Studia Antiqua

A Student Journal for the Study of the Ancient World

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of the Ancient World
Brigham Young University

STUDIA ANTIQUA

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

This issue marks my first adventure as editor of a publication. I have enjoyed the insights gained in reading the articles and learning how to publish and format a journal. Hopefully, the kinks (a.k.a. typos) have all been worked out. But, as in all things, I seek clemency with my foibles.

This issue is, once again, slightly slimmer than desired. This is perhaps to be expected in a transition from one editor to the next. Yet again, the quality of the articles in this issue is excellent.

I am grateful to have two senior writers submit to this issue. Dustin Simmons, a recent master's graduate, has contributed a work on ethnicity and its effect on ancient historiography. We are grateful to have a submission from a Classics background and hope to have more in the future. Also, David Calabro, a PhD student from the University of Chicago, has contributed a study on gestures in the book of Isaiah. This masterful work elucidates such a difficult text. E. Odin Yingling's article grapples with the dating of *Enuma elish*, offering his desired solution. I am grateful to have had my submission positively peer reviewed and accepted for publication. I seek to wade through the debate concerning John the Baptist's connection with Qumran.

Resurrected once more in this issue are book reviews. Stephen Whitaker and Justin Robinson provided our reviews for this issue, and both did a wonderful job. We hope to have much more in the future and that these reviews will help students become aware of possible books to add to their personal libraries.

Alan Taylor Farnes
Editor in Chief, *Studia Antiqua*

PERCEPTION AS REALITY: THE INTERSECTION OF GENRE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN CLASSICAL HISTORY

DUSTIN SIMMONS

Dustin Simmons recently graduated with his master's degree in comparative studies with an emphasis in classics from Brigham Young University.

Groups of people often define themselves in opposition to other groups. The Greeks and Romans were no different. In fact, modern ways of looking at different groups may simply be the continuation of how the Greeks and Romans looked at external groups over two thousand years ago. The ancient Greeks regarded anyone who did not speak their language as βάρβαρος, the origin of the modern English word "barbarian." This binary view of their world allowed the various Greek city-states, who were only rarely and briefly united and never in such a way that a modern observer would call a Greek nation, to share something in common with each other. This binary view was an important factor in their ethnic identity. The world was simply divided between those who spoke Greek (and were therefore inherently superior) and those who did not. Which other language was spoken was unimportant. If it was not Greek, it was barbarian.

Throughout this paper the English word "barbarian" will be employed largely in harmony with ancient usage to distinguish between those who are not Greek or Roman. The Greek word βάρβαρος did not originally have negative connotations and referred in a general way to those who did not speak Greek. The Romans did not have a word that described others in such a way, but words like *peregrinus* ("foreigner") and *alienus* ("foreign," "alien") came close. Eventually, the Romans adapted the Greek word for their own use and applied it in a similar way to those who did not speak Latin, although it tended to be used more for those peoples to the north and west of Italy—by Roman times it would have been difficult to use the pejorative meaning of "barbarian" against the more culturally developed and sophisticated east. This use of the word "barbarian" did nothing to distinguish identity between various groups of non-Greeks or non-Romans, and it was not until the Romans began to expand both to the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean that they began to make distinctions between different groups of others. Thus, language was one of the primary boundary markers for the Greeks and Romans when establishing others' ethnic identity. In Homer, the Greek term βάρβαρος is mentioned only as an adjective to describe the way the Carians speak. In Herodotus, it comes to develop a negative connotation as example after example is given of barbarians who continuously demonstrate their otherness

by the things they do and the way they behave. It appears that the rise of historiography roughly coincides with the rise of ethnocentrism. Ideas about ethnic identity were perpetuated by the writers of history in the Classical world as a way to place the barbarian outside their own ethnic identity in order to strengthen the didactic purpose of their history and as a way to help identify what it meant to be a Greek or a Roman.

The Role of Historiography

The genre of historiography plays a large role in the modern understanding of ancient perceptions of ethnic identity. So much of the current knowledge of ancient peoples comes from the ancient historiographers. There are not many ancient works of what a modern scholar would solely call ethnography,[1] but many of the surviving works of history contain ethnographic sections and accounts. Herodotus, the first author whose history survives, dedicated two entire books of his nine-book history to ethnographic discussions of the Egyptians and Scythians respectively. The *Commentaries* of Julius Caesar are indispensable for understanding ancient Gaul and Germany, and Livy also described the Gauls and their customs. It makes sense, then, that ancient historians were also interested in ethnography and the customs and practices of others. In fact, Charles W. Fornara, citing the eminent ancient historian Jacoby, claims that ethnography was merely one type of history writing in the ancient world.[2] Anciently, history itself was viewed as a branch of rhetoric and literature and quickly developed its own parameters about who should engage in recording past events, how those past events should be recorded, and how, stylistically, the undertaking should be handled. This would no doubt affect not only the literary style of the author, but also his portrayal of barbarians in order to meet his specific rhetorical purpose. Thus, the genre of history itself could in fact shape the way that barbarians would be portrayed.

Ethnicity Now and Then

The way that these different ethnicities were portrayed brings immediately to the front of any discourse the definitions of ethnicity itself. One of the most important questions, if not the most important, deals with how the ancients viewed ethnicity and how those ancient views are understood today. Modern scholars have suggested various ways of identifying what constitutes an ethnic group, beginning with Fredrik Barth's four criteria that an ethnic group "is largely biologically self-perpetuating, shares fundamental cultural values, . . . makes up a field of communication and interaction, [and] has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others."[3] Barth's criteria have largely been accepted by scholars, although they are occasionally modified to fit specific cases or needs. In adapting these criteria for an ancient

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1. Tacitus' *Germania* is perhaps the most famous, and the only such work in Latin. It should be noted that even though Tacitus wrote a separate work about Germany, he is most recognized for his work as a historian.

2. Charles W. Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 1–2.

3. Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), 10–11.

understanding of ethnicity, Gary D. Farney (citing Cornell) suggests six bases for understanding ethnicity: sharing a collective name, a myth of common descent, shared history, possessing a distinctive shared culture, association with a specific territory, and a sense of communal solidarity.[4] Many of these six are merely adaptations or expansions of Barth's original four identifiers. Barth's "biologically self-perpetuating" criterion can be understood to mean that those within a particular ethnic group have a shared biological relationship, which can be expressed in a myth of common descent. Ancients did not have the same scientific tools for determining genetic makeup or DNA profiling, so many ancient groups, particularly the Greeks, sought to connect the name of their people to each other through mythological genealogies that would provide a collective name and myth of common descent. For example, many Greeks were associated with one of the four primary tribes of Greece: Aeolians, Dorians, Achaeans, and Ionians. Seeking for some sort of familial connection, a mythological genealogy was created in which the Aeolians and Dorians shared a common ancestor named Hellen, whose sons gave their names to these tribes—Aeolus and Dorus. The Achaeans and Ionians were named after Hellen's grandsons Achaeus and Ionas. The sharing of "fundamental cultural values" and a "membership which identifies itself . . . and is identified by others" of Barth is synonymous with the ideas of Farney about a distinctive shared culture and a sense of communal solidarity. The one area that Barth does not discuss is ethnic groups having an association with a specific territory. This is not a flaw or mistake, but rather a difference that arises when discussing perceptions of ancient and modern ethnicity. In the modern world, people and groups are much more mobile, and while there are pockets of ethnicity that are connected to specific locations—Little Italys, Chinatowns—on the whole, ethnic groups are much more geographically dispersed, especially in the United States. Anciently, people were not generally as mobile and families often stayed in the same locality for multiple generations. Consequently, without the resulting diaspora, ethnic groups tended to remain in the same geographic areas and were associated with specific geographic territories and locations.[5] This connection of certain groups to specific geographical areas would come to play a role in the Classical perceptions and descriptions of foreigners.

It is interesting to note that the ancients' view of ethnicity, although they may have referred to it differently, is strikingly similar. Herodotus, the first historian to consciously give some sort of definition regarding the boundaries of ethnicity, says that what unites all Greeks is "kinship . . . in blood and speech" and having in common "the shrines of the gods and sacrifices, and the likeness of our way of life."[6] So the things that generate familiarity and

4. Gary D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 27–28.

5. The various groups of ancient Greece are a good example of this. The Dorians were those Greeks who inhabited the Peloponnesus, while the Ionians were seen as connected with Asia Minor. There was a similar territorial connection with various ethnic groups in Italy.

6. Herodotus, 8.144.2. While Homer portrays the Greeks as fighting against the Trojans, he does not show many differences between the two competing forces. Greeks and Trojans are able to communicate with each other, they share similar religious scruples and they have similar social customs. If it were not for the fact that Homer says that the Greeks came from the Aegean it would not be hard to see the Trojan War as a conflict between two groups of the same people—a sort of civil war.

ethnicity for the Greeks themselves are biological relation, speaking the same language, a common religious system, and common customs. These are very similar to the ethnic indicators mentioned above. Herodotus is much more in line with Barth's thinking (or is it the other way around?) than with Farney's. Again, this is most likely because of the unique context in which Herodotus is writing. By the time Herodotus was composing his history, the Greeks had spread throughout the Aegean and had been settled in those areas for a few generations. Because there were Greeks not only in Greece proper but also in Sicily and throughout southern Italy and Asia Minor, it would not have made sense for Herodotus to include a geographic territorial identifier. The question of whether these notions actually distinguish between ethnic groups is beside the point. What is more important is that they were believed to be ethnic identifiers by the ancients, particularly historians. Although it is a fairly simple task to establish when an idea or perception about a specific ethnic group was first mentioned in surviving texts, it is much more difficult and nearly impossible to determine when that idea really started and how it came to be accepted. The ancient historians were influenced by their cultural and social context and were thus conditioned to see particular groups in certain ways. Additionally, many historians simply repeated the ethnic stereotypes of their predecessors. Consequently, the author's own context, combined with the conventions of the historical genre, perpetuated the cycle of ethnic identity. Historiographers viewed people and events through a certain cultural and genre-specific lens, thus in a way drawing a picture they were already looking for. Perceptions of ethnicity were often perpetuated by historiographers, who wrote about barbarians in such a way that allowed them to place the barbarian outside their own corporate ethnic sphere in order to reinforce the didactic purpose of their history.

Borders of Genre

The earliest literature of the West, Homer's *Iliad*, functions as a sort of history. While its purpose was not primarily historical, it did serve that purpose for many Greeks. Many city-states traced their foundations back to heroes from the Trojan War or even before.[7] With the advent of history-writing, a new genre was created that was different from any other. History was a genre that could praise the great deeds of the past, like epic poetry, but also stand up to the rigors of sophistic inquiry about the validity and truthfulness of the events recorded. Herodotus, writing in the fifth-century B.C.E. after the defeat of Xerxes and his armies by a coalition of Greek city-states, was the first to set the parameters for what history would become. Others followed suit and eventually the writing of history became every bit as much a branch of literature as tragedy and epic, with its own conventions and requirements. Herodotus explains at the outset of his work his reasons for writing and publishing his ἱστορία or research: "In order that so the memory of the past may not be blotted out from among men by time, and that great and marvelous deeds done by Greeks and foreigners and especially the reason why

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7. Even Rome claimed to have a sort of founding figure from this great story in the Trojan hero Aeneas; hence Vergil's Roman epic *Aeneid*.

they warred against each other may not lack renown."[8] Herodotus establishes at the outset that he is interested in three things. First, at the most basic level he wants to preserve a memory of things that have occurred in the past. Second, he desires that the deeds of the Greeks and Barbarians receive their appropriate fame. The Greek word ἔργα, translated as "deeds" can mean both the actual deeds and accomplishments of men, but also means the physical buildings and monuments created by men. This is important since Herodotus shows an interest in the monumental architecture of the various peoples he discusses, particularly the Egyptians and is perplexed at the apparent lack of great temples under the Persians. This interest in actions and monuments became standard in historians forever after. Thirdly, he is interested in discovering the reasons for the conflict between the Greeks and Barbarians. The word translated "foreigners" in the passage above is actually the aforementioned βάρβαρος. Over time, these three motivations became the standard motivations and purposes of all later historians, and while others would adapt or expand on them, memorializing the past in an honorable way and searching for the underlying reasons for conflict would forever remain the hallmark of history. At the outset, history is connected not only with recounting the great deeds of the past but also with helping to define particular ethnic groups by cataloging their conflicts. This would, in turn, bring about a sense of corporate identity within the audience, making each individual feel as if he or she were a part of something greater and larger. It is with history that ethnic identity construction becomes an important factor and theme in literature.

Boundaries within Historiography

After Herodotus, each successive historian made minor corrections, suggestions, or additions to the genre of historiography. History was always about the great actions of men (both noble and ignoble), although the focus could shift back and forth between historical monographs like those of Thucydides and Sallust, to larger histories of nations like the massive work of Livy, to universal world histories like Diodorus Siculus. Anciently, it was generally accepted that history had a didactic purpose and that history should inspire people to be better and strive to emulate the worthy actions of their predecessors. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that historians should write about "noble and lofty subjects and such as will be of great utility to their readers,"[9] and Livy sought to provide examples so that his readers could "behold the lessons of every kind of experience, . . . and from these you may choose for yourself and for your own state what to imitate."[10] Polybius argued that "men have no more ready corrective of conduct than knowledge of the past" and that "the soundest education and training" was the study of history.[11] The moralizing aspect of historiography was a mainstay of the genre from the very beginning when Herodotus recounted the deeds of men in such a way so as to illustrate his moralistic purposes—what was appropriate behavior for a Greek was what was expected behavior from anyone else (with almost always

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8. Herodotus, 1.1.
9. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Art of Rhetoric*, 1.1.2.
10. Livy, *Praefatio*.
11. Polybius, 1.1.1–2.

negative connotations). History, by its very rhetorical and didactic nature, reinforced and perpetuated the various ethnic identities that served to identify characteristics and traits that were included within acceptable Greek or Roman identities and those that labeled a person as a barbarian.

Because the things included in a work of history were designed to instruct and encourage appropriate behavior from its hearers or readers, it was often others who were shown to be in the wrong. When Xerxes attempts to cross the Hellespont at the beginning of his expedition against Greece, Herodotus portrays him as not only crossing a physical boundary but a sort of metaphysical one as well, justifying his failure. When his bridge across the Hellespont is destroyed by a storm, Xerxes in his rage orders that the river be whipped three hundred times and that chains and fetters be dropped into it as a token of Xerxes' superiority over the river.[12] There is a direct correlation between Xerxes' ὕβρις and his eventual defeat in Greece. Xerxes is shown as one who does not understand the importance of religious scruples, even ignoring them as he marches to Athens and burns the sacred buildings on the acropolis. It is because of this ὕβρις and disrespect for the gods that Xerxes is, at the most basic level, a barbarian. Herodotus includes shared religious customs as an identifier of ethnicity, and Xerxes—together with Persians in general—has shown that he is, in effect, the very definition of what it means to be a barbarian, the anti-Greek. Likewise Hannibal, the great menace to Rome, was portrayed by historians of Rome as overly fond of money (Polybius and that he had even sworn an oath—with his hand on the sacrificial victim—that he would be the sworn enemy of Rome.[13] While he is portrayed occasionally as noble, that portrayal occurs only to bring more glory to the Roman people when he is finally defeated. His purpose in history is thus twofold: to provide a moral justification for his defeat and, at the same time, to enhance Rome's prestige at his defeat.

The genre of historiography itself was very different from other genres of literature. While it shared a common goal with epic in providing moral *exempla* and attempting to instill appropriate and accepted values in its audience, it was not chiefly designed for performance. Epic poetry and the great tragedies of Classical Athens were designed to please the hearer and ultimately win the favor of those who were either in attendance or supporting the poet. This presented the opportunity for sensationalism or overacting that would distort the story. For epic and other forms of poetry, often the moral or message was more important than any pretence to reality or actual events. This was not a concern because it was only rarely that tragedians composed plays based on historical events, and the events of epic poetry were located so far back in the mists of time that there was no hope of retaining any sense of historical truth—nor was there really any interest in doing so.

Authorial Boundaries

Just as certain events were fitting to be recorded in history, so were certain characteristics and talents required of those who wrote history. The qualifications of the historian himself were just as important as his skills in

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12. Herodotus, 7.35.
13. His love of money, Polybius, 9.25; the oath, Livy, 21.1.

lying bare past events. Three things were important to the historian as he prepared to compose his work. According to Polybius, "the first being the industrious study of memoirs and other documents, . . . the second the survey of cities, places, rivers, . . . the third being the review of political events."[14] Being well-read, well-traveled, and well aware of the political situation were requisites of those who wish to engage in writing history. These qualifications set some very serious limits on who would be in a position to write history—namely the wealthy and politically active. No one else would have the resources to travel to various historical sites or have access to the research materials needed or the connections to have a sound understanding of the political scene. These qualifications seem to have been fairly constant throughout the Greek and Hellenistic periods. The Greeks placed an emphasis on research (ὑστορία) and sought to learn about their subjects, not only in books but by firsthand experience. Herodotus claimed to have traveled all throughout the known world and claims to have spent significant amounts of time in Egypt and Scythia, the two places he spends most time talking about other than Greece. Herodotus was almost unique in his portrayal of otherness in his work. He lacks almost any sense of ethnic prejudice or judgment, commenting only occasionally in any judgmental way. His lack of explicit judgmental opinions or criticizing statements should not be understood to mean that he supported or endorsed the customs or practices he was recounting. Rather, Herodotus usually made his judgment clear in the outcome of the larger event in which his ethnographic treatise was contained. The people whose strange customs or buildings he described often met their end at some later point in the work, and Herodotus implies that at least part of the reason for their destruction or slavery is because of the non-Greek nature of those customs. This is another way Herodotus constructs the ethnic identity of others in order reinforce the ethnic identity of the Greeks.

The Romans felt similarly about the historians' involvement in affairs. Indeed, Roman history was for the most part written by the very men who made it—Roman senators. While their Greek counterparts appealed to research (through books, travel, and so forth), the Romans accessed their sense of duty and immense personal experience when taking up the task of writing history. Many Roman historians were very active in politics at Rome and fought and even commanded legions in her wars.[15] This background undoubtedly played a role in their portrayal of non-Romans. Caesar wrote about the ferocity of the Gauls and Germans, which he had witnessed firsthand in his campaigns against them. Likewise, Sallust wrote about events contemporary with his own time and he may have even played a role in them. While the Greeks put a premium on research as a qualification for writing history, the Romans seemed to emphasize the political stature and reputation of the man.[16]

In addition to Polybius' three "qualifications" that a historian must have, a fourth qualification was perhaps the most important of all. That was literary

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14. Polybius, 12.25e.

15. Livy is a notable exception. See the discussion in John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 140–41, on how Livy neatly avoids his obvious lack of military and political experience.

16. Fornara, *Ancient Greece and Rome*, 54.

style. Just as important as what was being written was how it was being written. Indeed, according to Fornara, "the historian was in the awkward position of serving two masters, what we call art and science."[17] The "science" was what a modern audience would call history—the relaying of facts and of what really happened. "Art," on the other hand, was what the ancients were just as equally concerned with. "So [historians] must not look for what to say but how to say it."[18] History must not be only useful but also pleasing. For the ancients, history was a branch of literature and rhetoric, and style was paramount in both. The single largest complaint about history writing by ancient historians and literary critics was the unnecessary stylistic adornments or unearned praise of individuals. This lack of impartiality or neutrality is expressed differently at different times. Polybius, writing during the period of great Roman expansion in the Middle Republic, argued that "he who assumes the character of a historian must ignore everything of [partiality], and often, if their actions demand this, speak good of his enemies and honor them with the highest praises while criticizing and even reproaching roundly his closest friends, should the errors of their conduct impose this duty on him."[19] He continued, "We should therefore not shrink from accusing our friends and praising our enemies."[20] This approach makes sense for the time when Polybius is writing and for almost all of Rome's Republican history. As Rome's Mediterranean empire expanded and came into contact and conflict with more and more groups of people, the historian had to paint a very vivid picture of these new populations for his Roman audience while portraying these unknown civilizations as powerful and ferocious. It was to be the destiny of Rome to bring law, religion and customs—in short, civilization—to these people.[21] There was no glory to be had in conquering some tiny tribe of weaklings, but a general who had fought ferociously against a nation of ruthless savages would earn himself a triumph and eternal glory. This reinforcement of the Roman ethnic identity became more and more pronounced as Roman power expanded. During this time Rome was coming into increasing contact with other cultures, and Romans needed to know what it was that made them special and different from those peoples they were conquering. The ethnic identities of these other peoples were always constructed so that Romans could feel justified, even blessed by the gods, for imposing their will on unwilling groups. The historians of Rome, especially those who were Roman and wrote in Latin, tended to emphasize Rome's governmental system as being at the core of Roman military success. Latin authors of Rome's history were able to co-opt the Roman populace by appealing to their innate desire to believe that they were intrinsically better than others and not that their success was the result of their impersonal government.

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17. Fornara, *Ancient Greece and Rome*, 99.
18. Lucian, *How to Write History*, 50.
19. Polybius, 1.14.5.
20. Polybius, 1.14.7.
21. Vergil, *Aeneid*, 6.851–853: "you, Roman, be sure to rule the world (be these your arts), to crown peace with justice, to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud." Although the *Aeneid* was written during the reign of Augustus, the same feeling of Roman superiority and a mandate to bring civilization to the uncivilized is present in the historians of earlier times and especially in Livy, who was a rough contemporary with Vergil.

All of these factors had a role in shaping how the Greek and Roman historians portrayed the other. Because a main focus of history was to preserve great deeds, history quickly became associated with war, which seems to have been one of the favorite pastimes of the age. By the time of Xenophon in the early fourth century B.C.E., "the proper subject of history had become a settled thing, limited to the notable activities of men at war and, by extension, between wars."[22] This statement should not be surprising when the subjects of the various histories are considered. Herodotus' main focus was the Greco-Persian Wars; Thucydides wrote exclusively about the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta; Xenophon himself wrote historical works about the end of the Peloponnesian War and the ensuing conflicts for Greek hegemony in addition to his account of Greek mercenaries fighting in Persia; Polybius dealt with the First Punic War and Rome's armed expansion into the Mediterranean; Sallusts' two surviving works are concerned with armed conflict, one domestic and the other foreign; much of Livy's surviving history deals with the Roman unification of Italy by force and defeat of Carthage in the Second Punic War. This focus on war and conflict provides an opportunity for the ancient historian to expose the otherness of the enemy. "Enemy" is the most basic level of the concept of "other." While a great deal of wars were fought between the various Greek city-states or among quarreling Roman generals, most of the attention of ancient historians is focused on groups that can be identified as non-Greek or non-Roman by the writer. Even when civil wars pitted Romans against other Romans, an effort was made to show the opposing side as somehow quantifiably different and accusations were normally thrown that one of the sides had taken up with the Gauls or some other barbarian group. When this was not the case, virtually all historians lamented the destruction wreaked upon a nation when its own citizens fought against each other. Sadness accompanied the underlying assumption that there is something inherently wrong in fighting against those who share the same language, dress, customs, and religious practices. Occasionally barbarians are praised or even begrudgingly admired because of their courage, but often they served a larger purpose in allowing the Greeks or Romans to identify themselves. As Irad Malkin points out in reference to the Greeks, "The Persians were the whetstone against which a common Greekness was sharpened."[23] While the Romans fought wars against many more enemies, even fighting against the Greeks themselves, the point remains valid. The Romans sharpened their understanding of their own ethnic identity against the aggregate identity of the barbarians.

Boundaries of Ethnicity

While the term βάρβαρος does appear in archaic Greek literature, the term does not seem to carry any pejorative meaning until the sixth-century B.C.E., when Persia and Greece began to come into contact and into increasing conflict.[24] From a very early time, the Greeks seemed to have had a view of

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22. Fornara, *Ancient Greece and Rome*, 97–98.

23. Irad Malkin, *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

24. See Jin Kim Hyun, *Ethnicity and Foreigners in Ancient Greece and China* (London: Duckworth, 2009), 12.

themselves as different from others. In the *Iliad*, the earliest piece of Western literature, the Greeks are identified as coming from the area of the Aegean as opposed to those living outside the Aegean.[25] The depiction of barbarians and other foreigners does not seem to have sprung up in a vacuum but rather in the context of conflict. Because historiography is mostly concerned with recounting these conflicts, the writings of the great historians hold an important position for understanding ancient perceptions of ethnic identity. Ethnocentrism seems to have arisen contemporary with the invention of historiography. The Trojans are portrayed sympathetically in the *Iliad*, and it is only with Herodotus that barbarians begin to be viewed negatively.[26] Because there was a recognizable external threat present in Xerxes and his Persians, a sort of unified Greekness became identifiable. It may be that communities are able to most fully identify themselves when they are forced to deal with an outside person or group that allows for formerly concealed or unacknowledged similarities within the group to be recognized and asserted. Indeed, ethnic self-awareness "frequently leads to ethnocentrism" and the "attribution of a pre-eminent status or exaggerated importance of one's own *ethnos*."[27] Both the Greeks and Romans are portrayed by their historians as forming this sense of communal identity in conflicts with other, often hostile, groups.

Greek Ethnic Boundaries

According to Herodotus, the Greeks all shared the same kinship, language, culture, and religious system.[28] He admits that these same criteria can be used to distinguish other peoples from each other, as he does when describing the Amazons.[29] Herodotus is perhaps unique in his treatment of the other, and that may be because was very well-traveled. He supposedly went to most of the places he talks about, especially Egypt. Herodotus himself was somewhat of an interesting case study in ethnicity. He was born in Halicarnassus in Ionia and thus would have had many dealings with various Persians in his youth. Exiled from Halicarnassus after a failed revolution, he spent a great deal of time in Athens and then reportedly spent the last years of his life at the Athenian colony of Thurii in Sicily. His interest in various groups of people, most notably the Egyptians and Scythians, is obvious. He devotes practically an entire book to the customs, marvels and monuments of each place.

When Herodotus expands his discussion to include Egypt, he does so because "nowhere are there so many marvelous things, nor in the whole world beside are there to be seen so many works of unspeakable greatness."[30] This is Herodotus' justification for spending the rest of book two discussing the various buildings, social customs, and religious rituals in Egypt. He justifies himself because Egypt is so different from Greece: "As the Egyptians have a climate peculiar to themselves, and their river is different in its nature from all

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25. Hyun, *Ethnicity and Foreigners*, 14.
26. Admittedly, the portrayals of barbarians in tragedy were becoming more negative at this time as well.
27. Hyun, *Ethnicity and Foreigners*, 9–10.
28. Herodotus, 8.144.2.
29. Herodotus, 4.111.
30. Herodotus, 2.35.1.

other rivers, so have they made all their customs and laws of a kind contrary for the most part to those of all other men."[31] Both of these statements connect with his original statement in the preface to his work, that he is interested in the "great and wonderful deeds" of men. Herodotus seems to include interesting facts and stories about Egyptian customs under the heading of great and wonderful deeds, and when he explains the reversed gender roles of Egypt or how only men serve as priests and how they shave their heads, he does so by prefacing his explanation with the phrase, "The Hellenes . . . , but the Egyptians. . . ."[32] Thus, it would appear that Herodotus identifies the Greeks as the opposite of the Egyptians in most respects. Paul Cartledge suggests, "The Greeks thus in various ways constructed their identities negatively, by means of a series of polarized oppositions of themselves to what they were not."[33]

On the other hand, there is present throughout nearly all ancient historiographical writings an interest in others, which seems to be more than just a passing curiosity. This interest in ethnography of other peoples and their respective social systems and cultural and religious practices could be used to argue that the Greeks and Romans were seeking to understand their ethnically identified counterparts in significant and meaningful ways. While this may have been the case—that Greeks and Romans were interested in building bridges of understanding between themselves and other groups—it is just as likely that they enjoyed listening to and reading those stories because they served to highlight their own uniqueness and superiority. The Romans especially seem to have used these differences for justification of their own prejudices and biases rather than using them to create meaningful relationships.

In addition to the Egyptians, Herodotus was very interested in Persian customs and used the Persians as a way to define the Greeks. While he recorded the wonders of Egypt almost as an interesting and useful digression, Herodotus portrays the Persians as barbarian. It was most likely because of the Greco-Persian Wars that "barbarian" came to be known as a pejorative term. "The Greeks developed their Greek-barbarian antithesis in the context of the conflict against the Persian menace."[34] The Persians were very different from the other Near Eastern peoples with whom Greece had had contact.[35] Herodotus portrays the Persians as being even further removed from the Greeks than the Egyptians were. The Persians did not even build temples, statues, or altars or believe in gods who have human qualities or characteristics.[36] They only deliberated serious matters when they were intoxicated and did not bury their dead until the bodies were mauled by birds or dogs.[37] This last custom would have been particularly horrifying to a Greek audience. It should be remembered that in the *Iliad* much energy and blood was spilled to regain

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31. Herodotus, 2.35.2.
32. See Herodotus, 2.35.2–36.4 for examples of various Egyptian practices.
33. Paul Cartledge, *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12–13.
34. Hyun, *Ethnicity and Foreigners*, 69.
35. Hyun, *Ethnicity and Foreigners*, 23.
36. Herodotus, 1.131.1.
37. Deliberating while intoxicated: Herodotus, 1.133.3; Burial practices: Herodotus, 1.140.1.

the body of a killed comrade in order to ensure proper burial. Even the gods were outraged when Achilles at first refused to give Hector a proper burial and instead allowed his body to be desecrated. Whether this was, in fact, the Persian custom is beside the point. Herodotus was attempting to show the Persians in such a way that would allow for a kind of righteous indignation and encourage the Greeks, who all shared similar religious practices, to unite against the Persians. Herodotus also recounts the Persian custom of "netting" the inhabitants of conquered islands and castrating the handsomest boys and sending the prettiest virgins to the king.[38] The Persians would also deport entire populations of captured cities[39] and often impaled their enemies.[40] The literary aspect of what Herodotus was doing must be kept in mind. He was tracing the development of the conflict between Greece and Persia and showing how different and cruel the Persians were compared to the Greeks. This rhetoric gave the Greeks the moral high ground and a reason to unite together against a powerful external threat. By constructing an ethnic identity for the Persians—who were in reality a conglomeration of many different eastern nations—Herodotus demonstrated Persian otherness as compared to Greekness. This Persian ethnic identity then served as a kind of rallying call to the Greeks. It was a way of unifying a geographically and often politically fragmented group of people under the banner of an inclusive Greek ethnic identity in order to rebuff the military advances of an exclusive (non-Greek) Persian ethnic construct.

Boundaries of Roman Ethnicity in History

The question of Roman ethnicity and how it was defined by the Romans is somewhat more complicated than that of the Greeks. From the very earliest stages of Roman history, Rome was a conglomeration of various groups. Many of these ethnic identities persisted down to the empire, and famous Romans often proclaimed their ethnic identity as a way to illustrate the great actions of their forefathers or to attach themselves to the great reputation of those who had come before.[41] Additionally, literature at Rome, and especially historiography, arrived relatively late in relation to ancient Greece and even in relation to Rome's own founding.[42] In many ways the Romans were the literary offspring of Greece and inherited not only many genres of Greek literature but also many prevailing ideas about ethnicity. Thus, by the time of the historians

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38. Herodotus, 6.31–32.

39. Herodotus, 1.161, 6.3, 6.20.

40. Herodotus, 1.128.2; 3.132.2; 6.30.1. Note the especially horrific (to the Greek mind) impaling of the head of the already dead Leonidas at Thermopylae: 7.238.1.

41. See especially the whole of Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition.*

42. Homer is nearly contemporary with the beginnings of a recognizable Greece, and Herodotus recounts, probably within fifty years, the most defining period of Greek history. Rome, by contrast, was a late bloomer. The first historian of Rome, Fabius Pictor, lived during the third century B.C.E.—nearly three hundred years after the founding of the Republic and he wrote in Greek, following Greek models and attempting to legitimize Rome and Roman accomplishments for a Greek audience. It was not until the next generation when Cato published his *Origines* that a Latin branch of history existed at Rome—and it is no longer extant. The best literary sources for the history of Rome are all comparatively late: Sallust, writing in the late Republic; Livy under Augustus; Tacitus under the Flavians.

whose writings are still extant were writing, many ethnic stereotypes had become entrenched in the Roman mind and embedded in Roman rhetorical training, which all the historians shared.[43] This is not as large an obstacle as it may seem at first. Romans were generally known for being conservative in their views and suspicious of those people or customs that were unfamiliar. Their values and customs, as portrayed by their own historians and others, remained largely static throughout Roman history. Roman culture, in turn, served to perpetuate many identifiers used to construct ethnic identities. Roman historians often saw in their stories what they wanted to see and what they had been trained to see during their rhetorical and political upbringing. Thus, historians often used accepted stereotypes in their portrayal of others because a person could reasonably expect all Gauls or Germans to act in a similar way or to say similar things in any given situation. These situations and the ethnically identified responses furthered the authors' didactic and moral purposes and reinforced those ethnic identities.

According to the historiographical tradition, the Romans were forced to identify themselves as a distinct group early on. The interesting point in dealing with the Romans is that although they identified themselves as a superior group throughout their history, they were unique in affiliating themselves with those whom they had conquered. For example, Livy records two separate traditions of what happened when the Trojan refugee Aeneas arrived in Italy with followers. In one account a war was fought between Aeneas and his men against the native Latins, and in the other a war was barely averted. However, in both traditions recounted by Livy, the Trojans and Latins ended up joining together as one group.[44] By the time Livy was writing, many of the early ethnic struggles between the various peoples of early Italy had been buried in the mists of time, but echoes still remained, and there was a consciousness on the part of many Romans and Italians of their ethnic heritage. Livy records two episodes of ethnic blending from early Rome. The story of the rape of the Sabine women is offered to explain how the Romans and Sabines came together.[45] Likewise, the story of the capture of Alba Longa and the immigration of the people from there to Rome provides a convenient way for understanding how many important contemporary families like the Julii came to be in Rome.[46] Romans, like the Greeks, were interested in their own origins and the origins of others. Stories like this provided an aetiological explanation for how and why different ethnic groups came to live in and have power at Rome. As Roman power expanded throughout the Italian peninsula and later into the Mediterranean, Rome increasingly came into contact with other groups, against whom it became increasingly important to identify and quantify what it meant to be a Roman. Because Italians who had been conquered or had made treaties with Rome supplied a significant amount of military manpower, Romans and Italians often fought together against enemies

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43. Sallust's *History* does not survive, although his two monographs about the war with Jugurtha and the conspiracy of Catiline do survive. Of Livy's 142-book history, only thirty-five books remain. On the rhetorical training of Roman historians, see Thomas S. Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians, 100 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2003), 22.

44. Livy, 1.1.5–11.

45. Livy, 1.9–13.

46. Livy, 1.29–30.

from outside the Italian peninsula. This allowed for and even encouraged Romans and Italians to come together and identify themselves against an external enemy.

The Romans were unique in their extending of the citizenship to peoples whom they had conquered. However, it is important to realize that the extension of the citizenship went quickest to those town and cities with whom Rome most easily identified.[47] The citizenship was extended more slowly to others who did not fit into the Romans' conception of what it meant to be Roman, and just as the Greeks had in large part defined themselves in opposition to the Persians, so the Romans consciously identified themselves in contrast to those around them. While the Greeks opposed the Persian barbarians, the constant nemesis of Rome was the Gauls. From a very early period, Rome had harbored a sense of fear and dread regarding these others from the North as a result of the sack of Rome by Gauls in 390 B.C.E. Livy is again the main source for what happened or at least for what was passed down through the literary and oral tradition. He says that the Gauls were lured into Italy by the new pleasures of fruits and wine.[48] The picture of the northern savage that is taken in by the desire of an easier and more pleasant lifestyle is also present in Caesar, but an interesting variation is also present. The Suebi, the most warlike and powerful of the German tribes against whom Caesar fought, prohibited the importation of wine to guard against the ill effects it would have on the inhabitants. The Gauls were portrayed as "consumed with wrath, a passion for which their race is powerless to control"[49] and a "race being naturally given to vainglorious outbursts."[50] Caesar likewise includes an ethnographic account of the Gauls and Germans, emphasizing their systems of government and their corresponding lack of sophistication and effectiveness vis-à-vis the Roman system.[51] In Livy, the Gauls were shown to be untrustworthy (especially in financial matters), wild and passionate, lacking military expertise and sophisticated military equipment, and characterized by uncontrollable anger.[52] This portrayal of the northern barbarian as savage and nearly uncontainable and uncontrollable is included by Roman historians as a way to illustrate the strengths of Rome and her citizens by contrasting strength, integrity, and moral uprightness against the ferocity, fickleness, and simplicity of those from the north. It was a way in which Roman historians could illustrate the triumph of Roman virtues over the cold savagery of the Gallic tribes.

The Romans sought to identify themselves by contrasting their customs and institutions in opposition to the customs and institutions of others. Roman historians, who had a particular didactic and even patriotic purpose, sought to illustrate these differences as a way of justifying not only the validity of the Romans but also as a means of justifying the Roman conquest of these

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47. For a discussion of the Roman citizenship in early Roman history see Adrian Nicholas Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 3–118.

48. Livy, 5.33.2.

49. Livy, 5.37.4.

50. Livy, 5.37.8.

51. Caesar, *Bellum gallicum*, 6.11–28.

52. Livy, 5.37; 5.46.3; 5.48.9; 38.21.

other groups who were viewed as uncivilized.

Conclusion

The writers of history from ancient Greece and Rome sought, above all, to glorify their respective countries and themes and to provide the study of the past as a useful and meaningful tool to show "that if ever again men find themselves in a like situation they may be able . . . from a consideration of the records of the past to handle rightly what now confronts them."[53] Since the most acceptable means of accumulating glory in the ancient Mediterranean was through military exploits, it is no wonder that most of the histories that survive from Classical antiquity deal mainly with war and the men who fought and commanded in them. War and armed conflict require opposing sides, and the historians essentialized the enemy as something other than Greek or other than Roman. Usually this was accomplished by showing the differences in religious practices in the case of the Persians, or illustrating the ruthlessness and lawlessness of the Gauls. This approach was a useful tool for bringing the moral argument to bear on the discussion. The barbarian was shown to be quantifiably and tangibly different and dangerous in their disregard for the laws of gods and men. The sense of ethnic identity, bound up with ethnographic treatises within historical works, was very important "because a sense of ethnic identity can influence behavior."[54] This sense of ethnic identity can also be understood as the reason why the Greeks and especially the Romans went to war. The Greek and Roman obsession with the heroism that accompanies war pushed them to look for opportunities to define themselves and to gain glory. Thus, the emerging and sometimes fluid sense of ethnic identity on behalf of the Greeks and Romans encouraged continual self-definition by engaging in conflict with others who had been identified and defined by the communal perceptions of ethnic identity. The historian played a major role in those definitions and in shaping the appropriate response and behavior to those definitions.

It was less important whether the portrayal of these other ethnic groups was accurate in portraying a true ethnicity than it was that a type of ethnic identity be constructed. Most of the time, it would appear that the historians did not fabricate these identities but rather gave them a more permanent voice. Since history was written by those who had the leisure time to do so, which would preclude nearly everyone except those engaged in the highest levels of society, the portrayal of barbarians is most likely a reflection of those opinions and stereotypes held by the upper classes. Because the upper classes were the repository of religious customs and traditional civic values, Classical historiography preserves a very important view of the ancient perceptions of ethnic identity and how it was portrayed.

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53. Lucian, *How to Write History*, 42. For historians writing about the greatness of their country, Livy, *Praefatio* 1–11; and the greatness of the topic, Thucydides, 1.21–23.
54. Neville Morley, *Theories, Models and Concepts in Ancient History* (London: Routledge, 2004), 102.

"WHEN YOU SPREAD YOUR PALMS, I WILL HIDE MY EYES": THE SYMBOLISM OF BODY GESTURES IN ISAIAH

DAVID CALABRO

David Calabro *is a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago in Near Eastern studies.*

A study of body gestures in Hebrew scripture is one way of uncovering multiple levels of meaning that are embedded in the text.[1] Most studies of gestures in the Hebrew Bible have focused on the accurate translation of phrases describing gestures, a major approach being to categorize a given gesture as, for example, a "gesture of prayer" so that the phrase describing that gesture ("he spread his palms") can be provided with an accurate gloss ("to pray," "he prayed") in a lexical entry, translation, or commentary.[2] Biblical scholars have sometimes also sought to link individual gestures with symbolic meanings; for example, some have addressed the question of whether the gesture of "spreading the palms" in prayer symbolizes a request for the hands to be filled, an offering (as if one's prayer were an object presented with the hands), or an exposure of the hands and vitals to divine examination.[3] These

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1. An earlier version of this paper was presented as part of a lecture series for Students of the Ancient Near East at Brigham Young University on October 2, 2008. I would like to thank those who shared comments with me following that presentation, especially John Thompson and James Carroll.

2. Examples of this approach include Mayer Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980); Paul Kruger, "Nonverbal Communication and Symbolic Gestures in the Psalms," *The Bible Translator* 45/2 (1994): 213–22. Similar concerns are evident in surveys such as P. R. Ackroyd, "*yad,*" in G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), vol. 5, 393–426; David Burke, "Gesture," in Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 2:449–57. This approach lies behind several modern Bible translations, some of which render gesture expressions like "I lifted up my hand" (Ezekiel 20:5) with paraphrases like "I swore," "I pledged my word" (NRSV, NJB), or with expansions like "I swore with uplifted hand" (NIV).

3. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 25–37; John Tvedtnes, "Temple Prayer in Ancient Times," in *The Temple in Time and Eternity*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 79–98, on p. 84. For other gestures, cf. Meir Malul, "More on *pachad yitschāq* (Genesis 31:42, 53) and the Oath by the Thigh," *Vetus Testamentum* 35/2 (1985): 192–200; David Rolph Seely, "The Raised Hand of God as an Oath Gesture," in Astrid B. Beck et al., eds., *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

approaches treat gestures as isolated carriers of meaning, much as words are isolated as lemmas and provided with glosses in dictionaries.

In addition to these aspects of meaning, anthropologists and scholars of nonverbal communication have shown that gestures are linked to each other as parts of a coherent nonverbal system within a culture; even aside from consciously constructed sign languages, every culture has what might be called a grammar or logic of gestures.[4] An example of such a grammar or logic is described by Raymond Firth:

> Like other forms of salutation the handclasp can be used as a status differentiator. It has been reported of the Bambara that traditionally a man saluted his superior by extending his palm upwards, whereupon the superior put his own hand palm downwards over it. Inversely, when a man greeted an inferior he extended his hand with palm down; but for an equal his palm was held perpendicular to the ground.[5]

In this example, the contrast between taking the "upper hand" with palm downward and offering the hand with palm upward corresponds symbolically to a contrast between high and low status. Relationships and contrasts also exist between the gestures described in ancient texts; paying attention to these allows one to tap a level of meaning beyond the analysis of isolated gestures. The meanings attached to these relationships and contrasts, like the grammatical rules of ancient languages, are rarely if ever stated explicitly in the texts, but they can be discovered through assembling examples of gestures and noting patterns of how they are used in context. Specifically, one can note the following: Who does the gesture to whom? What is the relationship between the one performing the gesture and the recipient of the gesture? What effect or function does the gesture have?

1995), 411–21. Similar to these approaches, which rely primarily on textual evidence, is the approach developed by the so-called "Fribourg School" in Germany, which involves studying Near Eastern iconography to elucidate the symbolism of gestures (*inter alia*) mentioned in literature. For an example of this approach, see Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 307–23.

4. The relevant literature is enormous; I mention here only a few key publications: Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen, "The Repertoire of Nonverbal Behavior: Categories, Origins, Usage, and Coding," *Semiotica* 1 (1969): 49–98; Ray Birdwhistell, *Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970); Raymond Firth, "Bodily Symbols of Greeting and Parting," in idem, *Symbols Public and Private* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 299–327; Judith Irvine, "Strategies of Status Manipulation in the Wolof Greeting," in Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds., *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 167–91; Adam Kendon, "Gesture," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): 109–28; John Haviland, "Gesture," in Alessandro Duranti, ed., *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 197–221. Among studies of biblical gestures, the one that comes closest to an approach to this issue is a short and neglected article by Zeev Falk, "Gestures Expressing Affirmation," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 4/3 (1959): 268–69. This article may be profitably compared with Malul, "More on *pachad yitschāq*," and Seely, "The Raised Hand of God," both cited above, which discuss the same gestures from a different point of view.

5. "Bodily Symbols," 320–21. Examples from a variety of other cultures, including our own, could be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

The purpose of this paper is to explore just a few aspects of the nonverbal "grammar" of ancient Hebrew gestures as found in the book of Isaiah. Specifically, I will discuss the contrast between gestures that can be performed at a distance (like extending or raising the hand) and those performed in contact with another (like grasping another's hand). I will argue that this contrast corresponds to an ancient Hebrew notion of distant (public, politically based) and close (intimate, kin-based) social relationships. I will also discuss nonverbal means of moving from a distant position to a situation of contact. In my discussion, I will draw attention specifically to how the gestures are used in context, as described above.

I have chosen the book of Isaiah as the main text for this paper, not because the nonverbal patterns I discuss are unique to Isaiah, but because of the relatively high concentration of these patterns and the high stakes involved in interpretation of the book for modern readers. Indeed, some of the examples I will discuss from Isaiah compare very well with examples from other Near Eastern sources. I would not, therefore, claim that these nonverbal patterns are a literary invention of Isaiah, but rather that they are part of the cultural background of the book—a background that is masterfully and meaningfully exploited in the book.

I. Displaying the Arm and Hand at a Distance: The Political Sphere

Revealing the Arm

I begin with the gesture of "revealing the arm," a gesture which does not involve contact and can be performed at a distance. In Hebrew, the gesture is described by three different expressions, all of which occur in Isaiah:

Yahweh will cause the majesty of his voice to be heard; he will let the strength of his arm be seen [נַחַת זְרוֹעוֹ יַרְאֶה](Isaiah 30:30).[6]

Yahweh has bared his holy arm [חָשַׂף יְהוָה אֶת-זְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ] in the eyes of all the nations (Isaiah 52:10).

Who has believed our report? And as for the arm [זְרוֹעַ] of Yahweh, against whom is it revealed [נִגְלָתָה]? (Isaiah 53:1).

All of the expressions for "revealing the arm" employ the Hebrew word זְרוֹעַ "arm." Both the word and the body part are closely associated with the notion of power or might. The Arabic word *ḏarʿun*, from the same root, means "power, ability, capability."[7]

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6. The Hebrew word נַחַת is most probably a loanword from Egyptian *nḫt* "strength, victory" as found in Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, *Aegyptisches Handwörterbuch* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1921), vol. 2, 314–17. See Maximilian Ellenbogen, *Foreign Words in the Old Testament: Their Origin and Etymology* (London 1962), 112; Donald Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 385. Others, following the traditional view, take the noun to mean "descent." Cf. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1999), 629, 639.

7. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz,

In the first two passages cited above, the reference to revealing the arm occurs in the context of judgment against the nations, a large-scale political context. In Isaiah 30:30, the context refers to sifting the nations and striking terror into Assyria by smiting it with a rod.[8] The gesture in these passages, therefore, is part of a large-scale, politically based interaction.

The significance of the gesture in Isaiah 53:1 is more obscure. In terms of the parallelism in this verse, the gesture phrase is apparently equivalent to the "report," literally the "thing heard" (שְׁמֻעָה). The two are similar in the sense of acting as a sign, the report being an audible sign and the gesture being a visible sign. The pair of questions in this verse could be interpreted in one of two ways: either they are rhetorical questions to which the answer is "nobody,"[9] or they refer to the suffering servant described in this chapter. An interpretation of the gesture as one of judgment, like the other two examples discussed above, is possible, though it is not clearly evident from the context.

Outside of Isaiah, the gesture of revealing the arm occurs only once, in Ezekiel 4:7. There the expression used is חֲשׂוּפָה זְרֹעֶךָ "bare the arm" (cf. Isaiah 52:10) and the context is an action prophecy in which Yahweh commands Ezekiel to perform the gesture against besieged Jerusalem, symbolizing the Lord's judgments that are about to fall on Jerusalem.

In all four instances of this gesture, the one performing the gesture is either God or, in Ezekiel 4:7, his prophet who performs the gesture symbolically on God's behalf. In three of the four instances (all but Isaiah 53:1), the gesture is directed against nations. The function of the gesture appears, at least in these three instances, to be hostile.

Extending the Hand

The use of the expression "extend the hand" in the clause "his hand is still extended" (KJV "his hand is stretched out still") forms a binding link for chapters 2–14 of Isaiah, that is, the oracle concerning Judah and Jerusalem (chapters 2–12) and the oracle against Babylon (chapters 13–14). The expression occurs eight times in this section of Isaiah.[10] Each time, the context is one of large-scale destruction, as in the following sampling:

> Therefore, the anger of Yahweh being kindled against his people, he extended his hand [וַיֵּט יָדוֹ] against them, he smote them, the mountains trembled, their corpses were like offal in the streets. In all this, his anger was not turning away, his hand still being extended [וְעוֹד יָדוֹ נְטוּיָה] (Isaiah 5:25).

> YHWH raised up the adversaries of Rezin against him and stirred up his enemies: Aram from the east and the Philistines from the west. They ate

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1994), 356.

8. See Isaiah 30:28, 31–32; note that NIV, NRSV, and NJB translate תְּנוּפָה in v. 32 as "blows of the arm," "brandished arm," and "uplifted hand" respectively; see comments on the gesture of "raising the hand" below.

9. On rhetorical questions in Biblical Hebrew, see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 18.1a, c; 18.2g; 18.3g; 40.3.

10. Isaiah 5:25 (*bis*); 9:11, 16, 20; 10:4; 14:26–27 (*bis*).

up Israel in one mouthful. In all this, his anger was not turning away, his hand still being extended (Isaiah 9:10–11).

He cut on the right hand but was hungry; he ate on the left hand but was not satisfied. Each man was eating the flesh of his own arm—Manasseh eating Ephraim, Ephraim eating Manasseh, and they together against Judah. In all this, his anger was not turning away, his hand still being extended (Isaiah 9:19–20).

This is the counsel determined for the whole land; this is the hand extended [הַיָּד הַנְּטוּיָה] against all nations. For YHWH of Hosts has determined it; who can frustrate it? It is his hand that is extended [וְיָדוֹ הַנְּטוּיָה]; who can turn it back? (Isaiah 14:26–27).

Outside of Isaiah, the expression נָטָה יָד occurs thirty-seven times in the Hebrew Bible.[11] For example, in the narrative of the deliverance from Egypt in Exodus 7–14, the expression describes the gesture performed by Moses to bring about the plagues and to part the sea. It is evident from these examples that the gesture is not just one of stretching forth the hand to strike somebody, use a tool, or the like. It seems, rather, that it is a gesture of power that can be efficacious without contact. One having the necessary power or authority extends his hand (with or without a weapon or symbol of authority) and causes the elements to move and enemies to be destroyed.[12]

In each of the Isaiah passages quoted above, the one performing the gesture is Yahweh, the recipient is a nation or nations, and the function of the gesture is violent.[13] These observations accord with the use of the gesture

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11. See Exodus 7:19; 8:2, 5, 13; 9:22; 10:12, 21–22; 14:16, 21, 26–27; 15:12; Joshua 8:18–19, 26; 2 Samuel 24:16; 1 Chronicles 21:16; Isaiah 23:11; 31:3; Jeremiah 6:12; 15:6; 51:25; Ezekiel 6:14; 14:9, 13; 16:27; 25:7, 13, 16; 35:3; Zephaniah 1:4; 2:13; Proverbs 1:24; Job 15:25.

12. All of these passages have the specific idiom נָטָה יָד . However, contrast the similar idiom שָׁלַח יָד , which is often used to describe reaching out the hand for the purpose of actual contact and concrete manipulation of objects. On the significance of נָטָה יָד and the gesture it denotes, see Paul Humbert, "Etendre la main," *Vetus Testamentum* 12/4 (1962): 383–395; H. P. L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (New Rochelle, New York: Caratzas Brothers, 1982), ch. 16; Othmar Keel, *Wirkmächtige Siegeszeichen im Alten Testament: Ikonographische Studien zu Jos 8:18–26; Ex 17:8–13; 2 Kön 13:14–19 und 1 Kön 22:11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974); Nicolas Wyatt, "Arms and the King," in Manfried Dietrich and Ingo Kottsieper, eds., *"Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf": Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient, Festschrift für Oswald Loretz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998), 833–82.

13. Some scholars at Brigham Young University have posited that the extended hand in these Isaiah passages can be interpreted both as destructive and as reaching out in mercy. See Donald Parry, *Understanding Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998), 59; Ann Madsen, "'His Hand is Stretched Out Still': The Lord's Eternal Covenant of Mercy," in *Revelation, Reason, and Faith: Essays in Honor of Truman G. Madsen*, ed. Donald Parry, Daniel Peterson, and Stephen Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 703–21. In this interpretation, the meaning could depend on whether the recipient of the gesture chooses to be an enemy or a friend of the one performing it. Nevertheless, the plain meaning of the gesture, as indicated by the context in the passages quoted above, is one of judgment and destruction.

elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. In all but two instances,[14] the one who performs the gesture is either Yahweh or his specially commissioned servant, and the gesture is violent, performed against political entities (Egypt, the city of Ai, Judah, Edom, and so forth) with large-scale destructive results.

Raising the Hand

Another gesture that is performed at a distance is that of "raising the hand." In the two examples of raising the hand found in Isaiah, the gesture is parallel to raising a standard, and it appears to function as a sign to gather to a specific location.

> On a bare mountain lift up a standard [שְׂאוּ-נֵס]; raise your voice to them. Elevate your hand [הָנִיפוּ יָד], that they might enter the doors of the nobles (Isaiah 13:2).

> Behold, I will lift up my hand [אֶשָּׂא יָדִי] to the nations; and to the peoples I will raise my standard [אָרִים נִסִּי]. They will bring your sons at their bosom; they will carry your daughters on their shoulders (Isaiah 49:22).

These verses use two synonymous idioms, הֵנִיף יָד and נָשָׂא יָד , to describe the gesture of "raising the hand." Thanks to a study by Jacob Milgrom,[15] we know that הֵנִיף means not "wave," as it was traditionally translated, but simply "raise." The expressions in these verses appear to be synonymous, both using יָד and both parallel to נֵס "banner, standard."

In both passages, while the raising of the standard and the parallel lifting up of the hand seem to be best understood as signals to gather, other interpretations are possible. In Isaiah 13:2, the "doors of the nobles" could be interpreted as tent-doors, and the scene could be understood as the muster of Yahweh's armies prior to an assault on Babylon, the elevating of the hand being the signal to muster.[16] In another interpretation, however, the "doors of the nobles" are the gates of Babylon, and the elevating of the hand constitutes an order to charge through them in an attack on the city.[17] In Isaiah 49:22, the gathering of the nations can be understood as a peaceful gathering, the gesture being a signal to the nations to assemble, or the picture could be of Yahweh

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14. The other two instances are in Proverbs 1:24, where personified Wisdom extends her hand to call out to others in the streets and at the gates, and Job 15:25, where a wicked man is said to extend his hand in rebellion against God.

15. Jacob Milgrom, "The Alleged Wave Offering in Israel and in the Ancient Near East," *IEJ* 22 (1972): 33–38.

16. Ackroyd, "*yad*," 415: "All three expressions [i.e. the three imperatives in Isaiah 13:2] would then refer to summoning the warriors."

17. Thanks are due to James Carroll for explaining (and demonstrating!) this interpretation to me. See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Anchor Bible: Isaiah 1–39* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 274, 278; John H. Hayes and Stuart A. Irvine, *Isaiah, the Eighth-Century Prophet: His Times and His Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 224. Blenkinsopp's discussion is hampered by misunderstanding the verb הֵנִיף as "wave" (see above); however, Hayes and Irvine, though they translate the verb correctly as "lift," still understand "the goal of the signalling" to be "that the attackers will enter 'the noble gates,' probably the gates of Babylon."

personally waging battle against the nations with uplifted hand and thereby forcing them to return the children of Israel to their homeland.[18] In my opinion, the parallelism of phrases in both passages, as well as a comparison of the passages themselves, supports the interpretation of the gesture as a signal to gather with no implied hostility toward the recipient of the gesture. However, no matter which interpretation is adopted, the context is that of large-scale political events (military action and the relocation of peoples), and the relationship between the one performing the gesture and the warriors or nations who are the recipient of the gesture is presented as politically based: commander-warriors, leader-nation, or attacker-foe, but not father-son, brother-brother, etc.

Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible and in other Near Eastern literature, gestures of raising the hand (expressed in Hebrew with the phrases הֵנִיף יָד , נָשָׂא יָד , and also הֵרִים יָד) have a variety of functions. They can denote destructive military action (like נָטָה יָד , discussed above), rebellion against a king, oath-taking, or other legal action such as claiming possession of property.[19] Almost without exception, symbolic gestures of raising one hand take place in a public (legal or political) context. In many cases, the raising of the hand seems to constitute a formal, performative action, as if the gesture were equivalent to saying, "I hereby . . . ," with the specific content of the action made clear either by means of speech or by the context surrounding the gesture. The two examples in Isaiah, in which the raised hand constitutes a signal to gather, an official order, or possibly a hostile action, fit well in the overall set of contexts and meanings associated with symbolic gestures of raising the hand. The main point here is that raising the hand, like revealing the arm and extending the hand, is associated with public actions between people whose relationship (at least as represented in the immediate context[20]) is based on political or official functions.

18. Cf. Ackroyd, "*yad*," 411–12; Joseph Blenkinsopp, in Michael D. Coogan, ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Hebrew Bible, 1048.

19. For the biblical material, see Falk, "Gestures Expressing Affirmation"; Johan Lust, "Ez., XX, 4–26 une parodie de l'histoire religieuse d'Israël," *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 43 (1967): 488–527; idem, "For I Lift up my Hand to Heaven and Swear," in F. García Martínez et al., eds., *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honour of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 155–64; idem, "The Raised Hand of the Lord in Deut 32:40 according to MT, 4QDeut-q, and LXX," in Alexander Rofé, ed., *Textus: Studies of the Hebrew University Bible Project*, Volume 18 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 33–45; Åke Viberg, *Symbols of Law: A Contextual Analysis of Legal Symbolic Acts in the Old Testament* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1992), chapter 2; Seely, "The Raised Hand of God"; Eugene McGarry, "The Ambidextrous Angel (Daniel 12:7 and Deuteronomy 32:40): Inner-Biblical Exegesis and Textual Criticism in Counterpoint," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124/2 (2005): 211–228. For Mesopotamia, see A. Leo Oppenheim, "Idiomatic Accadian (Lexicographical Researches)," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 61 (1941): 251–71, especially 267–71; Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 60–62, note 2.

20. People whose relationship is represented in the immediate context as formal and official may, in reality, be relatives who would interact quite differently in other contexts. Though Yahweh might act as a father to Israel in some contexts, he might be represented in other contexts as a political enemy of Israel, extending his hand to destroy. The important factor in the analysis of gesture patterns is the immediate context in which the gesture occurs.

II. Gestures Involving Contact with Another: The Family Sphere

Yahweh Grasping the Hand of His Chosen

We turn now to a gesture that involves contact between two parties, that of "grasping the hand." Six passages in Isaiah describe Yahweh performing this gesture to his servant or chosen.

I who have grasped you [הֶחֱזַקְתִּיךָ] from the ends of the earth and have called you from its corners, and have said to you, "You are my servant. I have chosen you and have not forsaken you" (Isaiah 41:9).

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not gaze about fearfully, for I am your God; I have strengthened you, I have helped you, I have held you with my saving right hand [תְּמַכְתִּיךָ בִּימִין צִדְקִי] (Isaiah 41:10).

For I am Yahweh your God, he who grasps your right hand [מַחֲזִיק יְמִינֶךָ], who says to you, "Do not fear, I will help you" (Isaiah 41:13).

Behold, as for my servant whom I hold [אֶתְמָךְ-בּוֹ], my chosen in whom my soul delights, I have put my spirit upon him, he will bring judgment to the nations (Isaiah 42:1).

I am Yahweh. I have called you in righteousness, and I will grasp your hand [אַחְזֵק בְּיָדֶךָ], watch over you, and make you a covenant of the people, a light to the nations (Isaiah 42:6).

Thus says Yahweh to his anointed, to Cyrus whose right hand I have grasped [הֶחֱזַקְתִּי בִימִינוֹ] to subdue nations before him—I will loose the loins of kings!—and to open doors before him—the gates will not be shut! (Isaiah 45:1).

In these examples, two verbs referring to grasping or holding are used: הֶחֱזִיק "grasp" and תָּמַךְ "hold, support." These examples of grasping the hand are similar to four examples in the Psalms that use the verbs תָּמַךְ "hold, support" and אָחַז "grasp" to describe Yahweh grasping the hand of his chosen (with תָּמַךְ : Psalms 41:13; 63:9; with אָחַז : 73:23–24; 139:9–10).

In Isaiah 41:9 and 42:1, Yahweh calls the recipient of the gesture his "servant" (עֶבֶד). However, this does not appear to be an ordinary master-servant relationship but a special, intimate relationship, one more naturally associated with close kinship. Yahweh makes promises to be with and help the recipient of the gesture (Isaiah 41:10, 13, 14; 43:2; 44:2; 45:2), and Yahweh acts as a גֹּאֵל (kinsman redeemer) to the recipient (Isaiah 41:14; 43:1, 14; 44:6, 22, 23, 24). Yahweh gives his servant a new name (Isaiah 43:1; 45:3–4), acting in a role similar to that of a parent at the birth of a child.[21] Yahweh also says

21. See Genesis 4:25, 26; 5:3, 29; 16:11, 15; 17:19; 19:37, 38; 21:3; 25:25, 26; 29:32, 33, 34, 35; 30:6, 8, 11, 13, 18, 20, 21, 24; 35:18; 38:3, 4, 5, 29, 30; 41:51, 52; Exodus 2:10, 22; Judges 13:24; 1 Samuel 1:20; 4:21; 2 Samuel 12:24; Isaiah 7:14; 8:3; 48:8; Hosea 1:4, 6, 9; Job 42:14; Ruth 4:17; 1 Chronicles 4:9; 7:16, 23. Of these 48 instances of

that he has formed his servant in the womb (Isaiah 44:2, 24; cf. 43:1). He uses similar language to refer to his "sons" and "daughters":

> I will say to the north, "Give (up)!" and to the south, "Do not keep back!
> Bring my sons from far and my daughters from the end of the earth, /
> each one who is called by my name and whom I created for my glory—I
> have formed him, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:6–7).

Although there is no explicit connection in these Isaiah passages between the gesture of grasping the hand and kinship, two considerations support the idea that such a connection exists. First, some textual passages outside of Isaiah that mention Yahweh or an earthly king grasping another's hand do have an explicit connection with kinship. One of these is found in the book of Jeremiah:

> Behold, days are coming, says Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant
> with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant
> that I made with their ancestors in the day that I grasped their hand
> [הֶחֱזִיקִי בְיָדָם] to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant
> of mine they broke, though I had become their husband, says Yahweh
> (Jeremiah 31:31–32).

This passage mentions a day in which Yahweh grasped Israel's hand to bring them out of Egypt. This is very similar to Ezekiel 20:5–6, where Yahweh describes having lifted up his hand (נָשָׂאתִי יָדִי) to bring Israel out of Egypt. Both Jeremiah 31:31–32 and Ezekiel 20:5–6 also mention or allude to Yahweh making a covenant with Israel. The two passages therefore describe different gestures being used in nearly identical contexts; however, there is one important difference in the context, namely that in Jeremiah 31:31–32, where the gesture is that of grasping the hand, Yahweh says that he had "become the husband" of the recipient of the gesture (בְּעַלְתִּי בָם). In other words, the difference in the gesture (grasping the hand versus raising the hand) corresponds symbolically to a difference in kinship status (husband-wife versus God-nation).

One might also mention Isaiah 56:4–5, an oracle to eunuchs who take hold of Yahweh's covenant:

> For thus says Yahweh to the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who
> choose what I delight in and take hold of my covenant: I will give them
> in my house, within my walls, a hand and a name better than sons and
> daughters. It is an eternal name that I will give them, one that will not be
> cut off (Isaiah 56:4–5).

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bestowing a birth name, 15 clearly describe the father bestowing the name, and 16 clearly describe the mother bestowing the name. Four instances describe Jacob's principal wives, Leah and Rachel, bestowing names on sons born of their handmaids, Zilpah and Bilhah. Eleven instances are somewhat ambiguous or show textual variation, though in almost all of these instances it is certain that the parents had the primary role in bestowing the name. One passage (Exodus 2:10) describes an adopted mother bestowing a name. Only one passage stands out in presenting a different custom: In Ruth 4:17, the neighbors of the parents give the name. It is useful to compare this general pattern with Genesis 32:25, 28–29, in which a "man" wrestles (וַיֵּאָבֵק , another contact gesture) with Jacob and afterwards gives him a new name. In verse 31, Jacob realizes that the "man" is God.

Here Yahweh promises to "give . . . a hand" (וְנָתַתִּי . . . יָד) to the eunuchs, which will be "better than sons and daughters." This could refer to a handclasp, or, as some have suggested, it could refer to the giving of a stela to be placed in the temple.[22] If the former interpretation is adopted, then this passage also makes a connection between the handclasp and kinship. The connection with kinship is seen in the expression "better than sons and daughters," in the bestowal of a name (see above), and in the general sense of the passage, promising people who have been denied certain kin relations, specifically marriage and fatherhood, that God will recompense them.

In a Phoenician inscription from the ancient city-state of Sam'al (modern Zinjirli in Turkey), the king Kilamuwa describes having "held" a subject people "by the hand":

> I held MŠKBM by the hand [*tmkt . . . lyd*], and they regarded (me) as an orphan regards a mother (Kilamuwa I, line 13).

Here Kilamuwa's holding MŠKBM by the hand marks the formation of a relationship between the two parties, and this relationship is equated symbolically with the relationship between an orphan and his mother.[23] In this instance, it is not Yahweh but an earthly king who performs the gesture; however, the uneven relationship between the one performing the gesture and the one receiving it is analogous to the other examples discussed above. Here it may be noted that the kinship relationship that is described is not one that existed prior to the gesture; a mother-son relationship between Kilamuwa and MŠKBM was not a precondition for the king grasping MŠKBM's hand. Rather, the gesture marks the formation of a kinship relationship. What was before a king-subject relationship is transformed into a mother-son relationship. This may be true for the other examples quoted above, Yahweh's gesture marking a symbolic transition from a distant God-mortal relationship to a closer kinship relationship.

The second consideration supporting the idea that Yahweh's grasping of the hand is connected with kinship in the passages quoted above is that the gesture in these passages is associated with kingship, which is associated in turn with divine sonship. Cyrus is called Yahweh's "anointed" in Isaiah 45:1, recalling Psalm 2:2, 6–7, in which the king is called Yahweh's "anointed" and his "son." Blenkinsopp describes the motif of the deity grasping the ruler's hand in these Isaiah passages as "part of official court language in the ancient

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22. Another possibility, which could be alluded to even if another interpretation is adopted as the primary meaning, is that יָד refers to the male reproductive organ (that is, the eunuchs are symbolically promised procreative power that will never again be "cut off"). See Ackroyd, "*yad*," 401–03.

23. Since *ytm*, translated here as "orphan," can mean either "fatherless" or "deprived of both parents," it is not known whether the reference is to the child's birth mother, emphasizing the king's role as sole provider, or to an adopted mother, emphasizing the king's roles as deliverer and life-giver. In my opinion, the latter option provides a better sense. It is possible, though not certain, that the gesture here is a figure of speech referring to giving help, a possibility that is also present in the other passages quoted above. These issues (the precise meaning of *ytm* and whether the gesture of grasping the hand is to be interpreted figuratively) do not have a major impact on the points made here. As the evidence presented here shows, if the grasping of the hand is figurative, then the figure of speech employs the same symbolism that the actual gesture would have.

Near East" and as part of the "Babylonian *Hofstil*, the protocol and ceremonial of the Babylonian court,"[24] and Eaton points out that God grasping the hand of the king and claiming him as son are two of the hallmarks of Israelite kingship in the Psalms.[25] This may be compared with the Egyptian Pyramid Texts, in which the gesture of a deity grasping the hand of the deceased king is often explicitly connected with the king's status as son of the deity.[26]

In view of these considerations, it appears likely that the gesture of Yahweh grasping the hand of a human was generally understood as symbolically forming or reaffirming a relationship of kinship. The fact that this is not always explicitly mentioned could be because, as part of the cultural world of the biblical authors and their intended audience, it was thought to be commonly understood and therefore not in need of explanation. It was enough simply to mention the gesture and the actors involved, and the implications of the gesture could be deduced by the audience. In fact, this underscores the importance of careful, comparative study of nonverbal communication patterns in scripture, since this can lead to an understanding of aspects of the message that are not readily available otherwise.

Grasping the Hand of a Parent

Aside from passages in which Yahweh grasps the hand of a human, one passage in Isaiah makes reference to a son grasping the hand of his mother to lead her:

> Of all the sons she has given birth to, there is no one to lead her along; of all the sons she has raised, there is no one to grasp her hand [מַחֲזִיק בְּיָדָהּ] (Isaiah 51:18).

In this passage, the mother is a personification of Jerusalem, who has become intoxicated by drinking from the cup of Yahweh's wrath (verse 17). There are similar examples in the Ugaritic *Tale of Aqhat*, in which one of a son's duties is said to be that of grasping his father's hand when his father is intoxicated, and in the Egyptian *Instruction of Amenemope*, in which one is admonished to reach out the hand to an elder who is intoxicated, thereby treating him as his children would.[27] In all three cases, the grasping of the hand is clearly cast as a duty associated with kin relationships: son to mother, son to father, and child to father. It is interesting to note that in these cases, in contrast with the gesture of Yahweh grasping the hand of his chosen, the kin

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24. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Anchor Bible: Isaiah 40–55* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 211, 249.

25. John Eaton, *Kingship and the Psalms*, 2nd edition (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 143–44, 146–47. I wish to express my thanks to Matthew Brown for pointing out these sources and their implications for this topic.

26. See Spells 269 (380a), 305 (473c), 422 (756a), 468 (902d), 480 (997a). Other passages in the Pyramid Texts make a similar explicit connection between divine sonship and the embrace, another contact gesture: see Spells 217 (160b), 222 (208b, 212b, 213a). In the foregoing, the numbers in parentheses refer to the numbers in Sethe's publication of the Pyramid Texts.

27. *Aqhat*, first tablet, column 1, lines 30–31 (also line 48 and column 2, lines 5–6, 19–20); Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 26. These parallels are noted by Johannes De Moor, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 228, note 31.

relationship is understood as a precondition of the gesture. It is a child's duty to grasp the hand of the parent; it is not the case that grasping the hand of an intoxicated person marks the formation of a child to parent relationship.

III. At the Threshold: Gestures That Transition from Distance to Contact

Prostration

Finally, we turn to gestures that are performed at a distance but that can, at least in some situations, transition to contact gestures. First among these is the gesture of prostration. The most common verb used to describe this gesture, הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה , occurs twelve times in Isaiah. Of these, six instances refer to worshipping idols or foreign deities (Isaiah 2:8, 20; 37:38; 44:15, 17; 46:6), three refer to bowing down to Yahweh or before his altar (Isaiah 27:13; 36:7; 66:23), and three refer to humans prostrating to other humans. In addition, the same or a similar gesture is described using different verbs in Isaiah 44:19 (סָגַד), 45:23 (כָּרַע), and 60:14 (שָׁחַח), which refer to worshipping an idol, worshipping Yahweh, and bowing down to other humans respectively. Here we will focus on the four examples of humans prostrating to other humans, since these provide the most detailed information on the gesture and its significance.

> The products of Egypt, the merchandise of Kush, Sabeans bearing tribute—they will come over to you and will be yours; they will walk behind you; they will come over bound in fetters. They will prostrate [יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ] to you and make supplication to you (Isaiah 45:14).[28]

> Thus says Yahweh, the redeemer of Israel, his holy one, to the one despised of soul, to the one nations abhor, to the servant of rulers: Kings will see and arise; princes also, and they will prostrate (Isaiah 49:7).

> Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens will be your nursing mothers. They will prostrate to you with their nose to the earth and will lick the dust of your feet (Isaiah 49:23).

> The children of your persecutors will come to you bowed down [שָׁחוֹחַ]; all those who spurned you will prostrate at the soles of your feet (Isaiah 60:14).

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the symbolism of this gesture is that of self-lowering, expressing one's inferiority and humility with respect

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28. Most translators (KJV, NIV, NRSV, NJB) translate אַנְשֵׁי מִדָּה in this verse as "men of stature," based on the similar phrases אִישׁ מִדָּה "man of stature" (1 Chronicles 11:23; 20:6) and אַנְשֵׁי מִדּוֹת "men of stature" (Numbers 13:32). However, parellelism and the general context in this passage make it more likely, in my estimation, that a metathesis has occured, changing an original נשאי מדה to אנשי מדה (both שׂ and שׁ being represented by the same grapheme, the letter Shin). This error was perhaps influenced by the above phrases meaning "man of stature" and "men of stature." The word מִדָּה meaning "tribute" is attested in Nehemiah 5:4.

to the recipient of the gesture. The Hebrew word הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה appears to derive from a root ḥwy "to beat" (attested as such in Egyptian and in a few Ugaritic passages).[29] It is thus an etymological parallel to English *kowtow* from Chinese "strike the head" (i.e. on the ground). As this etymology implies, the gesture is one of humility or subordination, lowering oneself to the maximum extent possible.

In addition to self-lowering, however, prostration can involve movement toward the recipient of the gesture. Among the passages quoted above, this is most clearly seen in Isaiah 60:14. The children of Israel's persecutors are said to "come . . .bowed down" until they are finally at the soles of Israel's feet. In Genesis 33:3, Jacob is said to have "prostrated to the ground seven times until he approached his brother." In 1 Samuel 20:41, as Jonathan comes into view, David rises and then prostrates three times before finally kissing Jonathan. Ancient Egyptian depictions of people from Asiatic tribes doing obeisance to the Pharaoh show the prostrating Asiatics with one knee drawn forward, which would facilitate forward movement.[30]

In some instances, the gesture of prostration is consummated in contact with the recipient. In Isaiah 49:23, the kings and queens prostrate themselves and "lick the dust of [Israel's] feet." Whether actual contact is achieved in Isaiah 60:14 is not as clear, though either contact or close proximity is implied in the statement that the gesture is performed "at the soles" of the recipients' feet. Examples of contact immediately following prostration can also be found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. In Genesis 33:3–4, for example, after Jacob prostrates seven times, his brother Esau runs to meet him, and the two embrace and kiss. As has already been mentioned, David and Jonathan kiss after David prostrates in 1 Samuel 20:41. Second Samuel 14:33 describes the formerly rebellious and now seemingly repentant Absalom entering the presence of his father, king David, and prostrating to him, whereupon the king kisses him. An interesting case is found in 1 Kings 2:19, in which Solomon rises and prostrates to his mother Bathsheba; the Septuagint, instead of having "prostrated to her," reads "kissed her." This variation could be explained in a number of ways; one possibility is that both phrases were present in the original text, in which case this would provide another example of prostration consummated by contact.

Two important observations from the above examples may be mentioned. First, in every case where contact following prostration is explicitly mentioned, there is also a relationship of kinship, either actual or surrogate, between the participants. In Isaiah 49:23, the kings and queens who lick the dust of Israel's feet are called "nursing fathers" and "nursing mothers." Likewise, those who come prostrating in Isaiah 60:14 seem from context to be the same as those

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29. Cf. Wilfred Watson, "An Egyptian Cognate for Ugaritic HWY (II)?" in Gabor Takacs, ed., *Egyptian and Semito-Hamitic (Afro-Asiatic) Studies in Memoriam W. Vycichl* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 155–59.

30. James Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), Nos. 45, 46, 47, 52. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 310, suggests that the purpose of having one knee forward was to facilitate rising; however, from a purely physiological standpoint, it is difficult to rise from a crouching position with one and not both knees forward, while having only one knee forward seems more in harmony with the purpose of crawling forward.

mentioned in verse 16, who are said to suckle Israel. The relationships of brother to brother in Genesis 33:3–4, father to son in 2 Samuel 14:33, and son to mother in 1 Kings 2:19 are straightforward.[31] In the case of 1 Samuel 20:41, David and Jonathan are brothers-in-law, David having married Jonathan's sister Michal (1 Samuel 18:27). Later, in 2 Samuel 1:26, David refers to Jonathan as "my brother" (cf. also 1 Samuel 18:1, 3; 20:17). By contrast, numerous other references to people prostrating to each other mention neither contact nor kinship. This implies that prostration can end in contact when, and only when, there is a relationship of kinship between the participants. This principle also seems to be at work in an Egyptian inscription from the Old Kingdom (fifth dynasty), in which the Memphite high priest Ptahshepses boasts that the king allowed him to kiss the king's feet instead of the ground; Ptahshepses had earlier married the king's daughter, thus becoming his son-in-law.[32]

Second, these examples show variation in the relative height of the participants when they make contact, as well as in who initiates the contact. In Isaiah 49:23, the contact is at the level of Israel's feet; here it is the ones performing the prostrating gesture who appear to initiate the contact, they being the subject of the verb "lick." In Genesis 33:3–4, however, the fact that the contact consists of embracing, falling on the neck, and kissing implies that the two participants end up physically positioned at an equal level; in this case, it is Esau who runs to meet his prostrating brother and initiates the contact. King David and his son also make contact on a physically equal level in 2 Samuel 14:33, David being the one who takes the initiative in kissing his son. The latter two examples are also similar in that the younger family member, who performs the prostration, is seeking to be reconciled to the elder. As these examples show, after one symbolically lowers himself or herself through prostration, the recipient of the gesture may choose to equalize the roles through initiating contact on an equal level.

To summarize, prostration, which is a way of lowering oneself symbolically with respect to another, has some dynamic elements. These include the possibility of movement toward the recipient, contact, and being restored to an equal height with respect to the recipient. When contact is achieved, it affirms a relationship of kinship with the recipient. In Isaiah 49:23 and 60:14, in which the one performing the gesture achieves contact with (or at least close proximity to) the feet of the recipient, the gesture signals both subordinate status and a kin relationship (the ones performing the gesture being foster fathers and nursing mothers of the recipients).[33] In all four Isaiah passages,

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31. Generally, in the Hebrew Bible, the embrace is exchanged only between blood relatives (uncle-nephew, brother-brother, grandfather-grandson, mother-son, etc.) and between lovers. The kiss is also usually exchanged between kin and lovers, though there are exceptions. See Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 328–335, which includes a table showing examples of kissing between kin. For the embrace specifically, cf. Genesis 29:13; 33:4; 48:10; 2 Kings 4:16; Proverbs 5:20; Song of Solomon 2:6; 8:3.

32. Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reichs* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1933), 52:2–3; 54:2–3. Cf. Emma Brunner-Traut, "Gesten," *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* II (1977), cols. 573–85, on col. 578. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 264–78, gives many examples from Akkadian texts of kissing the feet, many of which are apparently between non-kin, suggesting that the pattern described here (if it is, indeed, correct) was not universally found in the ancient Near East.

33. While the licking of the feet may be repulsive to modern readers, it is possible that

there is no equalizing of height, signifying that the unequal status of the participants is retained throughout the encounter.

There are many issues related to prostration that I have not touched on here, including the many examples of prostration to a deity in prayer or worship. A thorough study of the issues related to prostration is beyond the scope of this paper.[34] In the context of the other gestures discussed here, however, I have shown that prostration fits the general pattern of contact and non-contact gestures being indices of kinship and non-kinship. I have also discussed the contrast between high and low, which is an index of relative status in an interaction. Prostration can function as a means of symbolically moving between contrasting poles, from distant to contact and from low to high, thereby affirming one's kinship or renewing one's status.

Spreading the Hands/Palms

We turn, finally, to the non-contact gesture of spreading the hands or palms (פָּרַשׂ כַּפַּיִם , פָּרַשׂ יָדַיִם). There are two neatly contrasting examples of this gesture, one near the beginning and one near the end of the book of Isaiah:

And when you spread your palms [וּבְפָרִשְׂכֶם כַּפֵּיכֶם], I will hide my eyes from you; even as you keep on praying, I am not listening (Isaiah 1:15).

I have said, "Here I am, here I am!" to a nation that did not call on my name; I have spread my hands [פֵּרַשְׂתִּי יָדַי] all day to a rebellious people (Isaiah 65:1–2).

While the first instance refers to people spreading their hands in prayer to God, the second instance describes the opposite scenario, God spreading his hands to his people.

Others have discussed the significance of spreading the hands as a Hebrew gesture of prayer.[35] However, juxtaposing the example in Isaiah 1:15 with that of God spreading his hands in Isaiah 65:2 raises the interesting question of

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even this form of contact would have been considered beneficial for the one performing the gesture, since it would imply some degree of favor and privilege in the sight of the high-status recipient. Following my oral presentation of an earlier version of this paper, John Thompson pointed out to me a connection with Genesis 3:14, in which the serpent in the Garden of Eden is said to "go on his belly" (cf. prostration) and "eat the dust" (cf. licking the dust of the feet). The imagery of going on the belly and being crushed under the feet compare well with Egyptian representations showing chiefs of some of the same nations mentioned in these chapters of Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 45:14) being dominated by the king of Egypt. A thorough study pursuing these connections would be very interesting.

34. For more discussion of this and related gestures, one may consult Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 90–346.

35. See Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 25–32, 41–44; also note 3 above. Passages mentioning this gesture include Exodus 9:29, 33; 1 Kings 8:22, 38, 54; Psalm 44:21–22; Job 11:13–15; Ezra 9:5; 2 Chronicles 6:12–13 (*bis*), 29–30. All of these examples use the Qal stem of the verb, פָּרַשׂ "spread." Instances using the Piel stem פֵּרַשׂ are rarer; aside from the examples in Isaiah 1:15 and 65:1–2, see Jeremiah 4:31; Psalm 143:6; and Lamentations 1:17. Isaiah 25:10–11 uses this idiom to refer to a swimmer spreading his hands to swim.

how these gestures might relate to one another. It is noteworthy that in both passages, the gesture phrase is parallel to a speech act: prayer in Isaiah 1:15, and saying "Here I am, here I am!" in Isaiah 65:1–2.

I would suggest that both gestures, people spreading the palms in prayer and God spreading the hands to his people, are gestures that symbolically seek to establish contact with the other.[36] A very common, if not universal, gesture used by young children is that of stretching out the hands toward a parent, communicating a desire to be picked up.[37] Parents use a similar gesture of reaching out toward a child, and children recognize this as an invitation to come and be held.

In close proximity to these passages mentioning spreading the hands or palms, at opposite ends of the book of Isaiah, are passages mentioning a father to child relationship between God and his people:

> Hear, O heavens; listen, O earth; for God has spoken: "I have raised and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me!" (Isaiah 1:2).

> He (God) said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; then he became their Savior (Isaiah 63:8).

> For you are our Father, for Abraham did not know us, and Israel was not acquainted with us (Isaiah 63:16).

> Now, Yahweh, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our Potter; we are the work of your hands (Isaiah 64:7 [four verses before 65:1]).

Given these references to kinship between God and his people occurring in the same literary contexts as the gestures of spreading the hands or palms, it is possible to suggest that the gestures themselves have some connection with this kinship relationship. In both cases, the context makes it clear that the relationship of kinship has been severed or hurt through the rebellion of the child. The gestures may express a desire to renew or reaffirm the parent-child relationship through contact. In both instances, however, this purpose fails; contact is not achieved, for God averts his eyes from the gesture of his rebellious children in Isaiah 1:15, and Israel does not heed God's gesture in Isaiah 65:1–2.

IV. Conclusions

I have presented evidence for the existence of an ancient Israelite symbolic pattern, namely that physical contact between people was symbolically associated with kinship, while gestures that did not involve contact and could be performed at a distance were associated with non-kin, generally politically based relationships. I have also touched on another pattern, that of high or low physical position being associated with relatively high or low status.

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36. Cf. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 322.

37. It is interesting that the gesture of spreading the hands in both Jeremiah 4:31 and Psalm 143:6 is accompanied by a prayer mentioning the speaker's thirst; this could invoke the image of a nursing child wanting to breastfeed, or perhaps that of an older child appealing to a parent for a drink.

These symbolic patterns may also be found in the semantics of Biblical Hebrew. Some uses of words from the roots רחק "be distant," קרב "be near," and דבק "cling" show a metaphorical extension to include concepts of relative social proximity and kinship.[38] The roots רום "be high" and שפל "be low" also show a connection between relative height and relative status.[39]

It is interesting that some contact gestures seem to create a new relationship where one did not exist before. This is the case with Yahweh grasping the hand of his chosen; it is also the case with the recipient of prostration equalizing the status between participants by embracing and/ or kissing the one performing prostration. In all the examples of this use of contact gestures to create a new relationship, the one performing the gesture is of higher status, and it is possible that only one of higher status has the prerogative of offering kinship or equal status to another. In cases where the one performing the gesture is of lower status, such as grasping the hand of a parent and licking the dust of the feet in prostration, the gesture has a different character, presupposing rather than creating a relationship with the recipient.[40]

It is hoped that this study will prompt further investigations into the "grammar" of gestures mentioned in scripture. This is a neglected area of study that has great potential to deepen our understanding of these texts and of the cultures that produced them.

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38. See Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 179–80, 897–98, 934–35.

39. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 926–29, 1050.

40. Cf. Michael Silverstein, "Shifters, Linguistic Categories and Cultural Description," in Ben G. Blount, ed., *Language, Culture, and Society: A Book of Readings*, 2nd edition (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1995), 187–221, on 204–6. The indexical properties of language discussed by Silverstein are also relevant to nonverbal signs, including gestures.

GIVE ME BACK MY IDOL:
INVESTIGATING THE DATING OF ENUMA ELISH

E. ODIN YINGLING

E. Odin Yingling is an ancient Near Eastern studies major, with an emphasis in the Greek New Testament.

On December 3, 1872, George Smith announced the discovery of cuneiform tablets that contained 1,100 poetic lines scholars called "The Babylonian Epic of Creation."[1] However, the Babylonians and Assyrians knew the poem as *Enuma elish* ("When above").[2] Sir Austin Henry Layard initially located four tablets in the library of Ashurbanipal (668–626 B.C.E.).[3] Later, the tablets were brought to the British Museum and translated by Smith in 1876. The subsequent publication would cause decades of theological battle and were known as the "Babel-Bible controversy."[4] Parallels between the two creation stories and their implications fueled the debate. The controversy propelled subsequent archaeological digs, which unearthed many more tablets. In all, the complete account of *Enuma elish* is divided into seven sections/tablets.

Enuma Elish: Preliminary Scholarly Discussion and Thesis

Formerly, scholars dated the poem's origin earlier than 2000 B.C.E.[5] However, consensus points to a later date put forth by scholars such as W. G. Lambert[6] (1126–1105 B.C.E.), Thorkild Jacobsen[7] and Alexander Heidel[8] (1500–1400 B.C.E.), and W. von Soden[9] (1894–1595 B.C.E.). This paper agrees

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1. William Notz, "The Babel-Bible Controversy," *BSac* 68.269 (1911): 641–57.

2. Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1951), 1.

3. Morris Jastrow, "The Hebrew and Babylonian Accounts of Creation," *JQR* 13.4 (1901): 620–54.

4. Notz, "The Babel-Bible Controversy," 642. The debate was so popular at the time that all classes of society became embroiled in the conflict. Interestingly, Germany built a Babel-Bible library at this time.

5. Jastrow, "The Hebrew and Babylonian Accounts of Creation," 622.

6. W.G. Lambert, "The Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I: A Turning Point in the History of Ancient Mesopotamian Religion," in *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of T.J. Meek* (ed. W.S. McCullough; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 6.

7. Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1976), 165–67.

8. Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*, 14.

9. Wolfram von Soden, "Der hymnisch-epische Dialekt des Akkadischen," *Zeitschrift*

with Lambert in asserting that *Enuma elish* in its complete form was originally composed after the return of the statue of Marduk from Elam. The article advances new evidence based on internal evidence within *Enuma elish*.

Before engaging fully in this topic, some parameters must be established. Though the dating of *Enuma elish* has bearing on understanding historical issues dealing with the Hebrew Bible, this paper will solely focus on *Enuma elish* and not on parallels with the Genesis narrative. Also, this paper will be restricted to historical and textual evidence rather than the philological approach put forth by scholars such as von Soden and Jacobsen.[10] In addition, something must be said about the challenges in matching literary compositions with historical activity. Because we do not have the original copies of *Enuma elish*, the process of ascertaining exactly when the document was originally composed can be problematic. Furthermore, the period we are examining is riddled with textual and archeological gaps that are difficult to fill in. Additionally, even the most scientific approach can still be debated and, in the end, is subjective.

The majority of the tablets of "The Epic of Creation" have been dated from 750 to 200 B.C.E., with four fragmented copies from Assur dating to approximately 900 B.C.E. In reality, the so-called "Epic of Creation" is a misnomer and, according to Benjamin Foster, might be called "The Exaltation of Marduk."[11] In fact, most of the text does not focus on creation but on Marduk's rise to kingship over the Babylonian pantheon. Therefore, the composition of *Enuma elish* is inextricably linked with the rise to power of Marduk in the Babylonian pantheon. Consequently, this paper will follow the history of the rise of Marduk as a framework upon which to draw conclusions, using a chronology that moves from early possibilities to later ones.

Early Chronology Composition Theory: The Accession of Hammurabi (1792)

Marduk first appeared as an inconsequential god in the Sumerian pantheon around 3000 B.C.E.[12] Lambert states that although Babylon rose to prominence during the early years of the Babylonian dynasty its patron god Marduk remained relatively insignificant.[13] However, during the reign of Hammurabi Marduk was made the national god. All this attention to Marduk was fertile ground for a composition such as *Enuma elish*, in which the gods loudly proclaim the epic's purpose, "Marduk is king" (*Epic* 4:25). Hammurabi took both Babylon and Marduk from obscurity to prominence. Because of Hammurabi's influence, Heidel favors a dating during his reign. Heidel believes that the Babylonians promoted Marduk to the head of the pantheon in order to establish ideological and political dominance over rival cities.[14] In fact, the code

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für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete 41 (1933): 90–181.

10. For a linguistic analysis see: von Soden, "Der hymnisch-epische Dialekt des Akkadischen," 177–81. Also see: Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, 165–67.

11. Benjamin Foster, "Epic of Creation," in William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger Jr., eds., *The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, (3 vols.; Boston: Brill, 2003), 391. The translation used in this article will be based off their translation, see 1:391–402.

12. John D. Pleins, "Marduk," *ABD* 4:522–23.

13. Lambert, "Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I," 6.

14. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis,* 14; see also: Amelie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*

of Hammurabi asserts Marduk's new authority by saying: "[Enlil] committed the sovereignty over all the people to Marduk; . . . they made him great among the Igigi; . . . they made [his name] unsurpassable in the regions of the world; . . . they established for him an everlasting kingdom whose foundations are as firm as heaven and earth."[15]

By analyzing the code of Hammurabi, it becomes clear that Marduk is receiving absolute dominion. Marduk's name is completely "unsurpassable," and he is ranked among the Igigi gods. Heidel suggests the above passage from Hammurabi's code is evidence that Marduk was made head of the pantheon during the reign of Hammurabi. The only problem with Heidel's assertion is that it contradicts the internal evidence found in *Enuma elish.* First, in the epic Marduk's absolute dominion is not over "the people" but over the gods.[16] Marduk bargains with the other gods, giving them protection from Tiamat in return for autocracy. The gods agree and state that they will let Marduk "ordain destinies instead of [themselves]" (*Epic* 3:120). Second, Marduk is not just great *among* the Igigi gods but is told by them:

A) You are the *most important* among the great gods,

B) your destiny is *unrivalled*, your command is *supreme*.

A) O Marduk, you are the *most important* among the great gods,

B) your destiny is *unrivalled*, your command is *supreme*! (*Epic* 4:1–5, emphasis added)

The composers of *Enuma elish* did not think that Marduk was just a fellow brother among the gods but rather the supreme ruler.[17] Memorably, the authors of *Enuma elish* made sure to underscore the ideology of Marduk's unrivalled godly kingship by using dual sets of poetic repetition. The authors probably wanted Marduk's exalted status among the gods to be remembered. Most likely, Hammurabi's priests would not have composed an epic focusing on Marduk's kingship over the gods, when he was considered in Hammurabi's code to be a ruler over only the people, not the gods. Furthermore, Hammurabi's code was not composed until his fortieth regnal year, and he died in his forty-second regnal year.[18] Therefore, there is not much of a possibility for any later ideological shift concerning Marduk's kingship during the reign of Hammurabi. In the end, because Marduk was not made king *over* the gods during the reign of Hammurabi, *Enuma elish* most likely was not composed during his reign.

(2 vols.; London: Routledge, 1995), 1:111. After Hammurabi's defeat of Rim-Sin of Larsa (1763 B.C.E.) Hammurabi conquered, Isin, Uruk, Ur, Nippur, Larsa, Eshnunna, and Mari. His territory became so big that it resembled the Ur III empire. This created a need to assert Babylon's religious prominence, and unify the empire ideologically, and thus politically. Hammurabi (who appointed cultic leaders) would have had no better time to influence the priests to compose *Enuma elish.* 111.

15. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*, 14.

16. Lambert, "Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I," 5 expresses that making Marduk king of the gods, when he is only mentioned as a ruler over the people is simply "not sound exegesis."

17. Lambert, "Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I," 5.

18. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:111.

Middle Chronology Composition Theories

After the death of Hammurabi, Babylon gradually lost its prominence. In a period of only twenty years after the death of Hammurabi, Babylon had lost control over Mari and within eighty years had lost the plentiful southern territories which gave them access to the Persian Gulf sea trade. The slow process of decline in Babylon continued until it was sacked by the Hittite king Mursili I in 1595 B.C.E.[19] Upon taking Babylon, Mursili removed the statue of Marduk and took it to Hatti. The statue of Marduk was gone from Babylon twenty-four years before being returned.[20] The perfect time for creating *Enuma elish* might have been when Marduk returned to Babylon. However, according to Lambert an analysis of date formulae, deity names, royal inscriptions, and literary works still reveal that Enlil was worshipped as the head god.[21] And though some may say that in Hammurabi's code Enlil had already handed over sovereignty to Marduk over the people, Enlil still retained his position over the gods themselves.

The next possible date of composition for *Enuma elish* is found in the inscription of Agum II (fifteenth century B.C.E.). Scholars have noted similar parallels between this inscription and *Enuma elish*. Heidel even claims that *Enuma elish* inspired parts of the inscription of Agum II. The inscription mentions Marduk's temple filled with monsters, which are similar to those that Marduk battles within the epic. Heidel believes that because the monsters are located in the same temple as Marduk, *Enuma elish* must have inspired this motif. He names the following monsters: the viper, bison, great lion, mad dog, dragonfly, and goat fish. The evidence is intriguing, considering that the inscription tells of the restoration of the statues of Marduk. Initially, Heidel's evidence seems to hint that the epic was composed during the fifteenth century. However, internal evidence in *Enuma elish* seems to weaken Heidel's argument. *Enuma elish* describes Tiamat's monsters as "serpents, dragons, and hairy hero men, Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men, Mighty demons, fish men, and bull men" (*Epic* 3:89–90). Parallels with *Enuma elish* can be matched with all of "Agum's monsters" except the goat-fish. Furthermore, the inscription of Agum leaves out many of Tiamat's most potent allies, which include fish men, mighty demons, scorpion men, and especially hairy hero men. Though there is some overlap between the two texts, there seem to be more dissimilarities than similarities. It would be difficult to prove with any certainty a connection to *Enuma elish*. Also, Heidel admits in his footnotes that I. J. Gelb has explained that the inscription of Agum is a possible forgery. He states, "if the Agum inscription proves to be a forgery, [then my] . . . argument falls to the ground."[22] In the end an argument for a fifteenth-century composition of *Enuma elish* is to questionable to be relied upon.

Another possible date for the composition of *Enuma elish* is the time of the Babylonian ruler Adad-shuma-user (1216–1187 B.C.E.). Adad-shuma-user was able to successfully conquer Enlil-kudurri-usur (1197–1193 B.C.E.), king

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19. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:116.
20. J.J.M. Roberts, "Nebuchadnezzar I's Elamite Crisis in Theological Perspective," in *Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts & Sciences: Essays on the Ancient Near East in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein*, ed. Maria de Jong Ellis; 19 (1977): 184.
21. Lambert, "Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I," 6.
22. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*, 14.

of Assyria. The Babylonians had been under Assyrian hegemony since Tukulti-Ninurta I sacked Babylon in 1229 B.C.E. Texts indicate that it was during this time that Tukulti-Ninurta I took the statue of Marduk from Babylon. If this account is true, a return of the statue would definitely spark ideas for an *Enuma elish* composition.[23] Contrary to this dating scheme is the possibility that the account is a possible seventh-century forgery.[24] Also, other texts during Tukulti-Ninurta's reign do not mention removing the statue. In addition, the text places the theft of Marduk's statue during a time when the Elamites had possession of the statue. Likewise, the Elamite pillage is "well attested."[25] Consequently, we cannot place a date for the composition of *Enuma Elish* during the reign of Adad-shuma-user.

Later Chronology Theories

Because of the challenges with earlier dating models, Lambert dates the composition of *Enuma elish* after Nebuchadnezzar I (1126–1105 B.C.E.) conquers Elam and subsequently reclaims the statue of Marduk.[26] Lambert notes that the personal name "Marduk-is-king-of-the gods" appears earlier during the reign of Kudur-Enlil (1254–1246 B.C.E.) but is very rare.[27] To specify the dating, he argues that *Enuma elish* could not have been composed during Kassite rule because of their allegiance to *Samas* and *Enlil*.[28] Most likely, *Enuma elish* was composed after Kassite rule. So far, Lambert's reasoning appears to be very sound, but he does not elaborate any further. An additional look at the internal textual evidence in *Enuma elish* brings further insights.

New Insights into the Early Chronology Composition

In general, the epic seems to mimic the conflict with Elam (i.e., Elam and its forces represent Tamiat and her forces). For example, Shilhak-Inshushinak had retained the eastern fringe of Mesopotamia, which he had received from his father Kudur-Nahhunte, and Babylon had been subjected to many "devastating Elamite invasions."[29] This point in time was obviously not a comfortable one for Babylonia. Roberts points to a text that describes a valiant Nebuchadnezzar persuading his terrified nobles to face Elam.[30] Similarly, the epic describes the god Anshar's fear of Tiamiat's legions when "he cried out 'Woe!'; he bit his lip, . . . his mind was uneasy, his cries to Ea his offspring grew choked [and he said], where is one who can face [Tiamat]" (*Epic* 2:50). On the other hand, Marduk (just like Nebuchadnezzar) shows no fear as he valiantly faces "countless invincible weapons" (*Epic* 3:130). Although Marduk is supreme throughout the epic, there is a point where "his tactic turned to confusion, his reason was overthrown, his actions panicky" (*Epic* 3:66). Marduk obviously had some major setbacks before his victory. Interestingly, this is exactly the pic-

23. Roberts, "Nebuchadnezzar I's Elamite Crisis in Theological Perspective," 184.
24. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:356.
25. Ibid.
26. W.G. Lambert, "*Enuma Elish*," *ABD* 2:527.
27. Lambert, "Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I," 8.
28. Ibid.
29. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:375.
30. Roberts, "Nebuchadnezzar I's Elamite Crisis in Theological Perspective," 184.

ture we see happening in the historical documents that describe Babylon's attack against Elam. "The finest of the powerful horses gave out, the legs of even the strong man faltered," but in the end "Nebuchadnezzar presses on, nor has he rival. He does not fear the difficult terrain."[31] Just as Nebuchadnezzar in the end defeats the dreadful foe Elam, so Marduk "Subdued [Tiamat] and snuffed out her life" (*Epic* 4:100). The climax of the conquest in Elam is the return of the statue of Marduk to his temple, and Babylon became the "royal capital *par excellence*" the "eternal and holy city."[32] Consequently, a new year's celebration was integrated in which the other holy statues from other cities were gathered in submission to Babylon. *Enuma elish* was recited, and all the people paid absolute homage to Marduk. This image seems to be represented figuratively in the epic. For example, in the epic Babylon is described as the first and most important city on earth. In addition, all the gods are gathered together to the Marduk's temple to worship him.

Taking the previously mentioned evidence into consideration, the evidence previous to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I has too many difficulties to place any date with certainty. However, it seems that the name "Marduk is King of the Gods" was in existence during the reign of Kudur-Enlil (1254–1246 B.C.E.). At the earliest, the first solid evidence indicates that *Enuma elish* in its entirety was probably composed after Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Elam (1126–1105 B.C.E.). Lastly, *Enuma elish* in its entirety was probably created precisely to commemorate Babylon's victory over Elam and to reconfirm their religious preeminence.

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31. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:376.
32. Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:378.

JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE QUMRAN CONNECTION

ALAN TAYLOR FARNES

Alan Taylor Farnes is an ancient Near Eastern studies major, with an emphasis in the Greek New Testament.

A few words sprinkled in the New Testament lead many to theorize that John the Baptist[1] was a member of the community at Qumran.[2] This community was an ascetic group who, frustrated with the priesthood at Jerusalem, moved to Qumran during the second century B.C.E. to live there more purely. They also took upon themselves special dietary, clothing, ritual, and other practices. However, it is what is not stated in the New Testament that leads to the downpour of theorizing. The New Testament does not give us clues about the preministerial whereabouts of John the Baptist. John's interesting appropriation of Isaiah 40:3 has led scholars to wonder where John was raised and if it is possible to conclude that he was raised among the Qumranites. This paper wades through the debates and shows a possible interpretation.

Currently, scholars are divided on this topic. Examples of these opinions include the following: "I completely reject the simplistic assumption that. . . John the Baptist was actually a member of the sect."[3] "Today no one would dare state . . . that John was an Essene."[4] "John could have been a member

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1. I will use the term "Baptist" in my own writing, whereas the term "Baptizer" may be used in quoting the works of other authors. The two terms may be used interchangeably.

2. This paper operates on the debatable assumption that those who dwelled at Qumran were the Essenes. For insight into that debate, see Edna Ullmann-Margalit, "Spotlight on Scroll Scholars: Dissecting the Qumran-Essene Hypothesis," *BAR* 34.2 (March-April 2008): 63–67, 86; the whole of Gabrielle Bobbaccini's *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (ed. Gabrielle Boccaccini; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Albert I. Baumgarten, "Who Cares and Why Does It Matter? Qumran and the Essenes, Once Again!" *DSD* 11.2 (2004): 174–90; Geza Vermes, *Scrolls, Scriptures and Early Christianity* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 39–43; and many others.

3. Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1994), 404.

4. Julio Trebolle Barrera, "The Qumran Texts and the New Testament," in *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez and Julio Trebolle Barrera; trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 205. I offer yet another example of a scholar unequivocally denying the possibility of John being connected to Qumran: "John the Baptist was neither an Essene nor a spiritual pupil of the Essenes. Were he ever to have made the effort to walk over to Qumran, as a non-Essene he would have been denied entry, and at best

of the Qumran Community. There is nothing to deny this possibility."[5] "While the argument cannot be proved that John the Baptist was associated with the Essenes at Qumran, his circumstances certainly are suggestive."[6] Upon analyzing the possibilities, I conclude that John was adopted by the Qumranites at a young age, raised by them at Qumran, went through the initiatory processes but did not entirely complete them, and either left voluntarily or was expelled. He was therefore forced to subsist on food he could find on his own and clothes he could make himself. However, his beliefs and practices, as they differ from the Qumranites, are a result of the prophetic mantle placed upon him.

Heinrich Graetz, writing his *History of the Jews* in the nineteenth century, was the first to speak on this debate. Graetz claims that John was the Essene who prepared the way of the Lord.[7] He gives many reasons why he believes John was an Essene, many of which are questionable today. Nevertheless, Graetz was the first to begin the discussion. Since his writings, scholars have continued to debate whether or not we can conclude that John was indeed a Qumranite.

Despite being in disagreement to the idea of John being a Qumranite, two of the three scholars cited above soften their view to allow for some possibilities. First, Julio T. Barrera: "The fact that, according to the gospel of Luke (1:80), John lived 'in the desert' until the time to begin his own mission, could refer to this [John having spent some time among the Essenes]."[8] He even allows exactly what I am arguing: "if John did belong to the Qumran community, he must have left it at a certain moment to follow his own path."[9] To support this statement, he parallels John's interpretation of Isaiah 40:3 in John 1:23 with 1QS VIII 12–16:

"A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'" (Isa 40:3).

"And when these become members of the Community is Israel according to all these rules, they shall separate from the habitation of unjust men and shall go into the wilderness to prepare there the way of Him; as it is written, *Prepare in the wilderness the way of . . .* , *make straight in the desert a path for our God* (Isa. xl, 3)" (1QS VIII 12–16).[10]

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provided with enough food and drink for the long walk back." Hartmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 225.

5. William Sanford LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 152.

6. Andrew C. Skinner, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the World of Jesus," *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 2 (2010): 57.

7. Graetz even believes that John means Essene: "The Essene who sent forth this call to the Israelites was John the Baptist (his name doubtless meaning the Essene, he who daily bathed and cleansed both body and soul in spring water)." Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (6 vols.; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1893), 2:145–46.

8. Barrera, "Qumran Texts and the New Testament," 205.

9. Ibid.

10. This paper employs the translation by Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin, 1962). Emphasis in original shows that the emphasized section is quoting scripture. The ellipsis is to avoid using the tetragrammaton—the name of the Lord.

"He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"' as the prophet Isaiah said" (John 1:23).

He then compares the baptismal rites of both John and the Qumranites and finds similarities and differences. He even parallels John's use of the Spirit in Luke 3:16 with 1QS IV 20–21:[11]

"God will then purify every deed of man with His truth; He will refine for Himself the human frame by rooting out all spirit of injustice from the bounds of his flesh. He will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the spirit of holiness; like purifying waters He will shed upon him the spirit of truth (to cleanse him) of all abomination and injustice" (1QS IV 20–21).

"John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire'" (Luke 3:16).

However, in the end he concludes that due to the Qumranites' "closed and sectarian spirit,"[12] John "could not have been at home"[13] in such a community that forcefully rejected the very priestly line that his family hailed from. This may be true, but it is also possible that, rejecting the Hasmonean priesthood in the Jerusalem temple, Zacharias and Elisabeth would not have wanted their son John to be raised in such an environment but would rather have their son among the priestly elite at Qumran.

André Dupont-Sommer rejected the possibility of any connection between John and the Qumranites, claiming that John's baptism was referred to as the baptism of *John,* not the baptism of the Qumranites.[14] It is true that there are differences between John's baptism and that of the Qumranites. For example, John's baptism was performed only once for each believer, whereas the Qumranites practiced frequent, even daily, baptisms. Furthermore, John's baptism was for a remission of sins whereas the Qumranites' baptism was for ritual and purification purposes.

James H. Charlesworth asserts that he is "convinced that the similarities between John the Baptizer and the Qumranites are too impressive to be dismissed as merely an example of a shared milieu."[15] Charlesworth then gives five "striking points of similarity:"[16]

1. Both John and the Qumranites come from similar geographical locations.[17]

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11. Both references portray a peculiar belief in the Holy Ghost that was previously rare.

12. Barrera, "Qumran Texts and the New Testament," 206.

13. Ibid.

14. "He was an independent prophet, and the baptism which he administered was properly 'the baptism of John.'" André Dupont-Sommer, *The Jewish Sect of Qumran and of the Essenes* (trans. R. D. Barnett; London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co., 1953), 149.

15. James H. Charlesworth, "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community,*" in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Donald W. Parry and Eugene Charles Ulrich; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 356.

16. Charlesworth, "Baptizer," 357.

17. Also, Skinner: "John comes preaching in the wilderness of Judea—the very

2. "They both share a preference for prophecy, especially Isaiah."[18] Here Charlesworth comments on the connections with Isaiah 40:3.

3. They both used water as a means of expiation.

4. Both were eschatological.

5. Both were ascetic and even celibate. He concludes by saying that "John the Baptizer was one who refused full initiation because of the institutionalized hatred of all who were not within the community."[19]

William LaSor argues that that Josephus never mentions John growing up with the Qumranites.[20] This is a classic argument from silence. LaSor also states that John could not have been a Qumranite because he did not wear the white linen of the Qumranites. This is easily solvable: if John was expelled from the Qumranites, he would have been excluded from wearing their sacred raiment and would have been forced to make his own. In effect, anyone who has left the Qumran community is thereafter a Son of Darkness and is anathema to the Sons of Light. Concerning the exclusion of those who stray from the path, *The Community Rule* states, "And no man among the members of the Covenant of the Community who deliberately, on any point whatever, turns aside from all that is commanded, shall touch the pure Meal of the men of holiness or know anything of their counsel until his deeds are purified from all injustice and he walks in perfection of way" (1QS VIII 16–19). Also, the whole of 1QS VII outlines the punishments of those who commit a sin in the eyes of the Qumranites. One particularly interesting rule in this section reads, "Whoever has murmured against the authority of the Community shall be expelled and shall not return" (1QS VII 17). Most of the other laws require the perpetrator to do penance or be cut off from the meal of the community, but "murmuring against the authority of the community" will get one expelled without possibility of reacceptance. Perhaps this was John's situation. If so, he would be cut off from the community—even to the point that no member of the community is allowed to share food or property with him: "Moreover, if any member of the Community has shared with him his food or property which . . . of the Congregation, his sentence shall be the same; he shall be ex[pelled]" (1QS VII 26–27). Therefore, John could not wear the linens of the Essenes because he had been cut off from the community.

One major piece of evidence supporting that John was indeed a Qumranite is found in Josephus, who wrote of the Essenes, "They neglect wedlock, but choose other persons' children, while they are yet pliable, and fit for learning; and esteem them to be of their own kindred, and form them according to their own manners."[21] From this quote we can theorize that John was adopted by the Qumranites while still young. Many scholars have affirmed the notion that John was adopted.[22] Perhaps due to Zacharias' and Elisabeth's

location of the Dead Sea Scroll community." "World of Jesus," 57.

18. Ibid.

19. Charlesworth, "Baptizer," 375.

20. Both the white linen and Josephus' forgetfulness are herein contained: LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, 146.

21. Josephus, *Wars*, 2.8.2.

22. One being A. S. Geyser: "We can now assume with comparative certainty that John was brought up by the Essenes of the non-marrying type, who, according to Josephus, supplemented their numbers by adopting the children of others and forming them to their doctrines while they were still pliable." "The Youth of John the Baptist: A Deduction from

advanced age, their death, or other circumstances, he was adopted out to live at Qumran.

A. S. Geyser uses the Lucan Infancy Accounts and the break therein to show that Luke records all events of John's life in parallel with the events of Jesus' life. He shows that the break in the record excludes the *bar mitzvah* of John, whereas Luke includes an account of the *bar mitzvah* of Jesus. Therefore, Geyser claims that John must have been adopted before the age of twelve. He continues that the very fact that Luke included everything about John's upbringing and then is suddenly silent about his whereabouts while he was "in the wilderness" (Luke 1:80) gives away that John was indeed an Qumranite.[23]

Another piece of evidence supporting a connection between John and the Qumranites is that they both were communally exclusive.[24] In the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find a long recitation cursing "the men of the lot of Belial,"[25] which includes all of the Sons of Darkness or anyone not a Qumranite. The Qumranites closely followed a doctrine of hate and exclusion.[26] They were very eschatological and knew that all must have a judgment: if a man was a Qumranite, then he was saved; if he was a Son of Darkness, he was damned. We see that John, though not as extreme, held a similar belief. He believed that all were sinners and in need of repentance and baptism. At this time in Judean history to become a Jew, only Gentiles were baptized to wash away their defilement, but John proclaimed that *all* were in need of baptism—even Abraham's sons! (see Luke 3:8).

Even though John did believe in exclusion to a degree, it was this very

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the Break in the Parallel Account of the Lucan Infancy Story," *NovT* 1 (Jan. 1956): 71. Another is W. S. LaSor: "If John went to the wilderness when he was yet a very young boy, it is obvious that he had to be in someone's care. Scholars have suggested that his parents placed him in the custody of the Qumran 'Essenes,' reminding us of Josephus' statement." *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, 146.

23. "Luke . . . avoided all mention of the Movement of Disciples of John the Baptist, although we know from the patres that they existed and we can surmise from the Fourth Gospel that they constituted a real danger for the Jesus disciples. . . . In like manner, Luke, in common with the rest of the New Testament, avoided scrupulously to mention the Essenes, although we know from Josephus, Philo, Pliny, and the Sadokite Fragments that they numbered thousands . . . . By . . . excising only that part which appertains to the Youth of John the Baptist, Luke unwittingly tells us who it was that formed this strange forerunner of Jesus." "Youth of John the Baptist," 74–75.

24. The whole of this article supports my claim: James H. Charlesworth, "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community*." *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (1999): 353–75. Also, LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, 149.

25. "And the Levites shall curse all the men of the lot of Satan, saying: 'Be cursed because of all your guilty wickedness! May He deliver you up for torture at the hands of the vengeful Avengers! May He visit you with destruction by the hand of all the Wreakers of Revenge! Be cursed without mercy because of the darkness of your deeds! Be damned in the shadowy place of everlasting fire! May God not heed when you call on Him, nor pardon you by blotting out your sin! May He raise His angry face towards you for vengeance! May there be no "Peace" for you in the mouth of those who hold fast to the Fathers!" 1QS II 4–10.

26. Hate and exclusion, even between the classes within Qumran, is shown vividly by Josephus: "So far are the juniors inferior to the seniors, that if the seniors should be touched by the juniors, they must wash themselves, as if they had intermixed themselves with the company of a foreigner." *Wars*, 2.8.10.

doctrine that may have led him to eventually leave Qumran.[27] In addition to the doctrine of exclusion, it was the Qumranite doctrine of double predestination that was something that John could simply not swallow. As he joined the recitations of Qumran, he would have felt comfortable with the recitations concerning the enumeration of sins[28] and the Aaronic Blessing,[29] but it is obvious that he would not have felt comfortable reciting the aforementioned cursing of the sons of Belial. John simply did not believe that God had elected all who would be saved and damned the rest. He could not have believed that his father and mother—and all those he knew in Jerusalem—would be damned. Further, if he accepted this doctrine, he would have also been forced to accept that Jesus the Christ himself was a Son of Darkness! Rather, John believed that all should repent and be baptized (see Luke 3:8).

It is my opinion that John stayed for more than one year of the Qumranite two-year induction process. *The Community Rule* VI outlines the initiatory process. Anyone who would like to join is examined by the Guardian and then the Congregation. If admitted, he is not able to eat of the meal of the community nor take part in the possessions of the community for the first year, but he retains his own possessions (see 1QS VI 20). Then, upon reexamination after the first year, he is admitted into the community, surrenders all of his possessions, and undergoes a year with almost full membership. After examination after two years, he is admitted as a full member. Therefore, it seems likely that John stayed the first year and surrendered all of his possessions but did not complete his second-year review. This may have been due to his inability and refusal to denounce all who were not Qumranites. Therefore, he either voluntarily left the group or was expelled. This departure or expulsion, after spending so much time as a Qumranite, answers many questions concerning John's life: Why did John dress the way he did? Why did he eat the way he did? Why did he not go back to Jerusalem and take part in the priestly order there? Where did he go after he left Qumran? Josephus reminds us that, in ancient days, once a covenant was entered into, it was never broken—even if the covenant maker no longer believed in the covenant.[30] John made certain covenants, and he would never break them even if he became disenchanted with the Qumranites. Therefore, John would have been bound to follow the oath stating that no food may be given to an expelled Qumranite. More encompassing, he would have held to the oath stating that no goods may be given to an expelled Qumranite, including clothing.[31] Therefore, John made

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27. Again, the whole of Charlesworth's article supports my claim, "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community*," 353–75.

28. "And after them, all those entering the Covenant shall confess and say: 'We have strayed! We have [disobeyed!] We and our fathers before us have sinned and done wickedly in walking [counter to the precepts] of truth and righteousness." 1QS I 21–25.

29. "And the Priests shall bless all the men of the lot of God who walk perfectly in all His ways, saying: 'May He bless you with all good and preserve you from all evil! May he lighten your heart with life-giving wisdom and grant you eternal knowledge! May He raise His merciful face towards you for everlasting bliss!'" 1QS II 1–4.

30. Concerning those who are expelled from the Essenes Josephus writes: "As he is bound by the oath he has taken." *Wars*, 2.8.8.

31. The following is all encompassing: "And the person among the Community who fraternizes with (an expelled Essene) in concerns of purity or goods, who [. . .] the Many, and

his own clothes and lived on whatever food he could find in the Judean Desert: locusts and wild honey. In addition, after leaving the priestly class in Jerusalem, in a sense denouncing it for its apostasy, he could not return. Therefore, because John was alone in the world, he went on the east side of Jordan and preached there.

In conclusion, there is strong evidence that John was indeed a Qumranite, brought up at Qumran after being adopted. He was either expelled or voluntarily left before completing the two-year initiatory process and lived on his own in the Judean wilderness on the east side of the Jordan River, making his own clothes, and eating whatever he could find. For some differences between John and the Qumranites, be it in belief or practice, we have only one answer, asserted by LaSor: "How the Spirit works we do not know. We have enough records of men who claimed that they were, or were believed by others to have been, filled with the Spirit, that we can make a few observations. The Spirit uses holy men; the Spirit makes use of contemporary situations; the Spirit particularly works through the scriptures. We find in John something of each of these elements."[32]

Truly, John, as any prophet ever has been, was immersed in the Spirit (see Matthew 11:11), and any differences between his doctrine and that of the Qumranites—such as the manner of baptism or the need for missionary work—were likely taught to John by the Spirit.

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his sentence will be like his, he shall be exp[elled.]" Therefore we see that not only can an expelled Essene not take food, clothing or anything, but the Essene offering the goods would be expelled as well. 1QS VII 26–27.

32.   LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, 153.

BOOK REVIEWS

COLLINS, JOHN J., and DANIEL C. HARLOW, *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010. Pp xxxvii + 1360. Hardcover. $95. ISBN: 9780802825490.

The recently released *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (*DEJ*) constitutes a major effort on the part of its editors, contributing editors, and contributing authors whose collaboration produced this significant reference work that was some time in the making. The *DEJ* is the first dictionary dealing primarily with the period of Judaism alternately referred to as "Second Temple Judaism," "Early Judaism," and, formerly and somewhat misleadingly, "Late Judaism." More specifically, it covers the period between Alexander the Great's conquests in the fourth century BCE and the Bar Kokhba Revolt in the second century C.E. The *DEJ* includes 520 entries from 270 authors (including BYU's own Donald W. Parry and David Rolph Seely) who have researched, published, and are generally considered authorities on their topics. The editors, likewise, are prolific scholars of a range of Early Jewish topics. John J. Collins is the Holmes Professor of Old Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale Divinity School. He is widely published in several areas, including apocalypticism, Hellenistic Judaism, wisdom literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Daniel C. Harlow is a professor of early Judaism and Christianity at Calvin College, and has published on, among other things, the history and literature of early Judaism, Judaism and the context of the New Testament, and early Jewish and Christian apocalypses. The contributing editors are likewise eminent specialists in early Jewish topics, and include, among others, Shaye J. D. Cohen, Erich S. Gruen, Lawrence A. Schiffman, and James C. VanderKam. The caliber of scholarship and the careful attention to organization in this volume make it a welcome addition to any reference library.

Included in this reference work are some 290 pages of essays dealing with broader salient issues in early Judaism to introduce and contextualize the narrower and more concise individual dictionary entries. John J. Collins's introductory essay, "Early Judaism in Modern Scholarship," serves as both a general introduction to scholarship of the period and as an introduction to the book. It lays out the major issues in their breadth to support the depth

of the individual entries and helps the reader orient her- or himself to the topics covered. In addition, twelve other essays are devoted to major themes in early Judaism such as Jewish history, Judaism in both the land of Israel and in the Diaspora, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the relationship between early Judaism and early Christianity, and Dead Sea Scrolls. These essays are a useful point of departure for exploring the scholarship on general topics, and supplement the individual entries within their subcategories. The inclusion of essay topics in *DEJ* is an editorial choice that must inevitably pass over certain topics, but the editors seem to have produced a useful range of thematic foundations for the entries.

The entries themselves are generally helpful and, despite their brevity, fairly comprehensive. They are arranged alphabetically, but there is also a list of entries in the front matter organized into general categories, which is useful for browsing the *DEJ's* offerings in a particular area of interest. Most categories and interests associated with the period are fairly well represented. The editors also seem to have taken pains to solicit entries on more controversial topics from fairly moderate authors. There is, however, some inconsistency in the tone and coverage in the entries, which is particularly noticeable when comparing entries within a particular category. Although this is understandable due to the sheer number of authors consulted, the inconsistency is noticeable upon reading just a few entries and can be somewhat frustrating to the reader who readily finds certain kinds of information about a topic in one entry and unable to do so in a related entry. Still, the editors and contributing editors seem to have kept this inconsistency to manageable levels and will presumably be able to address this to some extent in subsequent editions. Despite this challenge, scholars and students will benefit from the profusion of information available in the *DEJ*. An important benefit of any recently released reference work is the inclusion of the most recent treatments of the selected topics in up-to-date bibliographies for each entry. The bibliographies are, for the most part, very helpful. Particularly useful in this edition is the coinciding breadth and specificity of these bibliographies due to the relatively specialized nature of this reference work. This makes the *DEJ* a valuable reference for students and scholars who want both a comprehensive and a relevant reference to stimulate research. Although this is especially true with regard to researching unfamiliar topics, the entries are also useful to specialists in the topics. While reading some of the bibliographies that deal with several of my own current interests, I was able to identify only a few omissions that I would have liked to have seen, and I was happy to find some with which I was not yet familiar.

The problem of deciding which entries to include in the dictionary appears to be one to which the editors gave considerable thought. With a reference work of this breadth, tough editorial decisions are required to keep the project both comprehensive and manageable. This presents some challenges in *DEJ*. One particularly bold inclusion in this volume is that of articles on several modern emeritus or deceased scholars of Early Judaism whose contribution is deemed particularly influential, including such eminent scholars as Elias Bickerman, R. H. Charles, Jacob Neusner, Morton Smith, Victor Tcherikover, and several others. The inherent risk immediately apparent in this editorial decision is that the criteria for inclusion are necessarily subjective, and the omission of some viable candidates for inclusion is inevitable. Despite these

constraints, however, the register of scholars included for their contribution is a useful one and covers a range of very influential figures. One could justifiably raise the criticism that some entries tend toward distinctly hagiographic overtones (the entry on Bickerman is illustrative of this phenomenon). Still, many are more careful to include a degree of critical disclosure and circumspection.

Certainly, credit is due to the chief editors and contributing editors for getting the book to press in a relatively timely manner. Such a large project with so many contributors leaves many places for the project to derail. Despite the issues with consistency and some notable omissions, the *DEJ* is a significant achievement when one considers the processes involved in producing it. It should prove a useful reference for both specialists and students interested in early Judaism.

STEPHEN WHITAKER
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

EVERSON, A. JOSEPH, and HYUN CHUL PAUL KIM, eds. *The Desert Will Bloom: Poetic Visions in Isaiah*, Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and Its Literature 4. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009. Pp. xii + 299. Paperback. $37.95. ISBN: 1589834259.

This book comes from a panel of scholars called the Formation of the Book of Isaiah Group of the Society of Biblical Literature and contains a collection of thirteen essays focusing on the poetic vision (or visions) of Isaiah and the symbolism used in those visions. From the very beginning of the introduction, it is made clear that the purpose of the book and the essays it contains is to present the visions of Isaiah as "a portrait of shalom" that allows us to see the "renewing [of] all things on the earth" to their original Eden-like state (1). The authors want to show that the vibrant symbolic nature of the visions can be understood through intertextuality and how those visions use language to leave in the imagination of their intended audience a reassured hope for the future. This review will not touch on each of the thirteen essays but instead discuss those essays that I believe best typify the excellent quality of work done in this book.

The first essay of the book is by Roy F. Melugin, who unfortunately passed away in 2008 (the book is dedicated to him). His article seems to be placed first to set the mood for the remainder of the book. His essay is entitled "Poetic Imagination, Intertextuality, and Life in a Symbolic World." Using literary criticism, he focuses on the relationship of imagery and poetic imagination throughout the book of Isaiah and the importance of knowing how the poetry works "to shape identity" for the individual and community (7). Melugin included what he thinks the reader would imagine as he or she reads the text. I found this very enlightening as it allowed for the reader to see Melugin as a person rather than just as a scholar. It is refreshing to see authors putting themselves into their written work because it allows the reader to glimpse the character and personality of the author in turn helping the reader to see how

they interpret the text. Not only do we learn from what Melugin says as an academic but we also learn from what he sees as a thoughtful individual.

The intertextuality of Isaiah is used consistently by the other essay writers. Each chose a theme centered around a specific image or a closely related group of imagery and then show how that image is used throughout Isaiah. Patricia Tull, in her essay "Persistent Vegetative States: People as Plants and Plants as People in Isaiah," employs an agricultural theme that typically encompasses the ideas of judgment, growth, and hope. Other groups of symbols used are the servant and the servant relationship, common phrases showing intertextuality, Jacob and Israel, and kingship. Zion/Jerusalem is a theme used by a few of the authors as they look at the city and her relationship with the wicked, the righteous, and the future. Chris A. Franke in "'Like a Mother I Have Comforted You': The Function of Figurative Language in Isaiah 1:7–29 and 66:7–14," examines the first and last chapters of Isaiah and compares the various maternal symbols used in conjunction with Jerusalem and then makes an excellent point that God also, through these same metaphors of pregnancy, nursing, and child protection, possesses a degree of femininity that we see in Isaiah more than in other prophetic works. "The Nations' Journey to Zion: Pilgrimage and Tribute as Metaphor in the Book of Isaiah," by Gary Stansell, uses the metaphors of pilgrimage and tribute throughout the whole of Isaiah; keeping the work separated into three sections of authorship as some of the others.

Carol Dempsey wrote the marvelous essay "From Desolation to Delight: The Transformative Vision of Isaiah 60–62." This essay is, by far, my favorite as she covers some of my favorite chapters and material from the book of Isaiah and allowed me to see things I had not seen before. Dempsey discusses the prophet Isaiah in these chapters from a theological and literary perspective but also overlaps into grammatical criticism as well. These chapters, according to Dempsey, relate to the city of Jerusalem and her inhabitants and their relationship to the new heaven and earth that is mentioned throughout the book. She establishes the interconnectivity of Isaiah 1–39, 40–55, and 56–66 but maintains that the interconnections between the first two parts of Isaiah are echoes for the third distinctly separating the aforementioned chapters into separate units.

I did, however, find one aspect of the book that may not be palatable to conservative readers. For the most part, the authors are vague on their belief about the authorship of Isaiah, but there are references to multiple authors for the book of Isaiah. This may not be palatable to those who believe Isaiah was written by one man. The authors of *The Desert Will Bloom* are not trying to persuade for or against multiple authorship, and this is not a major problem addressed in the book. The writers remain focused on looking at the figurative language of Isaiah and its connection to the symbolic.

The book did an excellent job of using literary, redaction, theological, and historical methodologies. All the authors were concise in their essays without sacrificing important detail and clear explanations of their points. The use of poetry, symbol, metaphor, and language by the authors allows for a clearer understanding of the directions and perceptions of the Isaiah text.

The Desert Will Bloom has successfully realized its intended purpose in a way that allows the work of each writer to support the other through an intertextuality that the book itself possesses. This clearly indicates that each

essay in the book was written for a shared specific purpose, which makes for a well-thought-out and organized book. This book may be read by scholar and layman alike, who will both come away satisfied. However, possessing a basic knowledge Hebrew, key terms and phrases common to the field (especially the poetry of the Bible), would be helpful in getting the most out of this book. The authors were also very kind in their use of the Hebrew language in that they provide the Hebrew (without vowels) alongside their English translation. This is also the case when phrases or verse are quoted. The attention and pains they have taken to make the book accessible to both the scholar and layman is appreciated, especially their inclusion of a scriptural index citing verses quoted or referred to by the authors for quick reference. I would recommend *The Desert Will Bloom* to anyone who wishes to gain a greater understanding of the symbols used in the book of Isaiah and how those symbols possess an interconnectivity that brings the whole of Isaiah together.

JUSTIN ROBINSON
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY