of Galla Placidia (c. 390–450) provides valuable reflections on the state of the Roman empire in

the fifth century C.E. In an age when emperors, like Galla's two brothers, Arcadius (395–408) and Honorius (395–423), and nephew, Theodosius II (408–50), hardly ever ventured beyond the fortified enclosure of their palaces, Galla spent years wandering across Italy, Gaul and Spain first as hostage in the camp of Alaric the Goth, and then as wife of Alaric's successor. In exile at the court of her nephew in Constantinople, Galla observed how princesses wield power while vaunting piety. Restored to Italy on the swords of the eastern Roman army, Galla watched the coronation of her son, age six, as the emperor of the western Roman provinces. For a dozen years (425–37) she acted as regent, treading uneasily between rival senatorial factions, ambitious church prelates, and charismatic military leaders. This new biography of Galla is organized according to her changing roles as bride, widow, bereaved mother, queen and empress. It examines her relations with men in power, her achievements as a politician, her skills at establishing power bases and political alliances, and her efficiency at accomplishing her desired goals. Using all the available sources, documents, epigraphy, coinage and the visual arts, and Galla's own letters, Hagith Sivan reconstructs the turning points and highlights of Galla's odd progression from a bloodthirsty princess at Rome to a bride of a barbarian in Gaul, from a manipulative sister and wife of emperors at the imperial court at Ravenna to a beggar at the court of her relatives in Constantinople, and from a devious regent of the western Roman empire to a collaborator of popes in Rome.

SKEATES, ROBIN, CAROL MCDAVID, and JOHN CARMAN, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 (anticipated publishing date). *The Oxford Handbook of Public Archaeology* seeks to reappraise the place of archaeology in the contemporary world by providing a series of essays that critically engage with both old and current debates in the field of public archaeology. Divided into four distinct sections and drawing across disciplines in this dynamic field, the volume aims to evaluate the range of research strategies and methods used in archaeological heritage and museum studies, identify and contribute to key contemporary debates, critically explore the history of archaeological resource management, and question the fundamental principles and practices through which the archaeological past is understood and used today.

SMITH, AMY C. S. *Polis and Personification in Classical Athenian Art*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. In this study Smith investigates the use of political

personifications in the visual arts of Athens in the Classical period (480–323 b.c.e.). Whether on objects that served primarily private roles (e.g., decorated vases) or public roles (e.g. cult statues and document stelai), these personifications represented aspects of the state of Athens—its people, government, and events—as well as the virtues (e.g. Nemesis, Peitho or Persuasion, and Eirene or Peace) that underpinned it. Athenians used the same figural language to represent other places and their peoples. This is the only study that uses personifications as a lens through which to view the intellectual and political climate of Athens in the Classical period.

STEADMAN, SHARON R. and GREGORY MCMAHON, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. This volume is a unique blend of comprehensive overviews on archaeological, philological, linguistic, and historical issues at the forefront of Anatolian scholarship in the twenty-first century. Anatolia is home to early complex societies and great empires, and was the destination of many migrants, visitors, and invaders. The offerings in this volume bring this reality to life as the chapters unfold nearly ten thousand years (ca. 10,000–323 B.C.E.) of peoples, languages, and diverse cultures who lived in or traversed Anatolia over these millennia. The contributors combine descriptions of current scholarship on important discussion and debates in Anatolian studies with new and cutting edge research for future directions of study. The fifty-four chapters are presented in five separate sections that range in topic from chronological and geographical overviews to anthropologically based issues of culture contact and imperial structures, and from historical settings of entire millennia to crucial data from key sites across the region. The contributors to the volume represent the best scholars in the field from North America, Europe, Turkey, and Asia. The appearance of this volume offers the very latest collection of studies on the fascinating peninsula known as Anatolia.

TENNEY, JONATHAN S. *Life at the Bottom of Babylonian Society: Servile Laborers at Nippur in the 14th and 13th Centuries B.C.* Leiden: Brill, 2011. *Life at the Bottom of Babylonian Society* is a study of the population dynamics, family structure, and legal status of publicly-controlled servile workers in Kassite Babylonia. It compares some of the demographic aspects proper to this group with other intensively studied past populations, such as Roman Egypt, Medieval Tuscany, and American slave plantations. It suggests that

families, especially those headed by single mothers, acted as a counter measure against population reduction (flight and death) and as a means for the state to control this labor force. The work marks a step forward in the use of quantitative measures in conjunction with cuneiform sources to achieve a better understanding of the social and economic forces that affected ancient Near Eastern populations.

VROLIJK, PAUL D. *Jacob's Wealth: An Examination into the Nature and Role of Material Possessions in the Jacob-Cycle (Gen 25:19–35:29)*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Various biblical studies on wealth and poverty have been published over the last thirty years. Some of these studies touch on the wealth of the patriarchs in Genesis 12–50, but they focus predominantly on other parts of the Bible. Scholars who have studied the patriarchal narratives in detail comment on aspects of patriarchal wealth, but do not offer an in-depth analysis of this topic. This book on Jacob's wealth shows that such an analysis is warranted. In the Jacob story, material possessions and their associated attitudes and actions are essential to understand the various relationship dynamics. Often, possessions are the cause of conflict, but they also play a role in conflict resolution. As a result, this study contributes to a fuller understanding of the Jacob-cycle.

WALLS, JERRY, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Eschatology is the branch of theology that deals with the final consummation of all things. Covering such subject matter as death, judgment, and the life to come, the discipline of eschatology must grapple with some of our greatest hopes, fears, anxieties and expectations. The issues involved are uniquely complicated because they are both intensely personal and of universal significance. To ponder the "last things" is to consider not only the final fate of all things, but to question daringly how one's individual journey through life relates to God's grander scheme. Over the course of history, many prominent thinkers have elevated eschatology into one of the most fascinating and controversial dimensions of religious belief. The *Oxford Handbook of Eschatology* provides an invaluable critical survey of this diverse body of thought and practice from a variety of perspectives: biblical, historical, theological, philosophical, and cultural. Through centuries of Christian thought—from the early Church fathers through the Middle Ages and the Reformation—eschatological issues were of the utmost importance. In other religions, too, similar concerns were central to the shaping of

the beliefs, practices, and identities of believers. After the Enlightenment, though, many religious thinkers began to downplay the importance of eschatology which, in light of rationalism, came to be seen as something of an embarrassment. The twentieth century, however, saw the rise of several phenomena that restored eschatology to the forefront of religious thought. From the rapid expansion of fundamentalist forms of Christianity, with their focus on the end times; to the proliferation of apocalyptic new religious movements; to the recent (and very public) debates about suicide, euthanasia, martyrdom, and paradise in Islam, interest in eschatology is once again dramatically on the rise. This expansive handbook offers thirty-nine chapters exploring the diverse terrain of eschatology's past, present, and future—providing informative insights on heaven, hell, and everything in between. This volume will prove to be the primary resource for students, scholars, and others interested in questions of our ultimate existence.

WENDEL, SUSAN. *Scriptural Interpretations and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Scholars of Christian origins often regard Luke-Acts and the writings of Justin Martyr as similar accounts of the replacement of Israel by the non-Jewish church. According to this view, both authors commandeer the Jewish scriptures as the sole possession of non-Jewish Christ-believers, rather than of Jews. Offering a fresh analysis of the exegesis of Luke and Justin, this book uncovers significant differences between their respective depictions of the privileged status that Christ-believers hold in relation to the Jewish scriptures. Although both authors argue that Christ-believers alone possess an inspired capacity to interpret the Jewish scriptures, unlike Justin, Luke envisages an ongoing role for the Jewish people as recipients of the promises that God pledged to Israel.

WESCOAT, BONNA DAIX. *The Temple of Athena at Assos*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013 (anticipated publishing date). This volume presents a comprehensive investigation of one of the most unusual archaic Greek temples. The Temple of Athena at Assos, in modern Turkey, was built in a city that had no prior monumental tradition in either architecture or sculpture, so that the entire building constitutes an exercise in architectural invention. In this fully illustrated study, Bonna Daix Wescoat assembles for the first time a complete inventory of the architecture (documenting two phases of construction), presents newly discovered epistyle reliefs and

decorated metopes, proposes a new reconstruction of the building, and situates the Temple within the formative development of monumental architecture in Archaic Greece.

ZIMI, ELENI. *Late Classical and Hellenistic Silver Plate from Macedonia*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. This is the first comprehensive and fully illustrated study of silver vessels from ancient Macedonia from the 4th to the 2nd centuries B.C.E. These precious vessels formed part of dining sets owned by the royal family and the elite and have been discovered in the tombs of their owners. Eleni Zimi presents 171 artifacts in a full-length study of form, decoration, inscriptions and manufacturing techniques, set against contemporary comparanda in other media (clay, bronze, glass). She adopts an art historical and sociological approach to the archaeological evidence and demonstrates that the use of silver vessels as an expression of wealth and a status symbol is not only connected with the wealth spread in the empire after Alexander's the Great expedition to the East, but constitutes a practice reflecting the opulence and appreciation for luxury at least in the Macedonian court from the reign of Philip II onwards.

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After unmaking the decision to pursue a legal career, **Bryan Kerr** decided to realize his true ambitions of spending the rest of his life studying Semitic

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Joseph Petramalo graduated from BYU in ancient Near Eastern studies. He currently owns three businesses and is working towards law school. He and Mindy have a little girl and one on the way.

Joseph Ponczoch has been studying classics continuously, earning a BA and an MA from BYU and later an MA from the University of Texas at Austin. In the transition from BYU to UT–Austin, Joseph and his family spent a wonderful nine months in Naples, Italy, editing PHerc. 1570, a previously unedited Greek treatise on wealth and poverty. Joseph recently earned his certification to teach Latin in the schools and is glad that Caesar will soon be on the AP curriculum. He and his wife, Katharine, are the parents of five children, with the middle child on the way.

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Jenifer Swindle graduated in 2003, lived in Italy for a couple of years, and then moved to New York City to get a degree in pastry arts. She worked as a pastry chef for several years and has recently returned to school to pursue an MS in nutrition.

Rebecca Sybrowsky Spencer graduated with an MA from BYU in ancient Near Eastern studies and then earned a JD from BYU. She is licensed to practice law in New York and New Jersey. She currently resides in the New York City area, where she is a full-time mother of one and practices law part-time.

After leaving BYU, **Rick Thomas** taught English in Korea. He has been teaching English for a total of five years now and is currently the site director at Nomen Global Language Centers in Provo. He works with international populations from all over the world (including the Near East!) and is just about to start a master's degree in counseling psychology at Westminster University in August. He and his wife have a beautiful nine-month-old daughter named Audrey-Camille.

Richard Torgerson earned a BA in Chinese and MA in language acquisition (Chinese) as well as a graduate level TESOL certificate from Brigham Young University in 2005. He is currently a PhD candidate in Cultural Foundations of Education at Kent State University, with research interests and expertise in educational policy, religion, and politics in education, and China/US comparative philosophy of education. His professional goals are focused on teaching and researching in the fields of education, comparative/international educational philosophy, and language learning.

Eric Vernon graduated from BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School in 1994, where he was executive editor of the *Law Review*. He attended Yale Divinity School, graduating in 1999 with an MAR degree. Currently Eric is General Counsel for The Wencor Group, an aerospace distribution company headquartered in Springville, Utah. Eric also teaches courses in management strategy and business ethics at the BYU Marriott School of Management.

Angela Wagner graduated from BYU with an honors BA in ancient Near Eastern studies. She is beginning an MA in theology at Durham University this fall, studying Hebrew wisdom literature under Dr. Stuart Weeks, and is the proud mother of one son.

David W. Warby graduated from BYU with a BA in political science in 1979 and with a JD from BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School in 1982. He was admitted to practice before the state and federal bar in Washington and practiced law in Central Washington until 1996, at which time he returned to school to pursue his original dream of teaching. He currently lives in Arlington, Washington, and teaches math at Snohomish High School in Snohomish, Washington. He and his wife, Marcia, have four children and two grandchildren.

Heather Wellendorf graduated from BYU in history with a minor in ancient Near Eastern studies. She then joined Teach for America. Heather is currently working as a Teach for America alumni classroom teacher in San Jose, California.

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Rachel Wise graduated from BYU in art history and English, and she began BYU's art history master's program fall 2011. She plans to pursue a PhD in American literature.

Erik Odin Yingling is currently an ancient Near Eastern studies major at BYU. He anticipates graduating next year and going on to graduate school in New Testament studies.

Tyson Yost graduated from BYU in 2004 with a dual degree in Asian Studies and comparative literature. He earned an MA in religious studies from the University of Chicago Divinity School and is currently finishing his PhD from Cornell University in Asian religion, where he studies early Indian and Chinese Buddhism. He is married to Lindsie Nichol and has three daughters with a fourth child on the way.