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THE EXODUS IN BIBLICAL MEMORY

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tradition (which is a product of oblivion and memory)

—Jorge Luis Borges

The exodus from Egypt is a focal point of ancient Israelite religion. Virtually every kind of religious literature in the Hebrew Bible—prose narrative, liturgical poetry, didactic prose, and prophecy—celebrates the exodus as a foundational event.¹ Israelite ritual, law, and ethics are often grounded in the precedent and memory of the exodus. In the Decalogue, Yahweh identifies himself as the one “who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exod 20:2 = Deut 5:6). In the covenantal language of this passage and many others, the deliverance from Egypt is the main historical warrant for the religious bond between Yahweh and Israel; it is the gracious act of the great lord for his people on which rests the superstructure of Israelite belief and practice. In some texts (and featured prominently in the Passover Haggadah), the historical distance of the exodus event is drawn into the present by the elastic quality of genealogical time: “You shall tell your son on that day, ‘It is because of what Yahweh did for me when he brought me out of Egypt’” (Exod 13:8; cf. Deut 6:20–25). In its existential actuality, the exodus, more than any other event of the Hebrew Bible, embodies William Faulkner’s adage: “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”²

Given the centrality of the exodus, it is not surprising that scholars have expended much energy trying to ascertain its historical content. Recent decades have seen a diminution of William F. Albright’s confidence that the exodus was

¹ See D. Daube, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963); Y. Zakovitch, “And You Shall Tell Your Son . . .”: *The Concept of the Exodus in the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991). The only significant exception is wisdom literature, which has led some scholars to view this genre as heterodox; but see J. J. Collins, “The Biblical Precedent for Natural Theology,” *JAAR Supplement* 45 (1977): 35–52; and J. Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 90–94.

² William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (New York: Random House, 1951), 92.

undoubtedly a historical event.³ He thought it “quite unreasonable to deny its [viz., the biblical account of the exodus] substantial accuracy” and assigned to the exodus a date of ca. 1297 B.C.E.⁴ This position contrasts, for example, with the recent history of ancient Israel by John Hayes and Maxwell Miller, which consigns the exodus to the shadowy realm of folk tradition into which critical historiography cannot penetrate.⁵ While the designation of folk tradition or folk history is apt for the general picture of the exodus, it does not necessarily follow that critical historiography has no point of entry into this tradition. Rather, I would suggest, the historian has much to investigate regarding the collective memories of a culture.⁶

Cultural memories tend to be a mixture of historical truth and fiction, composed of “authentic” historical details, folklore motifs, ethnic self-fashioning, ideological claims, and narrative imagination.⁷ They are communicated orally and in written texts and circulate in a wide discursive network. For the collec-

³ Recent valuable treatments of the exodus and history include B. Halpern, “The Exodus and the Israelite Historians,” *ErIsr* 24 (1993): 89–96; idem, “The Exodus from Egypt: Myth or Reality,” in *The Rise of Ancient Israel* (ed. H. Shanks; Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992), 86–117; A. Malamat, “The Exodus: Egyptian Analogies,” in *Exodus: The Egyptian Evidence* (ed. E. S. Frerichs and L. H. Lesko; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 15–26; C. A. Redmount, “Bitter Lives: Israel in and out of Egypt,” in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (ed. M. D. Coogan; New York: Oxford, 1998), 79–121; and below n. 14. A vigorous defense of the Albrightian position is offered by J. K. Hoffmeier (*Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1997]), though he acknowledges “the absence of direct archaeological or historical evidence” for this position (p. x).

⁴ W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 164; the date is defended on p. 159. Albright’s views are codified in J. Bright, *A History of Israel* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 118–25.

⁵ J. M. Miller and J. H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 67–68, 78; similarly, J. A. Soggin, *An Introduction to the History of Israel and Judah* (2d ed.; London: SCM, 1993), 26–27, 108–39.

⁶ A pertinent example is Yosef Yerushalmi’s subtle book *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (expanded ed.; New York: Schocken, 1989), in which he explores the vicissitudes of Jewish memory and conceptions of the past from biblical times to the present. Other important recent contributions include A. Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 3–21 (“Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness”); and P. Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 43–59 (“History as Social Memory”). For biblical studies, see N. K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 83–87 (“Tradition Formation as Sociohistorical Symbolization”); and recently J. Blenkinsopp, “Memory, Tradition, and the Construction of the Past in Ancient Israel,” *BTB* 27 (1997): 76–82; and I. Pardo, *The Biography of Ancient Israel: National Narratives in the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). See also the classic studies of M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (ed., trans., and introduction by L. A. Coser; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

⁷ An illuminating case study in the modern Middle East is A. Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

tive memories of the exodus, the Bible is our primary written source (including its constituent documentary sources), but we may plausibly assume that the written texts depend in various ways on earlier discourses, both oral and written. The collective memory of the exodus is, in this sense, situated in a history of discourses.

In a recent book, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, the Egyptologist Jan Assmann advocates an approach to cultural memories that he calls “mnemohistory.”⁸

Unlike history proper, mnemohistory is concerned not with the past as such, but only with the past as it is remembered. It surveys the story-lines of tradition, the webs of intertextuality, the diachronic continuities and discontinuities of reading the past. Mnemohistory is not the opposite of history, but rather is one of its branches or subdisciplines, such as intellectual history, social history, the history of mentalities, or the history of ideas. . . . Mnemohistory is reception theory applied to history.⁹

The data for mnemohistory are texts, artifacts, and other evidence of cultural discourse about the remembered past, and its object is to discern how such discourses are constituted and how they serve to inform and influence the cultural present. Assmann emphasizes that this kind of study focuses on the ways a culture “shap[es] an identity by reconstructing its past.”¹⁰ The habits of cultural life and the multifarious interests of the present exert selective pressures on collective memories of the past, creating a version of the past with present relevance. How the past becomes a meaningful frame for the present is the particular burden of mnemohistory.

In biblical studies this type of inquiry has some analogues in the history-of-religions school of Hermann Gunkel and Hugo Gressmann, particularly in its focus on the products of tradition and not primarily on the reconstruction of critical history. Moreover, like much of Gunkel’s work, it seeks to locate the discursive settings of such traditions, their *Sitze im Leben*, in order to explore the social and institutional structures in which they circulate. This kind of inquiry also takes its bearings from the *Annales* school of historiography, which emphasizes the social contexts and functions of history. Lucian Febvre stated that “organizing the past in accordance with the needs of the present, that is what one could call the social function of history.”¹¹ Mnemohistory is concerned with the social function of history in this sense.

⁸ Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); see my review in *BAR* 24, no. 2 (1998): 68.

⁹ Assmann, *Moses*, 8–9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹¹ L. Febvre, “A New Kind of History,” in *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* (ed. P. Burke; New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 41.

The past and the present are interrelated in collective memory, and the task of mnemohistory is to chart the forces, strains, and transformations in this relationship. The analytic movement is from history to discourse and back again, rather than holding the memories still as “evidence” for critical historical reconstruction. A mnemohistory of the exodus will survey history and memory to discern their mutual and interrelated traces, to see how the remembered past is constructed and reinterpreted, and how collective identity hinges on the remembered past.

I. Pharaohs and Slaves

The pharaoh of the exodus is not named. This is a point of frustration for the historian, but for the task of mnemohistory it is a potentially fruitful sign of selective memory. Why should the name of Pharaoh be a blank, with no surrogate name inserted in its place? This may be a case of inadvertent forgetting with no guiding motive, just as one effortlessly forgets the names of past presidents or prime ministers. Or it could be a sign of the stock function of this figure, as in the nameless pharaoh who takes Sarah into his harem (Gen 12:15–20) or the pharaoh who exalts Joseph (Gen 41).¹² But, in the exodus, the blank of Pharaoh’s identity may also function as a strategic feature of the tradition, providing a movable boundary of inclusion for those who share this memory.

The oppressive rule of Pharaoh and the enslavement of the ancestors—these are memories that could have been shared by many segments of the population of early Israel. It is plausible that some people in early Israel had indeed escaped from slavery in Egypt. The Egyptian names of Moses, Phineas, and Hophni are perhaps testimony to the Egyptian origin of some of the Levite lineages.¹³ But—and this is the important point—for the exodus story to take root in early Israel it was necessary for it to pertain to the remembered past of settlers who did *not* immigrate from Egypt.¹⁴ By leaving the name of Pharaoh a

¹² See A. Reinhartz, “Why Ask My Name?” *Anonymity and Identity in Biblical Narrative* (New York: Oxford, 1998), 139–41.

¹³ On these names, see recently D. B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 417–19.

¹⁴ This point is emphasized by the archaeological record of early Israelite sites, in which there is no obvious Egyptian influence on the material culture (pots, tools, architecture, village layout, etc.); nor is there any noticeable Egyptian influence on the Hebrew language or script. Such influences would be expected had there been any sizable immigration of population groups from Egypt. On these matters, see the thorough survey of J. Weinstein, “Exodus and Archaeological Reality,” in *Exodus: The Egyptian Evidence*, ed. Frerichs and Lesko, 87–103; and (in the same volume) D. B. Redford, “Observations on the Sojourn of the Bene-Israel,” 57–66; W. G. Dever, “Is There Any Archaeological Evidence for the Exodus,” 67–86.

blank, the memory of Egyptian oppression could extend to all who had felt the oppression of Pharaoh at any time in the remembered past. This extension of reference extends broadly throughout Canaan during the Egyptian empire of the Late Bronze Age.

From the conquests of Thutmose III (1479–1425 B.C.E.) through the reign of Ramesses III (1186–1154 B.C.E.) or Ramesses IV (1154–1148), the land of Canaan was a province of the Egyptian empire.¹⁵ Egyptian power manifested itself in various ways and with varying degrees of intensity throughout this period.¹⁶ The Egyptian administration was largely concerned with control of trade routes and the appropriation of resources from its northern province. The objects of taxation and tribute included wood, precious metals and copper, gemstones, glass, foodstuffs—and also people. Slaves were demanded as tribute from the rulers of the Canaanite city-states, who presumably rounded them up from the local population or captured them from other towns. The correspondence between Canaanite rulers and the Egyptian pharaoh discovered at El Amarna (dating to ca. 1360–1335) record the following human tribute sent to or requisitioned by Pharaoh:¹⁷

10 women sent by ‘Abdi-Ašarti of Amurru (EA 64)

46 females and 5 males sent by Milkilu of Gezer (EA 268)

[x] prisoners and 8 porters sent by ‘Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem (EA 287)

10 slaves, 21 girls, and [8]0 prisoners sent by ‘Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem (EA 288)

¹⁵ The boundaries of Egyptian rule varied according to the fluctuating fortunes of the Mitannian and Hittite empires to the north, but generally included the settled portions of what we call Syro-Palestine; see Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 166–69. The dates (from the “low chronology”) are cited from N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 392–93. On the chronology of the end of the Egyptian empire, see J. Weinstein, “The Collapse of the Egyptian Empire in the Southern Levant,” in *The Crisis Years: The 12th Century B.C. from Beyond the Danube to the Tigris* (ed. W. A. Ward and M. S. Joukowski; Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1992), 142–50.

¹⁶ See especially Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 125–237; J. M. Weinstein, “The Egyptian Empire in Palestine: A Reassessment,” *BASOR* 241 (1981): 1–28; I. Singer, “Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel,” *From Nomadism to Monarchy: Archaeological and Historical Aspects of Early Israel* (ed. I. Finkelstein and N. Na‘aman; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 284–95; and C. R. Higginbotham, “The Egyptianizing of Canaan,” *BAR* 24, no. 3 (1998): 36–43, 69, and references.

¹⁷ The following expands the data in W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1971), 348. The Amarna letters are cited according to the edition and translation of W. L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

20 girls sent by Šubandu (place unknown; EA 301)

[x +] 1 young servants, 10 servants, and 10 maidservants sent by an unknown ruler (EA 309)

[2]0 first-class slaves requisitioned by Pharaoh (along with the ruler's daughter in marriage; EA 99)

40 female cupbearers requisitioned by Pharaoh of Milkilu of Gezer (EA 369)

Comparable shipments of human tribute, we presume, continued before and after the brief period of the Amarna archive.

A second, apparently larger category of Canaanite slaves consisted of prisoners of war captured and brought to Egypt by military campaigns.¹⁸ The Egyptian term for such foreign captives was *sqr.w-nh*, literally, "bound for life." Thutmose III, the founder of the Egyptian empire, claims to have taken over 7,300 Canaanite prisoners of war, and his son, Amenhotep II, claims to have taken over 89,600 Canaanite captives. In Ramesside times, the capture of Canaanite prisoners was a regular anthem in accounts of military conquests, as in the following account of Ramesses III:

I have brought back in great numbers those that my sword has spared, with their hands tied behind their backs before my horses, and their wives and children in tens of thousands, and their livestock in hundreds of thousands. I have imprisoned their leaders in fortresses bearing my name, and I have added to them chief archers and tribal chiefs, branded and enslaved, tattooed with my name, and their wives and children have been treated in the same way.¹⁹

Along with the capture of prisoners of war, there is evidence of the deportation of sizable Canaanite populations to Egypt.²⁰ The huge number of captives listed by Amenhotep II has been interpreted as a deliberate policy of mass deportation of subject peoples, aptly described by Donald Redford as "tactics of terror."²¹ An inscription of Thutmose IV notes that the captured Canaanite

¹⁸ On the following data, see Helck, *Beziehungen*, 342–47; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 221–27; A. Loprieno, "Slaves," in *The Egyptians* (ed. S. Donadoni; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 200–212.

¹⁹ *Harris Papyrus I*; trans. Loprieno, "Slaves," 204–5.

²⁰ See Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 207–9; idem, *Egypt and Canaan in the New Kingdom* (Beersheva: Ben-Gurion University, 1990), 37–39; A. Amer, "Asiatic Prisoners Taken in the Reign of Amenophis II," *Scripta Mediterranea* 5 (1984): 27–28.

²¹ Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 164; so proposed by Amer ("Asiatic Prisoners," 27): "Such an unusually large number of captives (including whole families) may have been taken for the purpose of reducing the population and breaking its morale through mass deportation."

inhabitants of Gezer were resettled in Thebes.²² A letter from Akhenaten to the ruler of Damascus requests the deportation of a group of ‘Apiru to Nubia.²³ An inscription of Ramesses II boasts of displacing Asiatics to Africa, and vice versa:

He has placed the Shasu Asiatics into the western land,
he has settled the Libyans in the hills (of Asia),
filling the fortresses that he has built
with people captured by his mighty arm.²⁴

It has been argued that the deportation of local populations was a regular tool of Egyptian imperial policy.²⁵

In addition to Canaanites taken into Egyptian slavery by means of vassal tribute, military conquest, and mass deportation, Canaanites were sold into slavery for purely financial reasons.²⁶ In the Amarna letters, Rib-Hadda, ruler of Byblos, repeatedly reminds Pharaoh that his people have sold their sons and daughters in order to buy grain.²⁷ A tantalizing Egyptian record, reminiscent of the Joseph story, states: “His porters sold him to the Egyptians, and they seized him and took his goods.”²⁸ During the Ramesside period there were slave merchants in Egypt who dealt in foreign slaves, and legal systems were developed to regulate the purchase and sale of slaves by private individuals. Though Egyptians could become “servants” (*b3k*) for financial or legal reasons, the legal status of “slave” (*hm*) was reserved for foreigners.²⁹

Many of the foreign slaves ended up working on the vast estates of the Egyptian temples. A regular motif in Ramesside inscriptions is the boast of “stocking (the temple’s) workhouse with male and female slaves of His

²² “The settlement of the fortification of *Mn-hprw-rʿ* with Kharu whom his majesty captured in the city of Gezer” (trans. J. M. Weinstein, “The Egyptian Empire in Palestine: A Reassessment,” *BASOR* 241 [1981]: 14; cf. *ANET*, 248).

²³ Kamid el-Loz 1: “Send me the ‘Apiru of the pastureland(?) concerning whom I wrote you as follows, ‘I will place them in the cities of the land of Kush to dwell in them, inasmuch as I have plundered them’” (trans. Redford, *Egypt and Canaan*, 38–39).

²⁴ Trans. E. Bresciani, “Foreigners,” in *The Egyptians*, ed. Donadoni, 235.

²⁵ Amer compares this New Kingdom practice with the policy of mass deportation in the Hittite and the Middle Assyrian empires and later, greatly expanded, in the Neo-Assyrian empire (“Asiatic Prisoners,” 27–28).

²⁶ See Helck, *Beziehungen*, 348–49; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 221; Loprieno, “Slaves,” 205–6.

²⁷ “For two years I have been repeatedly robbed of my grain, we have no grain to eat. What can I say to my peasantry? Their sons, their daughters, the furnishings of their houses are gone, since they have been sold in the land of Yarimuta for provisions to keep us alive” (EA 85; trans. Moran, *Amarna*, 156; cf. EA 74, 75, 81, 90).

²⁸ Trans. A. F. Rainey, apud Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 221.

²⁹ Loprieno notes that *b3k* can designate Egyptians or foreigners, but *hm* designates only foreigners (“Slaves,” 209).

Majesty's captivity."³⁰ Egyptian temples also owned land and towns in Canaan. According to records from the last years of the empire, the temple of Amun owned 56 Canaanite towns and the temple of Re owned 103.³¹ Natural resources and slaves were presumably among the benefits that accrued to the temples from their Canaanite properties.

The evidence surveyed above suggests that many of the local settlers in early Israel had memories, direct or indirect, of Egyptian slavery.³² These memories were linked to no single pharaoh, but to pharaoh as such, that is, to the array of pharaohs whose military campaigns, vassal tributes, mass deportations, and support of the slave trade forced many Canaanites into Egyptian slavery. Not all of these slaves need to have escaped with Moses—or to have escaped at all—to create the bitter memory of Egyptian slavery among the early population of Israel. In this cultural setting, the story of a miraculous deliverance from Egyptian slavery would find ready ears. The indefiniteness of the memory of *which* pharaoh may be a sign of the widespread resonance of this collective memory.³³

The Egyptian empire was crumbling during the early decades of Israelite culture, and it is no surprise that the settlers defined themselves, at least in part, as former victims of an oppressive regime. Memories of shared suffering are potent ingredients in the formation and persistence of ethnic identity.³⁴ The nameless pharaoh of the oppression is, in this sense, an emblem of collective memory.

II. Signs and Wonders

The redemption of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt is, according to Exodus, effected by a series of plagues. Yahweh calls these plagues "my signs and won-

³⁰ Trans. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 209.

³¹ Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 209.

³² On the identities of these local settlers, note that the Philistine incursions and settlement in the early twelfth century B.C.E. probably displaced many Canaanites from the plains into the highlands of early Israel; see L. E. Stager, "The Impact of the Sea Peoples in Canaan (1185–1050 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (ed. T. E. Levy; New York: Facts On File, 1995), 348.

³³ It is worth noting that Egyptian control over Canaan grew more pervasive and oppressive in the later imperial period, the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries B.C.E.; see Weinstein, "Egyptian Empire," 17–22; Singer, "Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines," 284–94.

³⁴ See M. Nash, *The Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 10–17, 112–29, for ethnicity as a social-psychological construction of shared difference and a "refuge for the embattled"; see also the insightful treatment of these issues in antiquity in A. D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986). On issues of ethnicity in ancient Israel, see the articles in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. M. G. Brett; Leiden: Brill, 1996).

ders" (מִוִּפְתֵּי . . . אֹתֵהֶן, Exod 7:3). Through these signs and wonders the Egyptians will know Yahweh (Exod 7:5), and the Israelites are instructed to recount the story of these wonders to future generations so that they too will know Yahweh (Exod 10:1–2). The plagues are also called collectively מַגִּפֹּת (Exod 9:14) and נֶגַע (Exod 11:1), literally, "injury, wound." In their present form and redaction, the plagues are best comprehended as products of Israelite folklore and narrative imagination.³⁵ But it is also possible that the Egyptian plagues are, at least in part, a transformation and elaboration of the memory of real plagues, such as often occurred in the ancient world.³⁶ In the terms of mnemohistory, event and motif may intersect in the tradition of the plagues.

The idea that Yahweh has the power to send deadly or debilitating diseases—as in the plagues of pestilence (דָּבָר) and pox (שָׁחִיף)³⁷—is found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. A pestilence (דָּבָר) is sent upon Israel because of David's census (2 Sam 24); a deadly plague (מַגִּפָּה) afflicts the Philistines when they capture the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam 5–6);³⁸ and "great plagues" (נֶגְעִים גְּדֹלִים) befall Pharaoh's house because of the abduction of Sarai (Gen 12:17).³⁹ In the poem of Hab 3, Yahweh is accompanied on his fearsome march by דָּבָר and רָשָׁף, a doubled personification of "pestilence, plague."⁴⁰ The "destroyer" (מַשְׁחִית) sent by Yahweh in Exod 12:23 to kill the Egyptian firstborns is probably a variant of these plague demons.⁴¹ In his ability to inflict devastating diseases, Yahweh shares the role of other more specialized gods of disease, such as Canaanite Resheph or Mesopotamian Nergal.⁴²

Debilitating diseases similar to those in Exodus are also included among

³⁵ See the exemplary treatment of folkloristic, compositional, and redactional aspects of the plagues in W. H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1–18* (AB 2; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 286–354.

³⁶ On the evidence for epidemics in the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean, see W. H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 77–81, 99–109.

³⁷ "Pestilence" (דָּבָר) kills the animals in Exod 9:1–7 (JE); "pox" (שָׁחִיף) afflicts human and animal in Exod 9:8–12 (P). Probably also connected with the biblical concept of disease is the "destroyer" (מַשְׁחִית) who kills the firstborns of human and animal in Exod 12:23 (JE); see below.

³⁸ This disease is often identified with the bubonic plague because of the association of rodents and "buboes" (עֲפָלִים) in 1 Sam 5–6; see P. K. McCarter, *I Samuel* (AB 8; New York: Doubleday, 1980), 119–26.

³⁹ The latter is a literary foreshadowing of the plagues on Pharaoh's house in Exodus; see U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Part II: From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1964), 334–37; and recently M. Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 51–55.

⁴⁰ See J. Day, "New Light on the Mythological Background of the Allusion to Resheph in Habakkuk iii 5," *VT* 29 (1979): 353–55; G. del Olmo Lete, "Deber," *DDD*, 438–39; P. Xella, "Resheph," *DDD*, 1324–30.

⁴¹ S. A. Meier ("Destroyer," *DDD*, 458): "the Destroyer in Exod 12:23 belongs to the class of plague deities broadly attested in the ancient Near East."

⁴² These gods also share complementary aspects as gods of battle and the underworld; see Xella, "Resheph," 1325–26; A. Livingstone, "Nergal," *DDD*, 1170–72.

the covenant curses in biblical and other texts. In a clear reference to the exodus story, the covenant curses of Deut 28 include the “Egyptian pox” (שִׁחִין מִצִּרְיִם, Deut 28:27) and the “Egyptian diseases” (מִדְּוָה מִצִּרְיִם, Deut 28:60). Extrabiblical treaties often invoke a panoply of diseases among the treaty curses.⁴³

Several of the Egyptian plagues that belong to the category of natural calamity rather than disease are also paralleled elsewhere. The Sefire inscription (eighth century B.C.E.) relating a treaty between two Syrian kings includes the following curse:

[May Ha]dad [pour (over it)] every sort of evil (that exists) on earth and in heaven and every sort of trouble; and may he shower upon Arpad [ha]il-[stones]! For seven years may the locust devour (Arpad), and for seven years may the worm eat. (Sefire I.25–28)⁴⁴

As scholars have noted, the sequence of hail and locusts in this inscription is the same as in Exod 9–10 (and recalled in Ps 105:32–35), perhaps suggesting a common pool of West Semitic curse formulae.⁴⁵ The plague of darkness (Exod 10:21–23) also is found in biblical and extrabiblical documents, particularly in prophetic oracles of judgment (Amos 8:9; Mic 3:6; Joel 2:10; 3:4; 4:15).⁴⁶

Given the availability of such plague motifs—including diseases and natural calamities—in the religious and literary traditions of Israel, it is not necessary to conjecture that the plagues are memories of actual plagues in Egypt. It is sufficient to observe that the plagues may have been introduced into the exodus story at any time as the effective “signs and wonders” of Yahweh. But it is also possible that the Egyptian plagues reflect, at least in part, collective memories of real plagues during the period of the Egyptian empire. There is ample evidence for a devastating outbreak of disease—and its collective trauma—during this period.

Assmann has pointed out the similarity of the plague motif in Exodus to some late Egyptian traditions in which diseases are associated with ancient heresies.⁴⁷ In one version of this tradition, attributed to Manetho (an Egyptian

⁴³ See D. R. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964); and S. Parpola and K. Watanabe, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* (SAA 2; Helsinki: Helsinki University, 1988).

⁴⁴ Trans. J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire* (2d ed.; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1995), 45.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁴⁶ Note also the prophetic oracle delivered by Balaam in the seventh-century B.C.E. inscription from Deir ‘Allā (I.5–7): “The g[o]ds gathered together; the Šaddayin took their places as the assembly. And they said to [?], ‘Sew up, bolt up the heavens in your cloud, ordaining darkness instead of eternal light’” (trans. J. A. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā* [HSM 31; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980], 29).

⁴⁷ Assmann, *Moses*, 39–41.

priest of the third century B.C.E.), King Amenophis removed all the lepers and other impure people of Egypt to the city of Avaris, whereupon these people joined with the “shepherds” from Jerusalem (who had previously been expelled from Avaris) in revolt against the king. The victorious lepers and shepherds ruled Egypt in lawless and heretical fashion for thirteen years.⁴⁸ As Egyptologists have noted, this tradition seems to conflate the despised memory of the heretic king Akhenaton (born Amenhotep IV, who ruled at Amarna for thirteen years) with the hated rule of the Hyksos (literally, “foreign ruler”) dynasty, who ruled in Avaris and were remembered as “shepherd-kings” from Canaan.⁴⁹ The disease—leprosy in Manetho, unspecified in other accounts—may be, as Redford and Assmann have argued, a distorted memory of an actual epidemic that swept across the Near East during and after the reign of Akhenaten for ca. twenty years in the mid to late fourteenth century B.C.E.⁵⁰ A contemporary Egyptian medical text (see below) calls this disease “the Canaanite illness.”⁵¹

The following texts, from archives at Amarna, Ugarit, and Boğazköy, indicate the extent of this deadly fourteenth-century epidemic:

Letter from Cyprus (EA 35)

Behold, the hand of Nergal is now in my country; he has slain all the men of my country. . . . The hand of Nergal is in my country and in my own house. There was a young wife of mine that now, my brother, is dead.⁵²

Letter from Şumur (EA 96; quoting a letter from Byblos)

As to your saying, “I will not permit men from Şumur to enter my city. There is a pestilence in Şumur.”⁵³

⁴⁸ This account is preserved in Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.227–53; other versions of this tradition are attributed to Hecataeus of Abdera (fourth century B.C.E.); Chaeremon, an Egyptian priest (first century C.E.); and others; see the recent thorough treatment of E. S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 41–72.

⁴⁹ See D. B. Redford, “The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition,” *Or* 39 (1970): 48–50; idem, *Pharaonic King Lists, Annals and Day-Books: A Contribution to the Study of the Egyptian Sense of History* (Mississauga, ON: Benben, 1986), 276–96; Assmann, *Moses*, 29–39. Note Redford’s conclusion (*King Lists*, 294): “What the tale does prove is that the Amarna debacle, with all its characters and events, had not been lost to the collective memory of Egypt, but had survived in some form.” Pseudo-Manetho (see previous note) explicitly associates this story with Moses and the Exodus.

⁵⁰ Redford, “Hyksos,” 44–51; Assmann, *Moses*, 25–27; see also Helck, *Beziehungen*, 183.

⁵¹ See H. Goedicke, “The Canaanite Illness,” *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 11 (1984): 91–105; and Assmann, *Moses*, 27. The Egyptian term is *t-nt-mw*, literally, “that of the Canaanites.”

⁵² Trans. Moran, *Amarna*, 107–8. On the idiom “hand of DN” as a reference to plague, see the Ugaritic letter below, and J. J. M. Roberts, “The Hand of Yahweh,” *VT* 21 (1971): 246–49 (esp. 247–48 for a discussion of EA 35 and CTA 53).

⁵³ Trans. Moran, *Amarna*, 170.

Letter from Megiddo (EA 244)

Behold, the city is consumed by pestilence, by plague.⁵⁴

Letter from Byblos (EA 362)

As to his having said before the king, "There is a pestilence in the lands," the king, my lord, should not listen to the words of other men. There is no pestilence in the lands. It has been over for a long time.⁵⁵

Ugaritic letter (RS 4.475 = CTA 53 = CAT 2.10)

Concerning Targudassi and Kalbiyu, I have heard of the blows (with which) they have been stricken. Now if they have not been stricken, then send (word) to me. Also, the hand of a god is here, for death (here) is very strong.⁵⁶

Hittite royal inscription (KUB 14.8 = CTH 378; the "Plague Prayers of Murshili II")

The Hatti land has been cruelly afflicted by the plague. For twenty years now men have been dying in my father's days, in my brother's days, and in my own since I have become the priest of the gods. When men are dying in the Hatti land like this, the plague is in no way over. . . . My father sent foot soldiers and charioteers who attacked the country of Amqu, Egyptian territory. . . . He vanquished and smote the foot soldiers and the charioteers of the country of Egypt. But when they brought back to the Hatti land the prisoners which they had taken, a plague broke out among the prisoners and they began to die. When they moved the prisoners to the Hatti land, these prisoners carried the plague into the Hatti land. From that day on people have been dying in the Hatti land.⁵⁷

Egyptian royal inscription (Tutankhamen's "Restoration Stela")

The land was in grave disease (*sni-mnt*).

The gods have forsaken this land.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Trans. Moran, *Amarna*, 298 and nn. 1 and 5 (translation slightly adapted in accord with Moran's notes).

⁵⁵ Trans. Moran, *Amarna*, 360.

⁵⁶ Trans. D. Pardee, "As Strong as Death," in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Marvin H. Pope* (ed. J. H. Marks and R. M. Good; Guilford: Four Quarters, 1987), 66. E. Lipiński has noted that the context of this letter is plausibly the epidemic considered here, allowing the identification of its author, Ewri-Šarri, with the equivalently named ^{III}EN-LUGAL, a "servant" of Niqmaddu II (ca. 1380–1340) named in RS 16.247 ("Allusions historiques dans la correspondance ougaritique de Ras Shamra: Lettre de Ewri-Šarri à Pilsiya," *UF* 13 [1981]: 123–26). Lipiński suggests that Ewri-Šarri may have been a Ugaritic diplomat at the Hittite court making inquiries about two missing merchants. For other treatments of this letter, see A. Caquot, J.-M. de Tarragon, and J. L. Cunchillos, *Textes ougaritiques*, Tome II, *Textes religieux, rituels, correspondance* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), 275–80 and references.

⁵⁷ Trans. A. Goetze, *ANET*, 394–95; see also R. Lebrun, *Hymnes et prières hittites* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Centre d'histoire des religions, 1980), 192–239; and T. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 223–25.

⁵⁸ Trans. Assmann, *Moses*, 27; see also Redford, "Hyksos," 46. It is uncertain whether the

Wolfgang Helck notes that “this epidemic seems at that time to have afflicted the whole Near Eastern world.”⁵⁹ Assmann calls it “the worst epidemic which this region knew in antiquity.”⁶⁰ Though it is impossible to identify the disease, it seems to have been virulent and lethal, on the order of smallpox or bubonic plague.⁶¹

Two Egyptian spells against the “Canaanite illness” give access to contemporary subjective responses to this disease. A spell from a medical papyrus contemporary with the fourteenth-century B.C.E. epidemic instructs the healer to recite a chant from Keftui (Crete), “Saantaka-papiuaia-aiamaantarakukara,” over a poultice of fermented drink, urine, and *sd.t*.⁶² A somewhat more illuminating spell is from an earlier outbreak of this disease, from a medical papyrus of the sixteenth century B.C.E. The healer is instructed to say, “Who is wise as Re, who is wise as Re?” and to “blacken the body with charcoal to capture the god [the cause of the disease]” and say, “Just as Seth fought against the sea, so Seth will fight against you, O Canaanite, so that you shall not enter into the son of such-and-such.”⁶³

In the mythical rhetoric of this spell, the Canaanite god responsible for the disease is homologized with the chaos monster, Sea, whom Seth vanquished. This is an allusion to the well-known Canaanite myth in which Baal (whom the Egyptians equated with Seth) vanquished Sea, thereby establishing order in the cosmos and securing his eternal kingship.⁶⁴ The disease is conceived by the

term *sni-mnt* refers to an actual disease in this instance or whether it is meant metaphorically; Redford and Assmann incline to the former.

⁵⁹ Helck, *Beziehungen*, 183.

⁶⁰ Assmann, *Moses*, 27.

⁶¹ Goedicke (“Illness,” 92, 95) identifies this illness with bubonic plague because of the reference to charcoal color in the spell (see below). Interestingly, two Egyptian mummies of the twelfth century B.C.E. (one of which is Ramesses V) have been diagnosed with smallpox; see A. T. Sandison, “Diseases in Ancient Egypt,” in *Mummies, Disease, and Ancient Cultures* (ed. A. and E. Cockburn; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 32; J. E. Harris and K. R. Weeks, *X-Raying the Pharaohs* (New York: Scribner’s, 1973), 166.

⁶² *London Medical Papyrus* 11.4–6; trans. Bresciani, “Foreigners,” 240; cf. translations in Goedicke, “Illness,” 102; J. F. Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 37 (no. 57). Goedicke (“Illness,” 101 n. 49) notes G. Möller’s assignment of this papyrus to the reign of Tutankhamen (ca. 1336–1327 B.C.E.).

⁶³ *Hearst Medical Papyrus* 11.12–15; trans. E. Bresciani, “Foreigners,” 240; cf. translations in Goedicke, “Illness,” 94; and Borghouts, *Magical Texts*, 37 (no. 56). Goedicke (“Illness,” 99) dates this papyrus to ca. 1520 B.C.E.

⁶⁴ CAT 1.1–1.6; see the recent translation by M. S. Smith, “The Baal Cycle,” in *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry* (ed. S. B. Parker; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 81–180. On the knowledge of the mythology of Baal in Egypt, see R. Stadelmann, *Syrisch-palästinensische Gottheiten in Ägypten* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 32–47, 125–33; and translations of the *Astarte Papyrus* by J. A. Wilson, *ANET*, 17–18; and R. K. Ritner, *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1 (ed. W. W. Hallo; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 35–36.

Egyptians according to a mythic pattern—remarkably, a *Canaanite* mythic pattern—and, as required by the myth, order prevails over chaos. The patient is cured, at least according to the performative theory implicit in the spell.⁶⁵

I would suggest that this subjective reading of the cause and cure of the “Canaanite illness” illustrates how such a trauma may have been appropriated by the Canaanite precursors of Israel. The Egyptians blamed a Canaanite god for this disease, and some Canaanites may have construed its source similarly. But from the Canaanite point of view, the cultural signs of this mythic pattern would have been reversed—the divine agent of the disease would not be the evil “Canaanite,” a force of chaos, but the righteous Divine Warrior who sends his deadly plague against the chaotic enemy.⁶⁶ The enemy, from the Canaanite point of view, would most plausibly be identified as Pharaoh, the ruling power of the Egyptian empire. Note that plagues are often conceived of as divine punishment for royal sins, as in the sin of Shuppiluliuma in the Plague Prayer of Murshili (see above).⁶⁷ The chain of causality that accounts for the plague implicates the king, as is a common understanding of the nature of plagues in the ancient world.⁶⁸

At the time of the fourteenth-century epidemic, the Egyptian empire in Canaan was well established, and the despotic policies outlined above were in force. Was the deadly epidemic remembered as God’s rebuke for the oppressive rule of Pharaoh? Were the “signs and wonders” by which Yahweh defeated Pharaoh a distant memory of the trauma of epidemic, turned against the Egyptian enemy by “the hand of Yahweh” (Exod 9:3 [יְד־יְהוָה], 15 [יְד־יְהוָה])⁶⁹ and elaborated in Israelite tradition? In the biblical account, the plagues are shaped by narrative strategies and ethnic boundaries, limiting the most deadly plague to the Egyptian firstborn sons, with the Hebrew sons saved by the sign of paschal blood, a rite more effective than Egyptian magic.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ See the apt comments on the performative and mythical aspects of Egyptian magic in J. F. Borghouts, “Magical Practices among the Villagers,” in *Pharaoh’s Workers: The Villagers of Deir el Medina* (ed. L. H. Lesko; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 120–22.

⁶⁶ On the righteous wrath of the Divine Warrior—a role of Canaanite Baal and Israelite Yahweh—see F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 91–163.

⁶⁷ “My father sinned and transgressed against the word of the Hattian Storm-god, my Lord. But I have not sinned in any respect. It is only too true, however, that the father’s sin falls upon the son” (trans. Goetze, *ANET*, 395).

⁶⁸ Cf. Gen 12:17; 2 Sam 24; the Egyptian memory of Akhenaten (see above); and the sins of Agamemnon (*Iliad* I) and Oedipus in Greek tradition.

⁶⁹ On the “hand of DN” as the agent of plague, see Roberts, “Hand of Yahweh”; and cf. the role of the “destroyer” (בִּשְׂחֹרֵי) as the hand of Yahweh in Exod 12:23.

⁷⁰ On the thematics of the death of firstborn (and other) sons in the exodus story, see Exod 1:15–22; 4:22–26; 13:2, 11–15; and Propp, *Exodus*, 454–59.

If the outbreak of the “Canaanite illness” was as widespread and deadly as the textual data indicate, it must have made an impact on popular memory. Egyptian memories of the outbreak seem to have persisted until Hellenistic times and later.⁷¹ It may be that an Israelite version of these memories left its traces in the “Egyptian diseases” of Exodus—a cultural inversion of the “Canaanite illness”—among the signs and wonders that the Israelites are instructed to remember in story.

III. Moses: Mediator of Memory

Yahweh’s “signs and wonders” are sent through the agency of Moses, the incomparable man “whom Yahweh knew face to face” (Deut 34:10). The story of Moses’ birth, life, and death forms a frame for the stories of the exodus and wanderings, the long transition from slavery in Egypt to freedom as Yahweh’s people on the threshold of the Promised Land. The genre of the Pentateuch as a whole has been characterized as “the biography of Moses.”⁷² In the ancestral history recounted in the Pentateuch, Moses is the savior and founder of the people. Of what, we may ask, is Moses the memory?

A recent treatment of this question by Rudolf Smend concludes, convincingly in my view, that the details of Moses’ life that best withstand historical scrutiny—and hence are the most likely to be historical—are his name and his marriage to a Midianite woman.⁷³ Everything else about Moses’ life is so interwoven with narrative motifs and religious ideology that it is impossible to disengage the history from the tradition.⁷⁴ But Moses’ name and his wife’s ethnicity are details that, in Smend’s judgment, are unlikely to have been invented by tradition. The name is Egyptian, a fact that has been forgotten in biblical tradition.⁷⁵ And the Midianite affiliation seems too peculiar to have been invented

⁷¹ See n. 49 above.

⁷² R. P. Knierim argues that the genre and subject of the Pentateuch as a whole are best described as “the biography of Moses” (“The Composition of the Pentateuch,” in Knierim, *The Task of Old Testament Theology: Method and Cases* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 372–79). This oversimplifies, but correctly emphasizes the centrality of Moses.

⁷³ Rudolf Smend, “Mose als geschichtliche Gestalt,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 260 (1995): 1–19.

⁷⁴ For some traditional themes and patterns in the life of Moses, see Propp, *Exodus*, 32–34, 155–60, 241–43; R. S. Hendel, *The Epic of the Patriarch: The Jacob Cycle and the Narrative Traditions of Canaan and Israel* (HSM 42; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 137–65; D. Irvin, “The Joseph and Moses Stories as Narrative in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Narrative,” in *Israelite and Judaean History* (ed. J. H. Hayes and J. M. Miller; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 180–209; T. H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 223–35.

⁷⁵ The Egyptian name *Mose* was common in the era of the Ramesside kings; it is part of the names of the New Kingdom pharaohs, Ahmose, Thutmose, and Amenmose; see Redford, *Egypt*,

by folklore or ideology.⁷⁶ These items meet the test of “dissimilarity,” that is, they go against the grain of Israelite culture and tradition and so may plausibly be regarded as accurate historical memories. From these details, Smend draws a plausible minimal sketch:

The bearer of an Egyptian name, presumably living or having lived in Egypt, linked with a bedouin tribe encamped in the region of Sinai-southern Palestine-northern Arabia by marriage to a priestly family, therefore with one foot inside and the other outside Egypt.⁷⁷

If the historical Moses remains for the most part obscured from view, this minimal sketch is extremely suggestive for the mnemohistory of Moses. In these few details, Moses presents the figure of a mediator, someone betwixt-and-between, “with one foot inside and the other outside Egypt.” This aspect of his character recurs in many of the narratives about Moses in the Pentateuch. Moses’ multiple roles in biblical memory may best be linked together by his status as a mediator, one who bridges differences and frictions among various categories of biblical thought and experience. Moses is the unique man, the likes of whom “never again arose in Israel,” in large part because he combines the traits of so many opposed and even incompatible categories. Because he is the multifaceted man, he is able to unite together all of the stories of Exodus, Sinai, and wanderings into a coherent collective memory. The functions of Moses as a mediator are extraordinarily rich, perhaps allowing a glimpse into the relation between memory and history in the figure of Moses.

Canaan, and Israel, 417–18. Note that the *š* in *mōšeh* reflects an early phase of phonetic correspondence for Egyptian *s*, cf. the normal first-millennium correspondence with *s* as in *raʿamsēs* (Exod 1:11) and other loanwords; see Y. Muchiki, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords in North-West Semitic* (SBLDS 173; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 259–64, with the review of J. F. Quack, *Review of Biblical Literature* [<http://www.bookreviews.org>] (2000). On the likelihood that *Mose* was a royal nickname for the reigning pharaoh during the Ramesside era, see A. H. Gardiner, “The Egyptian Origin of Some English Personal Names,” *JAOS* 56 (1936): 193; R. O. Faulkner, “Egypt: From the Inception of the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Death of Ramesses III,” *CAH* 2/2:236. It is, I think, a historical irony that the name of Moses may also signify his (unnamed) royal adversaries.

⁷⁶ On Moses’ (and Yahweh’s) Midianite connection, see recently F. M. Cross, *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 53–70; L. E. Stager, “Forging an Identity: The Emergence of Ancient Israel,” in *Oxford History of the Biblical World*, ed. Coogan, 142–49; M. Weinfeld, “The Tribal League at Sinai,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. P. D. Miller, Jr., P. D. Hanson, and S. D. McBride; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 303–14; W. H. Schmidt, *Exodus, Sinai und Mose* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1983), 110–29; cf. J. Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus–Numbers* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994); and the speculative reconstruction of E. A. Knauf, *Midian: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordanabians am Ende des 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr.* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 50–56, 135–41.

⁷⁷ Smend, “Mose,” 16.

The clashing and often contradictory domains mediated by Moses in biblical memory include the following (with other mediating terms in parentheses):

<i>social status</i>	slave : free person
<i>ethnicity</i>	Egyptian : (Midianite) : Israelite
<i>ruling authority</i>	Pharaoh : Yahweh tribal elders : Yahweh
<i>geography</i>	Egypt : (wilderness) : Land of Israel
<i>theology</i>	Yahweh : Israelites/humans
<i>lineage relations</i>	tribe : (Levite) : tribe

In each of these domains, Moses is the mediator par excellence, the one who effects a crucial transformation or sustains a defining relationship.

1. *Social status*. Moses delivers the Hebrews from bondage and makes them a free and independent people. This is the great passage of identity, the symbolic rite of passage that constitutes Israel as “the people of Yahweh” (עַם יְהוָה). Moses is the human agent of this rite of passage and, appropriately, he has already experienced this passage himself. In the story of his birth he is born a slave, the son of Hebrews, who gains a new status as a free person as a result of his passage into and deliverance from the Nile.⁷⁸ The inner conflict between his status as a free man and his people’s state of slavery leads Moses to slay the Egyptian that he sees striking his fellow Hebrew (Exod 2:11). After this initial crude act of justice, Moses flees and later returns to finish the task of liberation. In his own story, Moses experiences and bridges the categories of slave and free man, making him an apt mediator for the transformation of his people. Ironically, the people don’t take well to this transformation, as the stories of the “murmurings” relate, so the transformation of the people is not completed until the next generation, which grows to maturity in freedom (Num 14:20–35).

2. *Ethnicity*. The story of Moses’ birth also makes this child in some sense both Israelite and Egyptian. He is born a Hebrew, but adopted and raised by Pharaoh’s daughter as an Egyptian. The daughters of the Midianite priest relate, after Moses delivers them from their oppressors, “An Egyptian saved us

⁷⁸ Note the thematic echoes in this scene: his vessel of salvation is an “ark” (תִּכְוָה), perhaps echoing the ark (תִּכְוָה) in which the human family was earlier saved from the flood; this ark is placed in the “reeds” (סִיף) of the river, anticipating the later deliverance of the people at the “Re(e)d Sea” (יָם סוּף). On these correspondences, see U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967), 18–19 ; Zakovitch, *Concept of the Exodus*, 104; J. Van Seters, *Life of Moses*, 29–34.

from the hand of the shepherds" (Exod 2:19). By his upbringing he is an Egyptian; he marries into a Midianite family, but by birth he is an Israelite. This blurred identity makes Moses an apt person to mediate between the Egyptians and the Israelites, to be Yahweh's appointed savior to "deliver my people Israel from Egypt" (Exod 3:10) and bring them to his holy mountain.

3. *Ruling authority.* Moses delivers the people from one king to the authority of another, from Pharaoh to Yahweh. Both are presented as legitimate rulers in their domains, but Israel belongs to Yahweh's rule. Moses possesses traits that are associated with both ruling authorities. As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he is a member of Pharaoh's household, even a potential king. As Yahweh's chosen savior, Moses is placed in the position of "god" to Aaron, who becomes Moses' "mouth" (Exod 4:16). The authority of Yahweh devolves onto Moses, who functions as Yahweh's agent on earth. The mingling of traits—Moses as heir of Pharaoh and agent of Yahweh—makes Moses an apt mediator between these opposed authorities.

Moses also mediates between Yahweh's rule and the authority of the tribal elders. In Exod 19:7, "Moses came and called to the elders of the people and set before them all these words which Yahweh had commanded him, and all the people answered together. . . ." Moses is the link between Yahweh and the elders, who bring the people to the covenant. Moses leads the elders into the direct presence of Yahweh on the holy mountain, "and they saw God, and they ate and drank" (Exod 24:9), clearly signaling their sacral, authoritative status.

4. *Geography.* The life of Moses spans the geographical opposition of Egypt and Israel. Born in Egypt, he flees to Midian and returns to Egypt at Yahweh's behest to lead Israel in its escape from Egypt. He leads the people back to the holy mountain, and thence through the desert to the land of Israel. As in the transition from slavery to freedom, Moses has already experienced the passage out of Egypt, making it appropriate for him to lead the rest of the people in their passage. Moses' death on the threshold of the Promised Land, after viewing the whole land, leaves him betwixt and between, neither in Egypt nor in the Promised Land.⁷⁹ Moses' geographical movements mark him as a mediator in the spatial transformation of the people.

5. *Theology.* Moses' role as a mediator between Israel and Yahweh (and concurrently between humans and Yahweh) is basic to his place in biblical

⁷⁹ Cross (*From Epic*, 58) has noted that the site of Moses' grave was in the ancestral territory of Reuben, but this has been forgotten in the present form of the tradition, for which this region is Moab (Deut 34:6). What an earlier stage of the tradition might have looked like is an intriguing question; see Cross's comments (*From Epic*, 60–61) on the parallelism between Mt. Nebo and Mt. Sinai.

memory. He is recalled as the only human whom “Yahweh knew face to face” (Deut 34:10). He ascends the sacred mountain to speak with Yahweh and receive his laws, which he relays to the people. At the theophany at the mountain, the people tell Moses in fear, “You speak with us and we shall hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exod 20:19). Moses is the unique man who can speak with God and with the people, mediating the human domain with the divine. Jethro describes Moses’ position as a mediator aptly: “you must be in front of God (מול־הַאֱלֹהִים) to the people” (Exod 18:19). Interestingly, as the divine/human mediator, Moses begins to partake of some aspects of divinity. He emanates God’s awesome aura after being in God’s presence, and he has to cover himself before the people, because they fear his radiant face (Exod 34:29–35).⁸⁰

6. *Lineage relations.* Within the social structure of Israel, Moses is the mediator among the tribes. He joins the tribes together in the exodus from Egypt and confirms their new sacred identity in the covenant at the sacred mountain. In the covenant ceremony of Exod 24:3–8, he builds an altar and twelve standing stones “for the twelve tribes of Israel,” and joins the tribes in blood kinship under the covenant.⁸¹ Later he and the tribal elders command the people to build an altar and standing stones in the Promised Land for another covenant ceremony (Deut 27:1–8). In addition to forging a unity among the tribes as a “holy people” (קֹדֶשׁ, Exod 19:6). Moses also adjudicates legal disputes (e.g., Exod 18:13–27) and assigns territorial allocations to the tribes (Num 32; 34–36).

The personal and institutional authority that enables Moses to mediate among the tribes in these various ways also pertains to his status as a Levite. Moses is a member of the tribe of Levi, which makes him a part of Israel, but this tribe itself has a betwixt-and-between status, both like and unlike the other tribes. It is a landless tribe, enabling Moses to assign territory without the taint of self-interest. It is also the tribe of priests, for whom the tasks of religious mediation between people and God are central duties. As a mediator within the lineage structures of Israel, Moses acts as an exponent of priestly roles and responsibilities.⁸²

⁸⁰ On this curious text, see recently W. L. Propp, “The Skin of Moses’ Face: Transfigured or Disfigured?” *CBQ* 49 (1987): 375–86; M. Haran, “The Shining of Moses’ Face: A Case Study in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography,” in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. B. Barrick and J. R. Spencer; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 159–73.

⁸¹ See R. S. Hendel, “Sacrifice as a Cultural System: The Ritual Symbolism of Exodus 24,3–8,” *ZAW* 101 (1989): 366–90.

⁸² On the priesthood as a mediating and cross-cutting institution in Israelite society, see N. K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 320; L. E. Stager, “The Archaeology

An important and curious aspect of Moses' role as mediator in many of these stories is the degree to which his mediation is incomplete or has serious slippage. With regard to social status, Moses does not wholly succeed in making the slaves free, for the people retain a "slave mentality" in their desire to return to Egypt whenever things get difficult (Exod 14:10–12; 16:1–3; 17:1–3; etc.). Similarly, Moses does not wholly establish a stable ruling authority linking the tribes and Yahweh, since the people and their leaders continually rebel—including some of his fellow Levites (Exod 32; Num 16). Geographically, his mediation from Egypt to the Promised Land is unfinished, since Moses is not allowed to complete the journey and dies in the plains of Moab (Deut 34:1–4). Even theologically, Moses' mediation between Yahweh and Israel is fraught with peril, with Yahweh occasionally threatening to destroy the people, or Moses asking to be relieved of his burden (Exod 32:9–14; Num 11:14–15). As the mediator par excellence, Moses is a complex and ultimately tragic figure, dying outside the Promised Land because of his own sin (Num 20:1–13) or because of the sins of the people (Deut 1:37).⁸³

As a figure of memory, Moses' role as mediator may be related to the betwixt-and-between qualities of a dimly perceived historical Moses. In biblical discourse, he becomes the mediator of many aspects of Israelite memory and identity. His end is also, in a different way, a mediating force. His death and burial outside the land—in a place that "no one knows" (Deut 34:6)—correlate on a symbolic level with the extraterritorial site of the sacred mountain, Sinai/Horeb. The twin memories of the sacred mountain and of Moses belong to all Israel. And yet the present location of these memories—Sinai/Horeb and Moses' tomb—are forgotten.⁸⁴ Perhaps to belong to all the people's memory it is necessary for both to be indeterminate, in no-man's land, absent to the present. These are memories that function in biblical thought as unifying principles, joining many different things together, but they are to be found only in the past.

IV. Conclusions: Time and the Exodus

The collective memories that constitute the story of the exodus include the Egyptian oppression, the plagues, and the towering figure of Moses. Each

of the Family in Ancient Israel," *BASOR* 260 (1985): 27–28. On the further cleavages among the priestly lineages, see Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 195–215; S. L. Cook, "Innerbiblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44," *JBL* 114 (1995): 193–208 and references.

⁸³ On these and related texts, see recently W. H. C. Propp, "Why Moses Could Not Enter the Promised Land," *BRev* 14, no. 3 (1998): 36–43 and references.

⁸⁴ See R. S. Hendel, "Where is Mount Sinai?" *BRev* 16, no. 3 (2000): 8; J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985), 19–23.

aspect of this complex tale may contain traces of historical events and persons, mingled together with mythic motifs, themes, and structures—the stuff that makes the past truly memorable.⁸⁵ The past uninterpreted would be a mere collection of facts. The past as people remember it is the meaningful past, the past as perceived and colored by subjective concepts, hopes, and fears. Memory is always selective, and it is organized and embroidered according to the desires of the present (i.e., the present situation of the memorious agent). The historically true and the symbolically true are interwoven in such a way that the past authorizes and encompasses the present. The exodus, in this sense, is not a punctual past but ongoing, a past continuous.

A useful model for the temporal dimensions of the exodus story is the tripartite rhythm of historical time outlined by Fernand Braudel—event, conjuncture, and *longue durée*.⁸⁶ The event belongs to the temporal rhythm of everyday life; it is history on a human scale. The conjuncture is a process on the scale of social time, such as the rise and fall of an empire or large-scale economic cycles. The *longue durée* is the largest scale of time, the scale of geological time or the life span of the human species. Seen from these multiple vantages, the memory of the exodus partakes of all three time scales.

The historical events are the most difficult to isolate, since they have been transposed into the larger scales. I have observed above that certain actions and policies of the Egyptian empire in Canaan may be discerned in the portrait of the Egyptian oppression. A devastating epidemic in the late fourteenth century, interpreted as an act of divine punishment, may be distantly recalled in the story of the Egyptian plagues. A historical figure named Moses may have been transformed into the savior and mediator of all Israel, perhaps generalized from the memory of a smaller group.

The conjunctures of social time are somewhat easier to discern in the story. The exodus is the story of the birth of a people, a social and ethnic unity, that emerges in Israel beginning in the Iron Age. This forging of identity is a process that extends over the lifetime of Israelite society. The processes of ethnic self-definition are evident in the symbolic rites of passage in the exodus story: the people are separated and delivered from the house of bondage; transformed into a new identity as the “people of Yahweh” at the holy mountain; and reincorporated into the Promised Land with their new identity in place. The story as a whole defines the collective identity and ethnic boundaries of the people, providing a common foundation for social and religious life. The social function of history is evident in the processes of ethnic self-definition in the story and in the annual festival (Passover) that reenacts this collective memory.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ See the characterization of the biblical “epic” (particularly JE) in Cross, *From Epic*, 22–40.

⁸⁶ F. Braudel, *On History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 25–54.

⁸⁷ On the symbolism of rites of passage and the social functions of the Passover rite, see Hen-

The time scale of the *longue durée* in the exodus story is appreciable in light of the continual resonance of this story in Western history.⁸⁸ As a story of deliverance from oppression, the birth of freedom, and the divine sanction of human rights and responsibilities, the exodus story has served as a paradigm for over two and a half millennia.⁸⁹ From Second Isaiah to Nelson Mandela, the images and ideas of the exodus persist. There is something in the story that pertains to the human spirit irrespective of cultural difference.⁹⁰ The human condition is illuminated by the encounters of Moses and Pharaoh, Yahweh and Israel, the holy mountain and the Promised Land. The exodus is a paradigm, or a congeries of paradigms, of human oppression and salvation in the temporal horizon of the *longue durée*.

The memory of the exodus is not just a memory of historical events, but a conflation of history and memory that suits the conditions of different qualities of time. To view the exodus with an eye to only one of these—whether to historical events, social functions, or enduring themes—is to misjudge the complexity and multiplicity of the whole. The mnemohistory of the exodus is a story of various pasts as they converge in the intersecting times of ancient lives, a particular people, and humanity writ large.⁹¹

del, "Sacrifice as a Cultural System," 374–75, 384–87; and N. Walls, "Pesah and Cultic Assimilation in Biblical Narrative" (forthcoming). On the transformation of Passover from a local sacrificial feast to a temple pilgrimage festival, see B. M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 53–97. Also of interest is the emphasis on commemorative ceremonies (including Passover) in P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 41–71.

⁸⁸ See the insightful treatment of M. Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

⁸⁹ I prescind from current controversies in liberation theology, but note J. D. Levenson's thoughtful essay, "Exodus and Liberation," in his *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies* (Louisville: Westminster/Knox, 1993), 127–59—though it is worth observing that in the classic Jewish theology of the exodus (as embodied in the Passover Haggadah), the giving of the law is a very subsidiary theme.

⁹⁰ Note Braudel's argument (*On History*, 44, 75–76) that Claude Lévi-Strauss's researches into the "deepest, least conscious layers" of kinship, myth, ceremonies, and institutions pertain to the *longue durée*.

⁹¹ My thanks to Bill Propp and Dina Stein for their insightful comments on earlier drafts.

THE *MBQR* AT QUMRAN, THE *EPISKOPOS*
IN THE ATHENIAN EMPIRE, AND THE
MEANING OF *LBQR*³ IN EZRA 7:14:
ON THE RELATION OF EZRA'S MISSION
TO THE PERSIAN LEGAL PROJECT

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כָּל־קָבֵל דִּי מִן־קֶדֶם מְלָכָא וְשִׁבְעַת יַעֲמָדֵי שְׁלִיחַ לְבִקְרָא עַל־יְהוּד וְלִירוּשָׁלַם
בְּדַת אֱלֹהֵךְ דִּי בִידֶךְ: (Ezra 7:14)

וְאַנְתָּ עֲזָרָא פְּחֻכְמַת אֱלֹהֵךְ דִּי־בִידֶךְ מִנִּי שְׁפָטִין וְדִינִין דִּי־לְהוֹן דְּאַנִּין (דִּינִין) לְכָל־
עֲמָה דִּי בַעֲבַר נְהִרָה לְכָל־יָדַעֵי דְתִי אֱלֹהֵךְ וְדִי לֹא יָדַע תְּהוֹדֵעֵן: (Ezra 7:25)

“The closer one looks, the more enigmatic Ezra’s mission becomes.”¹ So writes L. L. Grabbe, one of the many scholars who have tried to determine why—and indeed whether—Artaxerxes sent Ezra to Jerusalem. His solution? “We can only conclude that the mission of Ezra has yet to be explained.”²

The problem, of course, is to identify the historical context of Ezra’s mission, as set forth in his letter of appointment from Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:12–26). Although in the past, especially in the nineteenth century, many scholars rejected Artaxerxes’ letter as a fabrication, most scholars today accept it as

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¹ L. L. Grabbe, “What Was Ezra’s Mission?” in *Second Temple Studies 2. Temple Community in the Persian Period* (ed. T. C. Eskenazi and K. H. Richards; JSOTSup 175; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 297.

² L. L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992), 1:98.

authentic.³ In a recent article, D. Janzen has challenged the contemporary consensus:

Ezra's work is perfectly comprehensible within the background of administrator, priest, and scribe working within the framework of the temple assembly in Yehud. Attempting to reconcile his actions in the narrative with the letter's description of his duties is an unnecessary and unhelpful task, there being no compelling reason to regard the bulk of the letter as historically reliable, and certainly not the parts that seem to point to Ezra as a Persian official commissioned by the king to institute legal reforms in Yehud.⁴

Building on Grabbe's work, Janzen writes:

... there is no hard evidence that the Persian administration was in the habit of sending people, scribes or otherwise, on missions to reform legal practices. ... We know of no historical background that would explain the type of mission upon which Ezra is supposedly sent, and so we must conclude that Ezra's "mission" as such is suspect.⁵

Janzen also presents linguistic and stylistic arguments against the authenticity of the letter. He believes that the letter betrays its Palestinian origin by using the words כל קבל ("in accordance with"), רעו(ת) ("will [n.]"), קצף ("wrath"), רמא ("throw"); by introducing direct discourse with the particle די; and by failing to use the formula *PN kn ʾmr + imperative*.

In the body of this article, I shall argue that, contrary to Janzen's claim, the legal aspects of Ezra's mission fit the history of the period quite well. In appendix 1, I shall argue that the linguistic and stylistic features of Artaxerxes' letter cited by Janzen are not evidence of a Palestinian origin. First, however, it is necessary to clear up a misunderstanding concerning the meaning of a key phrase in the letter.

* * *

In Ezra 7:14, Ezra is told that his mission is לבקרא על יהוד ולירושלם בדת. ⁶ The phrase לבקרא על יהוד ולירושלם has generally been taken to

³ See the surveys in J. C. H. Lebram, "Die Traditionsgeschichte der Esragestalt und die Frage nach dem historischen Esra," in *Achaemenid History I* (ed. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et al.; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1987), 106–7; Grabbe, "Ezra's Mission," 291; and D. Janzen, "The 'Mission' of Ezra and the Persian-Period Temple Community," *JBL* 119 (2000): 621–23.

⁴ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 643.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 638.

⁶ Most scholars believe that the understood subject of both לבקרא and the preceding participle שליח is "you," referring to Ezra. Those who disagree, disagree only about שליח; see B. Porten

mean “to make investigation regarding Judea and Jerusalem,”⁷ “to conduct an investigation about Judah and Jerusalem,”⁸ “to conduct an inquiry into the situation in Judah and Jerusalem,”⁹ “to enquire/inquire about/concerning Judah and Jerusalem,”¹⁰ “to investigate Judah and Jerusalem,”¹¹ “to make inquiry concerning Yehud and Jerusalem,”¹² or “to seek out concerning Yehud and Jerusalem.”¹³ After noting the meaning of the verb בִּקֵּר elsewhere in Biblical Aramaic (Ezra 4:15, 19; 5:17; 6:1) and Hebrew, A. S. Kapelrud concludes: “We cannot therefore assume a different meaning in the present passage, but must translate it by ‘to undertake an investigation.’”¹⁴

At first glance, this interpretation, which has the weight of both tradition and usage behind it, appears unproblematic. Closer examination, however, reveals that it creates a number of difficulties. In the words of Williamson:

The meaning of the first stated aim of his mission, “to conduct an inquiry (לִבְקֹר) into the situation in Judah and Jerusalem on the basis of the law of your God,” is unfortunately not clear to us; it is one of the examples where the orders of this letter do not exactly match the narrative that follows. Elsewhere in Ezra, the verb refers only to searching for records, and is never followed by the preposition עַל, as it is here (cf. 4:15, 19; 5:17; 6:1). The verb is not attested elsewhere in Imperial Aramaic. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that on the one hand it can hardly be so broadly defined as to mean “teach and enforce the law” (something that is in any case explicitly demanded in vv 25–26), while on the other hand it would be difficult to understand the purpose of simply investigating whether or not the law was being observed.¹⁵

and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1986–), 1:141 (henceforth TAD); and Janzen, “‘Mission’ of Ezra,” 635.

⁷ C. C. Torrey, *Ezra Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910), 205.

⁸ J. M. Myers, *Ezra • Nehemiah* (AB 14; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 56. Cf. “eine Untersuchung . . . vorzunehmen” in S. Mowinkel, *Studien zu dem Buche Ezra-Nehemia III* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1965), 126; and “um eine Untersuchung durchzuführen” in R. Rendtorff, “Ezra und das ‘Gesetz,’” ZAW 96 (1984): 171.

⁹ H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC 16; Waco: Word, 1985), 95; idem, “Judah and the Jews,” in *Achaemenid History XI: Studies in Persian History: Essays in Memory of David M. Lewis* (ed. P. Briant et al.; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1998), 161.

¹⁰ O. Margalith, “The Political Role of Ezra as Persian Governor,” ZAW 98 (1986): 110; J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 145; Grabbe, “Ezra’s Mission,” 287.

¹¹ Grabbe, “Ezra’s Mission,” 288.

¹² K. G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 228–29.

¹³ Janzen, “‘Mission’ of Ezra,” 630.

¹⁴ A. S. Kapelrud, *The Question of Authorship in the Ezra-Narrative: A Lexical Investigation* (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1944), 30.

¹⁵ Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 101. It should be noted that it is no longer the case that “the verb is not attested elsewhere in Imperial Aramaic.” It is attested dozens of times in the recently

These difficulties make the conventional interpretation dubious. I suggest that the correct interpretation of לבקרא על יהוד ולירושלם may be deduced from parallels such as האיש המבקר על הרבים (1QS 6:11–12) and האיש המבקר על מלאכת הרבים (1QS 6:19–20). These phrases cannot mean “the man who conducts inquiries concerning the community” and “the man who conducts inquiries concerning the community’s property.” Surely Weinfeld is right to translate לבקרא as “the overseer over.”¹⁶

I would suggest that, in Ezra 7:14 too, the meaning of the preposition על is not “concerning” but “over,” as in Ezra 4:20 על ירושלם, “over Jerusalem,” etc. As a first approximation, we may translate לבקרא על יהוד ולירושלם as “to oversee Judah and Jerusalem” on the analogy of האיש המבקר על הרבים, “the man who oversees the community,” and האיש המבקר על מלאכת הרבים, “the man who oversees the community’s property.”

Similar conclusions have been reached in a few modern commentaries written in Hebrew.¹⁷ Moses Isaac Ashkenazi of Trieste, a student of Samuel David Luzatto, glosses לבקרא with להשגיח, seemingly in the postbiblical sense of “supervise.”¹⁸ And M. Kochman writes that the interpretation לפקח (“to supervise”) fits the context better than “to search, examine, investigate.”¹⁹ Finally, NJPS should also be mentioned here. It departs from virtually all English versions in translating “to regulate.”²⁰

* * *

Further insight into the meanings of לבקרא and מבקר is provided by the corresponding Greek terms, ἐπισκοπέω and ἐπίσκοπος.²¹ Like Aramaic בקר,

deciphered Egyptian Aramaic Customs Account, where it is used of inspecting incoming and outgoing ships for the purpose of assessing duty, etc.; Porten and Yardeni, *TAD*, 3:xxviii, 82–193. For two attestations in Qumran Aramaic, see J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 312 s.v. *bqr*.

¹⁶ M. Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 19. See also appendix 2, below.

¹⁷ I am indebted to S. Z. Leiman for the two references that follow.

¹⁸ Moses Isaac Ashkenazi of Trieste, *הואיל משה: ביאור על ספרי עזרא ונחמיה* (Przemysł: Zupnik, Knoller et Hammerschmidt, 1888), 74.

¹⁹ I am indebted to S. Z. Leiman for the two references that follow.

²⁰ So too Porten and Yardeni, *TAD*, 1:141.

²¹ The correspondence between the Semitic terms and the Greek ones has often been noted; see, e.g., B. Thiering, “Mebaqquer and Episkopos in the Light of the Temple Scroll,” *JBL* 100 (1981): 69–74. Indeed, the Greek verb that renders לבקרא in 1 Esdr (8:12) and 2 Esdr is a variant of ἐπισκοπέω. In the postbiblical period, the correspondence appears to have produced a loan translation. Thus, the verb בקר בקר (esp. the sick) in Mishnaic Hebrew and Galilean Aramaic, a well-known meaning of ἐπισκοπέω; see Jastrow, 187 s.v. בקר; M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University,

ἐπισκοπέω has the meaning “inspect, examine,” but it can also mean “exercise the office of ἐπίσκοπος.”²² The latter means “inspector, overseer,” but it can also have the technical meaning of “supervisor, inspector sent by Athens to subject states.”²³

All the occurrences of ἐπίσκοπος in this technical sense are from the mid-/late fifth century B.C.E., around the time of Ezra. According to R. Meiggs, “the title did not survive the fifth century in Athens.”²⁴ In all but one of the texts, we find the ἐπίσκοποι involved in setting up governmental, especially judicial, institutions in subject states on behalf of the imperial power.

In a decree from Erythrae, dated 453/452 B.C.E., “the *episkopoi* are concerned with the establishment of the first democratic Council, but not its successors, which are to be the responsibility of the *phrourarchos*.”²⁵ Another fragment of what may be the same decree “mentions *phrouroi*, *phrourarchos*, and *episkopoi* and certain judicial arrangements are laid down, but not enough survives to define the nature of the cases and the responsibility for deciding them.”²⁶ The decree of Clinias, dated 447 B.C.E., also mentions these traveling commissioners: “The Boule and the *archontes* in the cities and the *episkopoi* . . . are to ensure that the tribute be collected each year and brought to Athens.”²⁷

Finally, we have a satirical portrait of an ἐπίσκοπος in Aristophanes’ *Birds* (1021–1057), produced in 414 B.C.E. In this comedy, the ἐπίσκοπος, who “may be wearing rich Persian clothes,” carries a “scroll containing the Assembly decree authorizing the sending of an ἐπίσκοπος” and “a pair of voting-urns, one for acquittal pebbles, one for conviction, familiar from their use in the law-courts.”²⁸ These urns (designated, incidentally, by the Semitic loanword κάδος

1990), 110 s.v. בקר; H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 657 s.v. ἐπισκοπέω, meaning 2. And the regular use of ܩܪ with בקר in Samaritan Aramaic (A. Tal, *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic* [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 111) may be due to a calque on the Greek verb. In an e-mail communication (Oct. 19, 2000), Tal writes: “The way I see it, *bqr ʿl* is a quasi-idiomatic connection (collocation) between a verb and a preposition, forming a single unit. . . . This, of course, makes the preposition a part of the verb, nearly abolishing its own meaning. . . . In Syriac, a single case [of *bqr ʿl*] is mentioned by Payne-Smith [p. 575]. . . . I think that [*bqr ʿl*] in the passage in Bereshit Rabba 91 (p. 1124 of the Theodor-Albeck edition), is a calque of the same Aramaic collocation.” All of this accords perfectly with the interpretation of בקר advocated here.

²² Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 657 s.v. ἐπισκοπέω, meaning 5.

²³ *Ibid.*, s.v. ἐπίσκοπος, meaning 3.

²⁴ R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 212.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 212; cf. P. J. Rhodes, “The Delian League to 449 B.C.,” in *CAH*, 2d ed., 5:56–57; and W. Schuller, *Die Herrschaft der Athener im Ersten Attischen Seebund* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 40–42. I am indebted to M. Ostwald for the latter two references.

²⁶ Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, 114.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 165.

²⁸ Aristophanes, *Birds* (ed. N. Dunbar; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 563, 564, 566.

< כד >²⁹ “would suggest that the Inspector had been sent (though he never gets round to saying so) to set up a legal system on the Athenian model in Cloud-cuckootown.”³⁰ When the ἐπίσκοπος is beaten by Pisthetairos, all he can do is threaten to sue; clearly he has no military escort and no real power to carry out his mission.

Ezra resembles the Athenian ἐπίσκοπος in a surprising number of ways. He too was sent by an imperial government in the fifth century B.C.E., presumably wearing rich Persian clothes, to set up a legal system in a subject state. He too carried a scroll from the government containing the decree authorizing him to do that. He too came without a military escort to enforce his decisions.³¹ And he too ceded his authority to another official (viz., the governor, Nehemiah), with broader and more permanent powers, after completing his mission.³²

I suggest, therefore, that מְבַקֵּר has the meaning “to exercise the office of מְבַקֵּר” (just as ἐπισκοπέω has the meaning “to exercise the office of ἐπίσκοπος” and just as BH לכהן has the meaning “to exercise the office of כהן”) and that the מְבַקֵּר was a “temporary overseer” or “visiting commissioner”³³ sent by the Persian government to subject states to oversee major projects, like the setting up of a judicial system.

It has often been claimed that the מְבַקֵּר of the Qumran community served as the model for the ἐπίσκοπος of the Christian community.³⁴ The evidence considered above raises the possibility that the מְבַקֵּר in the Persian empire was the model for the ἐπίσκοπος in the Athenian empire. After all, the Athenian empire grew out of an alliance of Greek states against Persia.³⁵ And it is certainly suggestive that the earliest attestation of the term ἐπίσκοπος in the technical sense is in a decree from Erythrae in Ionia.³⁶ The Greek cities of Ionia were part of the Persian empire before being incorporated into the Athenian empire, and Erythrae in particular was a hotbed of Medizers before they were

²⁹ See E. Masson, *Recherches sur les plus anciens emprunts sémitiques en grec* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1967), 42–44.

³⁰ Aristophanes, *Birds*, 567.

³¹ As noted by Grabbe, “Ezra’s Mission,” 295; and R. North, “Civil Authority in Ezra,” in *Studi in onore di Edoardo Volterra* (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 1971), 385.

³² So, at least, according to the traditional date of Ezra’s mission. See further below.

³³ These are the terms used by Rhodes (“Delian League,” 56–57) and Meiggs (*Athenian Empire*, 213), respectively, in referring to the ἐπίσκοπος. Ezra has been described in similar terms. Thus, M. Smith writes: “It may be that Ezra was sent out as a special commissioner, instead of a normal governor, because of the legal change the court contemplated at that time” (*Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament* [New York/London: Columbia University Press, 1971], 196).

³⁴ Thiering, “Mebaqquer and Episkopos,” 69–74.

³⁵ Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, 5.

³⁶ The term appears in a nontechnical sense already in Homer.

driven out.³⁷ It seems likely that ἐπίσκοπος was their term for the occasional מבקר sent by the Persian government. One might even theorize that the Athenians learned both the institution and the technical use of the term (and perhaps even a Persian-style uniform) from the Ionians, but this is not essential to my argument.

One thing emerges clearly from the discussion above: although Ezra's administrative title was probably מפקד על יהוד וירושלם, he had no mandate to oversee the affairs of Judah and Jerusalem in every sphere. Janzen is right on the mark when he observes that "Nehemiah, as governor, can act in a way that Ezra, as administrator, cannot."³⁸ But his inference from this observation is less convincing: "Had Ezra the sort of power that the letter ascribes to him, were he a royal appointee like Nehemiah, he could have taken decisive and final action with or without the approval of the assembly."³⁹ It is not true that the letter ascribes to Ezra powers similar to those of Nehemiah. A close reading of the text shows that his authority was limited to setting up a judicial system. The similarity between the phrase בדת אלהך די בידך, "in the law of your god that you possess (lit., that is in your hand)," in 7:14 and the phrases כחכמת אלהך די בידך, "in accordance with the wisdom of your god that you possess (lit., that is in your hand),"⁴⁰ and לכל ידעי דהי אלהך, "all who know the laws of your god," in 7:25 suggests that 7:25 harks back to 7:14. More precisely, כחכמת אלהך די בידך, "in accordance with the wisdom of your god that you possess, appoint magistrates and judges," resumes the theme of בדת אלהך . . . לבקרא, "to serve as overseer . . . in (the sphere of) the law of your god that you possess," with שפטין מני paralleling—and delimiting—לבקרא.

One of the great advantages of the theory propounded above is that it clarifies, in a completely natural way, the relationship between the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah. Those two missions have been perceived by many as being incompatible. In the words of R. H. Pfeiffer:

If we regard the account of his [Ezra's] activity as substantially historical, it is difficult to reconcile it with Nehemiah's memoirs. The Chronicler, unaware of the contradictions, apparently regards Ezra and Nehemiah as contemporaries (Neh. 8:9; 12:36). In reality, if Artaxerxes I had dispatched Ezra to Jerusalem with full powers in 458, he could hardly have sent Nehemiah with similar authority in 445–444, when Ezra was still active. . . .⁴¹

However, if Ezra held an office similar to that of the ἐπίσκοπος, his mission was always meant to be limited in scope and duration and to overlap that of

³⁷ Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, 6, 23–24, 112–14; Rhodes, "Delian League," 56–57.

³⁸ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 641.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Hoglund calls this "a probable reiteration" (*Imperial Administration*, 230).

⁴¹ R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper, 1941), 819.

the next governor (whoever that might turn out to be). The new judicial system would come under the authority of the new governor. Surely the latter would want a briefing, preferably from the מִכְּרָה himself, on what had been accomplished and what remained to be done.

In short, the legal component of Ezra's mission and even the term for it fit squarely into the fifth century B.C.E. This calls into question Janzen's claim that "we know of no historical background that would explain the type of mission upon which Ezra is supposedly sent."

* * *

Janzen's claim concerning the legal component of Ezra's mission is further undermined by a short Demotic text written on the verso of the papyrus containing the Demotic Chronicle. According to that text, Darius I convened a commission in Egypt to codify the laws that had been in effect until the end of Amasis's reign in both the national language and Aramaic ("Assyrian script").⁴²

The idea of connecting Ezra's mission with Darius's codification of Egyptian law has its roots in the nineteenth century. Even before the publication of the aforementioned Demotic text, E. Meyer discerned a link between Artaxerxes' charge to Ezra and the tradition preserved by Diodorus Siculus (1.95) and others that Darius was the last great lawgiver of Egypt.⁴³ Since then, many scholars from the fields of biblical and Iranian studies have accepted this connection in some form, despite disagreement on the precise nature of Ezra's mission and his law.⁴⁴ But what do Darius's activities in Egypt have to do with Ezra, who flourished in a different time and place?

⁴² W. Spiegelberg, *Die sogenannte demotische Chronik des Pap. 215 der Bibliothèque Nationale zu Paris nebst den auf der Rückseite des Papyrus stehenden Texten* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1914), 30–31. For more recent translations, see E. Seidl, *Ägyptische Rechtsgeschichte der Saiten- und Perserzeit* (2d ed.; Glückstadt: Augustin, 1968), 1–2; D. Devauchelle, "Le sentiment anti-perse des anciens Égyptiens," *Transeuphratène* 9 (1995): 74–75; and E. Bresciani, "Cambyse, Darius I et le droit des temples égyptiens," in *Egypte pharaonique: Pouvoir, Société* (ed. B. Menu; Paris: Harmattan, 1996), 113. For the term "Assyrian script," see n. 70 below.

⁴³ E. Meyer, *Die Entstehung des Judentums* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1896), 70–71.

⁴⁴ See H. H. Schaefer, *Das persische Weltreich* (Breslau: Wilh. Gottl. Korn, 1941), 25; W. Rudolph, *Ezra und Nehemia* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949), 76; U. Kellermann, "Erwägungen zum Problem der Esradatierung," *ZAW* 80 (1968): 82–83; M. A. Dandamayev, "Politische und wirtschaftliche Geschichte," in *Beiträge zu Achämenidengeschichte* (ed. G. Walser; Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1972), 27; R. N. Frye, "Institutions," in *Beiträge zu Achämenidengeschichte*, ed. Walser, 92; K. Koch, "Ezra and the Origins of Judaism," *JSS* 19 (1974): 183; P. Frei, "Zentralgewalt und Lokalaautonomie im Achämenidenreich," in *Reichsidee und Reichsorganisation im Perserreich* (ed. P. Frei and K. Koch; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 14–17; G. Widengren, "The Persian Period," in *Israelite and Judean History* (ed. J. H. Hayes and J. M. Miller; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 515; D. J. A. Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah*,

Let us deal first with the place. Most authorities agree that Egypt cannot have been the only province ordered by Darius to set up a legal commission. Thus, J. D. Ray speaks of Darius's "codification of the laws of the empire, a process which reached Egypt in the king's fourth year."⁴⁵ R. A. Parker asserts that "the 'restoration of order' inscription of Darius, Susa *e* = No. 15 (cf. Kent, *JAOS* LIV [1934], 40 ff.; *ibid.*, LVIII [1938], 112 ff.; Weissbach, *ZDMG*, XCI [1937], 80 ff.) certainly indicates codification throughout all the empire."⁴⁶ M. A. Dandamaev and V. G. Lukonin write:

Intensive work on the codification of the laws of the conquered peoples was carried out during the reign of Darius I, while ancient laws, particularly the Code of Hammurappi, were also studied. . . . The laws existing in various countries were made uniform within the limits of a given country, while where necessary they were also changed according to the policy of the king.⁴⁷

So too J. M. Cook:

Darius certainly did not originate a body of law for the Persians or for the Persian empire. But he did recognize the importance of codified law and was much concerned to have the regulations or patents that existed in the socially advanced provinces of the empire written down and transcribed for the use of officials there.⁴⁸

In the same vein, P. Frei attempts to prove that there was a procedure for royal authorization of the laws of local communities.⁴⁹

It appears that Darius came to the throne convinced that the Persian government needed to be aware of the laws—both civil and religious—already in

Esther (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1984), 105; Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 104–5; Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 157; P. R. Ackroyd, "The Written Evidence for Palestine," in *Achaemenid History IV* (ed. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et al.; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1990), 216; E. M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 256–57; Hoglund, *Imperial Administration*, 235; K. Koch, "Der Artaxerxes-Erlaß im Esrabuch," in *Meilenstein: Festgabe für Herbert Donner zum 16. Februar 1995* (ed. M. Weippert and S. Timm; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995), 92, 93 n. 31; E. Blum, "Esra, die Mosestora und die persische Politik," *Trumah* 9 (2000): 12.

⁴⁵ J. D. Ray, "Egypt 525–404 B.C.," in *CAH*, 2d ed., 4:262.

⁴⁶ R. A. Parker, "Darius and his Egyptian Campaign," *AJS* 58 (1941): 374 n. 7.

⁴⁷ M. A. Dandamaev and V. G. Lukonin, in *The Culture and Social Institutions of Ancient Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 117.

⁴⁸ J. M. Cook, "The Rise of the Achaemenids and Establishment of their Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 2:221.

⁴⁹ Frei, "Zentralgewalt," 7–43. See also C. Tuplin, "The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire," in *Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires* (ed. I. Carradice; Oxford: BAR International Series, 1987), 112–13. For representation of local communities at the court in other areas, see M. Heltzer, "Neh. 11.24 and the Provincial Representative at the Persian Royal Court," *Transeuphratène* 8 (1994): 109–19.

existence in the provinces of the empire. Before these laws could be officially recognized, they had to be codified and translated into Aramaic, the language of the empire. In places such as Babylonia, where codes already existed, the first step was unnecessary:

The so-called Neo-Babylonian Laws . . . continued to function under the Achaemenids in Babylonia. . . .

The Laws of Hammurappi also continued to be rewritten and studied during Achaemenid times, as is attested by the numerous copies of them dating from the sixth and fifth centuries. Some sections of these laws were also valid under the Achaemenids. . . .⁵⁰

In other places, such as Egypt, codification was also required. As has frequently been noted, this is the background of Plato's remark in *Letters* 7.332b that Darius was an exemplary lawgiver, who preserved the Persian empire through the laws that he framed.

Although it is the codification component of the Persian legal project that has been the focus of attention in ancient and modern times, a few scholars have recognized that the translation component was no less important for Darius's purpose. Bresciani points out that "in ordering a copy of the corpus of Egyptian law in Aramaic, Darius clearly wanted to make the code available to government officials, and above all to the satrap, in the official language of the empire."⁵¹ Ray notes that the Aramaic version was "for the guidance of officials in general, similar perhaps to the *Gnomon* of the Idios Logos, which was used in Roman Egypt."⁵²

Darius's thinking seems to have been influenced by the mistakes of his predecessor, Cambyses:

Before Darius, Cambyses' decree . . . had disrupted the "temple law" in force under Amasis; Darius' legislative decree, together with his liberal measures concerning the Egyptian temples, added to his reputation as a lawgiver. Confirmation of this role can also be found in Diodorus (I, 95): part of Cambyses' impiety consisted in the way he flouted Egyptian law; Darius' legislative activity is described as an attempt to atone for these legal impieties.⁵³

In other words, the implacable hatred engendered by Cambyses' trampling of the old temple laws⁵⁴ probably contributed to Darius's decision to launch his

⁵⁰ Dandamaev and Lukonin, *Culture and Social Institutions*, 123.

⁵¹ E. Bresciani, "Egypt and the Persian Empire," in *The Greeks and the Persians From the Sixth to the Fourth Centuries* (ed. H. Bengtson; New York: Delacorte, 1968), 338. See also E. Bresciani, "The Persian Occupation of Egypt," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, 2:508.

⁵² Ray, "Egypt 525–404 B.C.," 262.

⁵³ Bresciani, "Egypt and the Persian Empire," 338.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 335–36; Bresciani, "Persian Occupation," 2:506.

legal project. The goal was to avoid future blunders stemming from ignorance of local laws.

Given this background, it is not surprising that Darius's order to set up a legal commission in Egypt is closely tied to a campaign to cultivate good relations with the Egyptian priesthood:

The Great King's protection of Egyptian worship and its priesthood was . . . expressed in the building of a grandiose Temple to Amon-Ra in the Oasis of El-Khārga. Proof of Darius' building activity in Egypt is given by the inscriptions in the caves at Wādī Hammāmāt; and blocks bearing his name have been found at El-Kāb in Upper Egypt and at Busiris in the Delta. A great number of stelae from the Serapeum can be dated to between the third and fourteenth year of Darius; A stela from Fayyūm is dedicated to Darius as the god Horus; and we know from the statue of Udjahorresne that Darius gave orders for the restoration of the "house of life" at Saïs.⁵⁵

At least some of these conciliatory gestures came at the beginning of Darius's reign. Udjahorresne's mission is generally dated to year 3 of Darius, the same year that signs of Persian interest in the Serapeum first appear. In year 4, during a visit to Egypt, Darius won over the Egyptians with a show of pious love for the Apis-bull.⁵⁶ Later in year 4, after leaving Egypt, Darius gave the order to establish the commission.⁵⁷ In view of the chronology, there may well have been a connection between these events, as suggested by Bresciani and Blenkinsopp.⁵⁸ Darius may have felt that he needed to gain the trust of the priests before embarking on a project requiring their cooperation. In other words, Darius's displays of piety were only step 1 of a two-step policy.

There is no reason to believe that Darius excluded the province of Yehud from this two-step policy. If anything, the opposite is true. Step 1 was implemented there already in year 2 of Darius, with permission granted to Jeshua and Zerubbabel to restore the temple. This would seem to enhance the probability that step 2 was implemented in Yehud as well.

⁵⁵ Bresciani, "Persian Occupation," 2:508–9.

⁵⁶ G. G. Cameron, "Darius, Egypt, and the 'Lands Beyond the Sea,'" *JNES* 2 (1943): 310–11; Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, 148–49.

⁵⁷ Most scholars continue to speak of year 3, following Spiegelberg's transcription and translation (*Chronik*, 30–31) rather than his glossary (*ibid.*, 144). The confusion was pointed out by Parker ("Darius," 373), but even some Demotists appear to have overlooked his note. Among the Demotists who give the revised reading are Ray ("Egypt 525–404 B.C.," 262) and J. H. Johnson ("The Persians and the Continuity of Egyptian Culture," in *Achaemenid History VIII* [ed. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et al.; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1994], 157).

⁵⁸ Bresciani, "Egypt and the Persian Empire," 338–39; J. Blenkinsopp, "The Mission of Udjahorresne and those of Ezra and Nehemiah," *JBL* 106 (1987): 412–13. However, Blenkinsopp, like almost all biblical scholars, and Bresciani give the date of the formation of the legal commission as year 3 of Darius rather than year 4; see the preceding footnote.



The above discussion has narrowed the gap between Darius's codification of Egyptian law and Ezra's mission but by no means eliminated it. For Grabbe, it is the chronological gap, the fact that "Ezra was long after Darius," that makes any connection between them dubious.⁵⁹ Let us turn now to this problem.

Even in Egypt, the Persian legal project proved to be a very time-consuming undertaking. The text on the verso of the Demotic Chronicle reports that the commission worked on the code from year 4 (518 B.C.E.) of Darius I until year 19 (503 B.C.E.), but the story does not end there. In the continuation, the year 27 (495 B.C.E.) is mentioned, and, though the papyrus is damaged at this point, it seems clear that the entire process was not completed until that year. The Demotists who have studied the text assume that after laboring for fifteen years in Egypt, the commission was forced to spend an additional eight years in Susa, explaining their work and getting governmental approval.⁶⁰

Clearly the Egyptian portion of the project was completed during Darius's reign, but that tells us little about the progress of the project in the rest of the empire; given the background of the project, it is likely that Darius gave top priority to Egypt. A leading Iranist, R. N. Frye, believes that it was left for Darius's successors to complete the project:

Although the work was not finished before his death, the successors of Darius continued to be interested in the codification of the laws of their subject peoples. It is in this light that one must understand the efforts of Ezra (7, 11) and Nehemiah (8, 1) to codify the Mosaic law, which was not accomplished until the reign of Artaxerxes I.⁶¹

Frye's reference to "the efforts of Ezra . . . to codify the Mosaic law" needlessly exacerbates the chronological problem raised by Grabbe. Ezra's mission, as set forth in Artaxerxes' letter, would have been possible only *after* the completion of the Jewish portion of the Persian legal project. Assuming the traditional dating of Nisan 458 B.C.E. (year 7 of Artaxerxes I) for Ezra's departure from Babylonia⁶² and a period of preparation preceding that, this would imply

⁵⁹ Grabbe, "Ezra's Mission," 297.

⁶⁰ See Spiegelberg, *Chronik*, 31 n. 5; N. J. Reich, "The Codification of the Egyptian Laws by Darius and the Origin of the 'Demotic Chronicle,'" *Mizraim* 1 (1933): 180; Bresciani, "Cambyse," 109, 113. These additional years are routinely overlooked by biblical scholars. According to Bresciani's translation, there is an explicit reference to the confirmation process in the text: "Il y eut la vérification quand il (Darius I?) vint chez eux (c.à.d. les sages de la commission), en l'an 27." Bresciani rejects the view of Reich (loc. cit.) that, during this process, "these laws were . . . adjusted according to the wishes and the policy of the king" (see Bresciani, "Persian Occupation," 2:508 n. 1).

⁶¹ Frye, "Institutions," 92.

⁶² It is impossible within the framework of this article to enter into the debate concerning the

that the Jews received governmental approval for their laws in 459 B.C.E. at the latest,⁶³ that is, thirty-six years at most after the Egyptians. This does not seem unreasonable given the number of provinces involved and the length of time required for approval. The resources of any government would have been strained by an undertaking of this magnitude.

Another reason for the delay may have been the special situation of the Jews. In Egypt and Babylonia, there was an existing judicial system that continued to function after the Persian conquest. Persian recognition of Jewish law entailed the establishment of a new judicial system in Judah, no doubt at the expense of some other system already in effect there. In the words of Koch: "The appointment of officers and judges in the towns of Palestine would have been a severe encroachment on the civil administration of the province."⁶⁴ The fierce resistance to Jewish autonomy on the part of the Samaritan provincial officials and the resulting political intrigue are well documented in Ezra 4.

Finally, the Persians may have had objections to some of the contents of the Jewish law code. As noted by Y. Kaufmann, the ban on idolatry and idolaters would have been offensive to many Persians.⁶⁵ The other law codes studied in Susa in the time of Darius and Xerxes contained no such laws. An echo of such an objection, set in that very place and time, is found in Esth 3:8: "their laws are different from those of every other people."⁶⁶ Thus, there may well have been circles within the Persian government hostile to the Jews and opposed to putting their law code on a par with the officially sanctioned law codes of the empire. Such opposition could easily have prolonged the ratification process and kept members of the commission cooling their heels "in the king's gate" at Susa.

In short, the fact that "Ezra was long after Darius" is not an argument against connecting Ezra's mission with Darius's codification of Egyptian law.

date of Ezra's mission. Suffice it to say that many scholars uphold the traditional date, and that it is the one that best fits our interpretation of Ezra's mission.

⁶³ It has been suggested that Artaxerxes I granted permission for Ezra's mission because of worries caused by the fall of Memphis in the autumn of 459; see M. Smith, "Palestinian Judaism in the Persian Period," in *The Greeks and the Persians From the Sixth to the Fourth Centuries*, ed. Bengtson, 391–92; Margalith, "Political Role"; and R. J. Littman, "Athens, Persia and The Book of Ezra," *TAPA* 125 (1995): 251–59. Ratification of the Jewish law code could have come at the same time or at an earlier date.

⁶⁴ Koch, "Ezra," 181 n. 1.

⁶⁵ Y. Kaufmann, *הולדת המצוות הישראלית* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik; Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1967), 281.

⁶⁶ Leaving aside the question of the overall historicity of the book of Esther, it is difficult to imagine a more appropriate setting for this accusation than Susa during the reign of Xerxes. By the time of Xerxes, Susa would have been home to an unprecedented library of law codes, making possible the study of comparative law for the first time in history.

Any one of the factors discussed above is sufficient to account for a delay amounting to thirty-six years at most. Once again we see that there is no basis for Janzen's claim that "we know of no historical background that would explain the type of mission upon which Ezra is supposedly sent, and so we must conclude that Ezra's 'mission' as such is suspect."

* * *

The task of a Jewish legal commission would have been to provide the government with authoritative texts of the Jewish law code in Hebrew and in Aramaic translation. As argued above, the Aramaic version was of critical importance to the Persians. The whole point of the Persian legal project was to produce law codes written in Aramaic to guide the officials who governed the provinces.

We must therefore imagine a major translation project under royal patronage. The *Letter of Aristeas* provides an instructive parallel.⁶⁷ It tells of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 B.C.E.) summoning seventy-two Jewish elders from Palestine to translate the Law from Hebrew into Greek. We need not enter into the debate concerning the historicity of this story. For our purposes, all that matters is that someone—either Ptolemy or a later writer—thought that the idea made good sense. That someone may well have been influenced by a tradition about the translation of the Law by a royal commission in an earlier period.

Ezra's mission was to implement the work of this commission, and we should probably assume that he was a member, at least *ex officio*. Artaxerxes' letter of appointment refers to Ezra in terms very similar to the terms used by Darius in describing the men to be appointed to the Egyptian legal commission. According to the Demotic account, Darius asked his satrap to appoint "the wise men (*rmt rh*) . . . among the military men, the priests (*w^cb.w*), and the scribes (*sh.w*) of Egypt" to the commission. Artaxerxes' letter twice calls Ezra a "priest and law-scribe." The second term means "legal expert" or, as NJPS translates, "scholar in the law." As a legal expert possessing "the wisdom of [his] god," Ezra was uniquely qualified to be a member of such a commission and to implement its conclusions.

Rabbinic traditions about Ezra point in the same direction, making him a member of a Great Assembly and associating him with two innovations: the Targum and the "Assyrian script." These traditions, which are generally dis-

⁶⁷ M. Greenberg informs me that a similar comparison was made by E. Bickerman. Bickerman pointed to the Aramaic translation of the Egyptian law code produced for Darius (and the Ptolemaic Greek translation of the Egyptian law code) as evidence that ancient governments sometimes undertook extensive translation projects and as confirmation of the traditional account of the origin of the Septuagint; see E. Bickerman, "The Septuagint as a Translation," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 1:173–74 (reprinted from *PAAJR* 28 [1959]).

missed by modern scholars, need to be reexamined in the light of the Demotic text, which also speaks of an Aramaic version in "Assyrian script" produced by a great assembly. Such a reexamination should take a close look at terminology. For example, the Late Babylonian term *kiništu*⁶⁸ may be evidence that the term כְּנִישָׁתָא רַבְתָּא ("the Great Assembly"), preserved in *Tg. Cant.* 7:3,⁶⁹ was at home in the Achaemenid period. Other evidence may show that "Assyrian script" was the term used by Darius for the official Aramaic script of his empire.⁷⁰

There is no way of knowing whether Ezra joined the commission early enough to participate in its work. Nevertheless, it is suggestive that a number of rabbinic sources from Palestine and, later, from Byzantium portray Ezra as a text critic using various strategies to deal with variant readings in the Torah.⁷¹ Perhaps we are to think of Ezra doing this work in his capacity as a member of the Great Assembly,⁷² long before Artaxerxes sent him to Jerusalem.

⁶⁸ The meaning of this term, a borrowing of Aramaic כְּנִישָׁתָא, is controversial, and it may well have had several senses. M. J. Geller defines it as "a college of priests that met in the Temple to decide matters relating to the Temple and in addition acted as a court of law" ("The Influence of Ancient Mesopotamia on Hellenistic Judaism," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* [ed. J. M. Sasson; New York: Scribner, 1995], 44). He believes that it sheds light on the origin of the Great Assembly, which he equates with the Sanhedrin.

⁶⁹ All of the members of the Great Assembly named there flourished during the period of the Persian legal project: Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Bilshan, Mordecai, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

⁷⁰ Old Persian *Aθurā*, presumably derived from Old Aramaic אַשּׁוּר ("Assyria"; pronounced [ʔAθu:r]), is used of the Transeuphratene satrapy in at least one of Darius's inscriptions; see P. R. Helms, "Greeks in the Neo-Assyrian Levant and 'Assyria' in Early Greek Writers" (doctoral diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980), 298–301; M. Dandamayev, "Achaemenid Aθurā," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (ed. E. Yarshater; London/New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 816. Darius was not the first to call Aram "Assyria." That usage is attested already in a Demotic text dated to year 41 of Amasis (529 B.C.E.) and may be attested even earlier in Greek; see W. Erichsen, "Erwähnung eines Zuges nach Nubien unter Amasis in einem demotischen Text," *Klio* 34 (1941): 57, 59; Helms, "Greeks," 21 n. 1; R. N. Frye, "Assyria and Syria: Synonyms," *JNES* 51 (1992): 282. Nor was he the first to use the term "Assyrian script"; however, he may well have been responsible for popularizing a change in the usage of that term. Before it was used of the Aramaic script, the term referred to cuneiform writing; it is used that way already in a hieroglyphic Luwian text from Carcemish dated to ca. 800 B.C.E.; see J. D. Hawkins, "Assyrians and Hittites," *Iraq* 36 (1974): 68 n. 6; and J. C. Greenfield, "Of Scribes, Scripts and Languages," in *Phoinikea Grammata* (ed. C. Baurain et al.; Liège/Namur: Société des Études Classiques, 1991), 179. The Greeks of the fifth century retain the old usage alongside the new one; C. A. Nylander, "ΑΣΣΥΡΙΑ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΑ: Remarks on the 21st 'Letter of Themistokles,'" *Opuscula Atheniensia* 8 (1968): 122 n. 16. The picture is, thus, far more complicated than I imagined when I wrote "Why the Aramaic Script Was Called 'Assyrian' in Hebrew, Greek, and Demotic," *Orientalia* 62 (1993): 80–82, and some of the conclusions of that article need to be revised accordingly.

⁷¹ See my "The Byzantine Biblical Commentaries from the Genizah: A 'Missing Link' in the Evolution of Biblical Exegesis," to appear in *Jewish Studies: An Internet Journal*.

⁷² In David Qimhi's paraphrase of the aforementioned sources, "the men of the Great Assembly" is substituted for Ezra (see again my "Byzantine Biblical Commentaries").

The relationship between Ezra's mission and the Persian legal project may be hinted at in Ezra 8:36: וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַחֲשֵׁרֵפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּפְחוּתֵי עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר, "and they gave the king's edicts [lit., laws] to the king's satraps and the governors of Beyond the River."⁷³ It is well known that the expression used here, דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, is the plural counterpart of Late Babylonian *dātu ša šarri*, "the king's law." The use of this expression—instead of, say, "the king's letter(s)"—is noteworthy; cf. Neh 2:9: וָאֵבֹאוּ אֶל פְּחוּתֵי עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר וְאֶתְּנָה לָהֶם אֶת אֲנִירוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ, "I came to the governors of Beyond the River, and I gave them the king's letters." What were these royal edicts/laws that Ezra delivered? Certainly, they must have included a copy of the king's letter to him. At a minimum, then, the verse describes Ezra's presentation of his credentials.

But there was probably more, as hinted by the plural. We have already seen that, in discussing the officials for whom the Aramaic translation of the Egyptian law code was intended, Bresciani specifically singles out the satrap.⁷⁴ If so, Ezra must have delivered to the king's satraps all of the דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ relevant to his mission: the king's Aramaic edict mandating that he establish a new system of courts together with an Aramaic version, approved by the king, of the law (Old Iranian *dāta*) that his judges (Old Iranian *dātabara*) would be upholding.⁷⁵

Ezra's mission is, thus, the culmination of the work of a Jewish legal commission. After the commission presented the Jewish code to the Persian government in Aramaic translation and the government finally ratified it, he was sent to set up the mechanism for enforcing it.

Appendix 1

Janzen's Linguistic and Stylistic Arguments against the Authenticity of Artaxerxes' Letter to Ezra

D. Janzen argues, on linguistic and stylistic grounds, that Artaxerxes' letter to Ezra is not authentic. He points to four "generic words that appear in the let-

⁷³ It has been claimed that this verse carries the absurd implication that Ezra "was able to give orders to the 'king's satraps and to the governors'" (Grabbe, "Ezra's Mission," 293). This analysis distorts the meaning of the Hebrew and ignores both the parallel in Neh 2:9 (see below) and the prevalent tradition (going back at least as far as AV) of translating יָדַעַ in this verse with "delivered" or the like. The expression "give orders to" in the sense of commanding a subordinate is an English idiom that is clearly inappropriate here, if only because the verse says explicitly that the orders or laws that he gave to the satraps and governors were the king's, not his own. This English idiom is quite different in meaning from the superficially similar Hebrew one found in Esth 3:14, 15; 9:14; etc.

⁷⁴ See n. 51 above.

⁷⁵ See Koch, "Ezra," 183: "The Egyptian parallel, the codification of the law of the forefathers and its introduction as a provincial law by the Persian government, included the delivery of an Aramaic copy of this law to the Persian authorities. I wonder if the edict of Artaxerxes did not also presuppose the delivery of an Aramaic copy of the Torah to the Persian court."

ter that suggest a Palestinian rather than a Persian or Babylonian origin of the letter": כל קבל ("in accordance with"), רעו(ת) ("will [n.]"), קצף ("wrath"), רמא ("throw").⁷⁶ The Aramaist will find this claim rather startling—especially as regards רמא, which is found in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, Mandaic, and Pehlevi (as an Aramaic logogram), not to mention Syriac and (according to some) Palmyrene.⁷⁷ How many Aramaic words can boast of being better attested in Eastern Aramaic, including the Aramaic of Persia and Babylonia? As for רעו(ת) and קצף, they are found in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic (see below) and Syriac, respectively.⁷⁸

It is only by arbitrarily excluding all of these data that Janzen is able to cite the last three lexical items as evidence for his claim. Janzen does not bother to defend this exclusion or even to mention the excluded data; he simply restricts his discussion to "epigraphical Aramaic," as though the reason for this were self-evident. But exclusion of data is hardly what one would expect in the presentation of an argument from silence. Such an argument needs to rest on the largest possible database if it is to escape the charge of statistical insignificance.

In one case, however, Janzen makes a more daring claim: "The term רעו is unknown in any dialect of Aramaic beyond that spoken in Palestine."⁷⁹ In the next breath, however, Janzen says that it "is found in Rabbinic Aramaic," citing Jastrow, 1486. What he does not say is that one of Jastrow's examples—ברעות נפשיה, "of his own free will"—is from the *Babylonian* Talmud and exhibits *Babylonian* Aramaic. Janzen's categories—"epigraphical Aramaic" versus "Rabbinic Aramaic" (instead of the usual "Eastern Aramaic" versus "Western Aramaic")—have certainly led him astray. ברעות נפשיה is an excellent Babylonian parallel to רעות מלכא in Artaxerxes' letter. It would be difficult to imagine an argument from silence that would be convincing in these circumstances.

Actually, it would be quite surprising if רעו(ת) were not found in Eastern Aramaic in the Persian period. That is because the root goes back to Proto-Semitic (as Janzen himself notes), and the pattern (with the abstract *-ūt* ending) is probably attested already in the fourteenth century B.C.E.⁸⁰ The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for the verb רמא. Janzen's claim is thus tantamount to a claim that these words had become obsolete outside of Palestine by Ezra's time, despite the fact that they are attested later in Syria, Babylonia, and Persia. Does

⁷⁶ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 628–29.

⁷⁷ See the standard dictionaries.

⁷⁸ See the standard dictionaries.

⁷⁹ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 628.

⁸⁰ The word אכרת ("healing"), with the same pattern and root type as רעות, appears in hieratic transcription as *ʿ-s-t-m* in the London Medical Papyrus; see my "Northwest Semitic Incantations in an Egyptian Medical Papyrus of the Fourteenth Century B.C.E.," *JNES* 51 (1992): 195; and my "The London Medical Papyrus," in *The Context of Scripture* (ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr.; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:328.

Janzen believe that these words disappeared from Eastern Aramaic and then reappeared? If so, on what basis?

Janzen's first example, *כל קבל*, has more substance. As he notes, the form found outside of Palestine is *לִקְבַּל*. But this could easily be one of those small changes that inevitably creep in when a document is copied by speakers of a different dialect. There are other examples of such small changes in this document, and Janzen has rightly ignored them.

What about the Persian loanwords (*אספרנא* [3x], *גנוי*, *נובריא*, *אדרודא*, *שרשי*, not to mention *דה* [6x]) in the letter? Can they really be ignored in an article proposing "a Palestinian rather than a Persian or Babylonian origin of the letter" based on its vocabulary? They would seem to be at least as relevant to the question as the common Aramaic terms mentioned above, and yet Janzen does not discuss them at all. Indeed, were it not for a statement that H. G. M. Williamson argues for the letter's authenticity based on "its Persian loanwords,"⁸¹ there would be no mention of them in the article. If Janzen wishes to dismiss them, he needs to show that all of these words were in common use in Palestine during the period to which he dates the letter and that the density of Persian words exhibited by this text (expressed as a percentage of the total) is typical of Palestinian compositions.

Janzen's stylistic arguments are equally unconvincing. He asserts that "the introduction of direct discourse with the particle *ד* is unlikely to have originated from the hand of a Persian official."⁸² He also knows that "the style that the letter uses to convey these orders is not what we expect in a piece of official Persian correspondence. We expect the phrase *PN kn ʾmr* followed by an imperative, but nothing of the sort occurs here."⁸³ One would hardly guess from these confident assertions that not a single Aramaic royal edict from the Persian empire is available for comparison with the letters in the Bible. In the words of Grabbe: "it must be acknowledged that we have only *one* royal letter generally admitted as genuine, and this is only in Greek translation. . . ."⁸⁴

Let us begin with the second of Janzen's stylistic arguments:

Even if Ezra's mission had come completely at the monarch's initiative, we would still expect Artaxerxes to employ the usual phrases of command found in official Persian correspondence. When Arsames issued an order, he employed the phrase *כֵּעַת אַרְשָׁם כֵּן אֲחֵר*, "Now, Arsames says thus:" In this way was a command from a superior communicated; yet it is a phrase that never appears in the Artaxerxes letter.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 622.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 627.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Grabbe, "Ezra's Mission," 292 n. 16.

⁸⁵ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 627.

Now, one may question the assumption that the style of a royal firman must conform to the style of a satrap's letter. Is it not possible, for example, that Arsames writes כעת ארשם כן אמר because he is not entitled to write בני שים מעם, "I hereby decree [lit., from me an order is hereby issued]"? But even if we accept Janzen's assumption, his assertion is at variance with the facts.

Porten's stylistic study of the Artaxerxes letter is important here,⁸⁶ but there is no mention of it in Janzen's article. Porten notes that many of the official letters found in Egypt have a command beginning with "you" following a reference to a letter having been sent. However, the command is not invariably introduced by *PN kn ʾmr*; there is an alternate pattern without that introduction.⁸⁷ Among Porten's examples, there are two in which the two patterns contrast neatly: a pair of letters, one from Arsames and the other from Prince Varuvahya, written to the same person about the failure of Varuvahya's official, Ḥatubasti, to deliver the rent for Varuvahya's domains. In Arsames' letter (*TAD* A6.13.4 = Driver 10.4), the order begins: כעת ארשם כן אמר אתם הנדרו עברו, לחתובסתי פקיד ורוהי, "Now, Arsames says thus: 'You, issue instruction to Ḥatubasti, official of Varuvahya.'" The parallel order in Varuvahya's letter (*TAD* A6.14.2-3 = Driver 11.2-3) begins: כ[ע]ת אתם אתנצח[ו] והנדרוא עברו לפקידא, "Now, you, be diligent and issue instruction to [m]y official." Another good example of the second pattern (without *PN kn ʾmr*) cited by Porten is from the Passover Letter (*TAD* A4.1.3 = Cowley 21.3), where the order begins: כעת אתם כן מנו, "Now, you thus count." Thus, Janzen's stylistic rule is invalid.

Even if Janzen's stylistic rules were valid, they would be irrelevant, because they apply only to "administrative correspondence sent in reply to an earlier query."⁸⁸ Artaxerxes' letter to Ezra does not belong to this category; it is more like *TAD* A6.16.1 = Driver 13.1, where we find ובע[ת אנ]ת אתנצח, "and no[w, yo]u, be diligent," immediately after the salutation. Despite this, Janzen maintains that this failure to cite a letter from Ezra is itself evidence that the letter is not authentic:

So had Ezra desired to return to Jerusalem to attend to matters within the cultus there, he would have sent a request to the king, who, in his reply, would have cited this request verbatim. Ezra would not, as Meyer suggested, have written a letter for Artaxerxes to sign. The lack of quotation of the kind that we have seen above speaks against the letter's authenticity. Now, one could argue that Ezra's journey was Artaxerxes' idea and that there was no original request on the part of the Judean that [sic] his mission originated in the mind of Artaxerxes. If that were the case, however, it

⁸⁶ B. Porten, *המסמכים בספר עזרא ושליחותו של עזרא*, *Shnaton* 3 (1978-79): 186-89.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁸⁸ Janzen, "'Mission' of Ezra," 627.

becomes difficult to explain the letter writer's detailed knowledge of aspects of the Jerusalem cultus.⁸⁹

If Artaxerxes' letter is the result of a joint effort of the Persian government and a Jewish legal commission, however, it is hardly surprising that the letter reflects knowledge of the Jerusalem cult.

Janzen's other stylistic argument against the authenticity of the letter is based on an interpretation of 7:21 that few English-speaking scholars share:

In 7:21–24, Artaxerxes apparently quotes a letter that he has sent to his treasurers, informing them that they are to supply the Jerusalem temple with a certain amount of provisions. This type of quotation clearly falls within the epistolary tradition of the Persian administration. A difficulty, however, lies with its introduction. Artaxerxes leads into the quote this way: וּמִנִּי אֶרְתַּחְשַׁסְתָּא מֶלֶכָא שִׁים טַעַם לְכָל גִּזְבָּרֵיָא דִּי בַעֲבַר נַחֲרָה דִּי, “And from me, I, Artaxerxes the king, an order has been given to all the treasurers who are in Across-the-River, saying: . . .” (7:21). Nowhere in the extrabiblical Persian-period governmental correspondence do we find a quotation of another letter introduced with the relative particle דִּי or וּ.⁹⁰

This passage is problematic. Janzen's use of the term “relative particle” makes it appear that he is referring to the first דִּי, for the second וּ is not a relative particle by any definition. Nevertheless, he must be referring to the second דִּי, which he has translated as “saying.”

A more substantive problem is Janzen's translation of שִׁים טַעַם מִנִּי with “from me . . . an order has been given” in 7:21. The past tense of this translation, implying the existence of a previous letter, is crucial to his argument, but it is well known that passive שִׁים can be either a participle or a perfect in Biblical Aramaic. Thus, the phrase שִׁים טַעַם מִנִּי clearly contains a participle and has the meaning “from me an order is hereby issued” in Ezra 6:8, 11; 7:13; and Dan 3:29.⁹¹ If it has the same meaning in Ezra 7:21, the second דִּי is completely natural, even according to Janzen's criteria, and there is no justification for trans-

⁸⁹ Ibid., 626.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 626–27.

⁹¹ Cf. שִׁים as passive participle in BH, e.g., Num 24:21 and Obad 4. In Hebrew too, we find the performative (“hereby”) expressed by the participle in the Persian period, instead of the perfect used in the preexilic period; see my “Ancient Hebrew,” in *The Semitic Languages* (ed. R. Hetzron; London: Routledge, 1997), 158. Thus, 1 Kgs 3:12, הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לְךָ לֵב חָכָם וְנָבוֹן, “I (hereby) grant you a wise and discerning mind,” is reformulated as 2 Chr 1:12, הַחֲכָמָה וְהַמִּדָּע נָתַתִּי לְךָ, “wisdom and knowledge are (hereby) granted to you.” For the use of the passive (שִׁים, נָתַתִּי) rather than the active, see E. Y. Kutscher, “Two ‘Passive’ Constructions in Aramaic in the Light of Persian,” in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Semitic Studies* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1969), 148–51; reprinted in E. Y. Kutscher, *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* (ed. Z. Ben-Hayyim et al.; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977), 86–89.

lating it as “saying,” Janzen makes no attempt to defend his assumption about שׂם, despite the fact that almost all English versions, from the time of AV until today, translate it with the present tense in this verse. If it is true that taking שׂם as a perfect makes the second יד unnatural, then the proper conclusion to be drawn is that שׂם is a participle, not that the letter is a fabrication.

Appendix 2

The Qumran מִבְּקֵר and the Nabatean מִבְּקֵרָא

Much has been written about the Qumran official known as the מִבְּקֵר, whose duties are described in the *Damascus Covenant* and the *Community Rule*. It has been shown that those duties “concentrate particularly on three areas: admission into the community (4QD^a 5 i 14; CD 13:13; 15:8, 11, 14), the administration of finances and supervision of trade (1QS 6:20; CD 13:16; 14:13), and judicial proceedings (CD 9:18, 19, 22; 14:11–12; 4QD^a 11:16; see also 4Q477).”⁹² However, the origin of the office and the term has yet to be fully clarified.

Based on the role of the מִבְּקֵר in admitting new members, S. Schechter compared him to the Roman censor, whose original duty was to register citizens and their property. “Such an office,” he wrote, “entirely unknown to Judaism, could have been only borrowed from the Romans.”⁹³ Although I. Lévi and R. H. Charles accepted this comparison,⁹⁴ other scholars did not. E. Meyer objected to the connotations of the term: “‘Censor’, womit Schechter ihn übersetzt, berücksichtigt nur eine Seite seiner Tätigkeit und erweckt überdies als römischer Amtstitel falsche Vorstellungen.”⁹⁵ M. H. Segal attempted to replace Schechter’s theory of borrowing with a theory of internal evolution:

The מִבְּקֵר must have been originally the officer entrusted with the examination of charges against members of the Sect, and also with the examination of neophytes and repentants; . . . Gradually, however, his powers and influence extended, until he became the direct ruler of the community. The office of

⁹² C. Hempel, “Community Structures in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Admission, Organization, Disciplinary Procedures,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years* (ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2:81. I am indebted to M. J. Bernstein for this reference.

⁹³ S. Schechter, *Fragments of a Zadokite Work*, vol. 1 of *Documents of Jewish Sectaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), XXIII n. 41.

⁹⁴ I. Lévi, “Un écrit sadducéen antérieur à la destruction du Temple,” *REJ* 61 (1911): 195; R. H. Charles, “Fragments of a Zadokite Work,” in *APOT*, 787, 824.

⁹⁵ E. Meyer, *Die Gemeinde des neuen Bundes im Lande Damaskus* (Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 1919, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 9; Berlin: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1919), 46 n. 4.

the מִבְקֵר is thus of native origin, and has no connection with the Roman Censor (as supposed by the editor, . . .).⁹⁶

Neither theory has stood the test of time. A. R. C. Leaney writes that, unlike the episcopacy, whose evolution can be traced, "there is no history of the office of *mebaqqer*."⁹⁷

The origin of the title is equally problematic. Some scholars view the term as being isolated. Leaney writes that "the term is not found elsewhere in OT or later Hebrew, although the participle of a common enough verb."⁹⁸ Similarly, J. H. Charlesworth reports that מִבְקֵר is "a term found at Qumran only in the Damascus Covenant and in the Rule of the Community, but nowhere else in other Jewish literature, including the apocryphal compositions and rabbinic writings."⁹⁹

According to other scholars, the term has biblical roots. This view appears already in F. F. Hvidberg's discussion of the phrase כְּרוּעָה עֲדָרוּ in CD 13:9, a passage that describes the duties of the מִבְקֵר. Earlier scholars had connected כְּרוּעָה עֲדָרוּ to Isa 40:11.¹⁰⁰ Hvidberg initially does too, but then he goes on to ask: "Is this expression derived from Isa 10:11 [sic, for 40:11] or [is it] from Ezek 34:12 כִּבְקֵרְתָּ רֵעָה עֲדָרוּ and the name מִבְקֵר taken from there?!"¹⁰¹

C. Rabin tries to settle the matter in favor of Hvidberg's second alternative by creating a second allusion to Ezek 34 in that passage.¹⁰² He reads the line in question as וַיִּשְׁ[יב] לְכָל מִדְּהוּבָם כְּרוּעָה עֲדָרוּ and then emends it to וַיִּשְׁ[יב] לְכָל מִדְּהוּבָם כְּרוּעָה עֲדָרוּ, "and he shall bring back all those among them that have strayed, as a shepherd, his flock," producing an allusion to Ezek 34:16, וָאֵת הַנִּדְחָתָא אֲשִׁיב, "and I will bring back the strayed."¹⁰³

Weinfeld states unequivocally that "the two titles which we find in the Qumran sect writings, פִּקֵּד and מִבְקֵר, have roots in Biblical literature."¹⁰⁴ Like Rabin, Weinfeld finds the biblical roots of the title מִבְקֵר in Ezek 34:12.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁶ M. H. Segal, "Additional Notes on 'Fragments of a Zadokite Work,'" *JQR* n.s. 3 (1912–13): 311.

⁹⁷ A. R. C. Leaney, *The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 189.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ J. H. Charlesworth, "Community Organization: Rule of the Community," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; Oxford: University Press, 2000), 1:135.

¹⁰⁰ Lévi, "Écrit sadducéen," 202 n. 4; M.-J. Lagrange, "La secte juive de la nouvelle alliance au pays de Damas," *RB* 21 (1912): 236; Charles, "Fragments," 831.

¹⁰¹ F. F. Hvidberg, *Menigheden af den nye Pagt i Damascus* (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1928), 173.

¹⁰² C. Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), 65, line 9, nn. 3 and 5. The siglum ¶ in these two footnotes stands for "allusion or reminiscence" (*ibid.*, xiii).

¹⁰³ Rabin, *Zadokite Documents*, 65; see also Thiering, "Mebaqqer and Episkopos," 66.

¹⁰⁴ Weinfeld, *Organizational Pattern*, 20.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

However, Rabin's second allusion disappears if we follow recent scholarship in rejecting the reading [יב]וישקוד in favor of וישקה.¹⁰⁶ That takes us back to the original form of Hvidberg's suggestion. That suggestion is very ingenious, but is it convincing? After all, if the author of the description really meant to connect מבקר with עדרו רעה בבקרת רעה, why did he omit the word בבקרת? Moreover, even if it could be shown that the author believed the term to be derived from Ezek 34:11, that derivation would have to be viewed as a midrashic folk etymology.

Based on the above discussion, it appears that the title מבקר does have a biblical antecedent—not the Aramaizing infinitive בקרת in Ezekiel but the very similar Aramaic infinitive לבקרא in Ezra's letter of appointment from Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:14). This conclusion raises new questions. Did the Achaemenid מבקרא evolve into the Qumran מבקר? If so, how? One could point to the role of the latter in judicial proceedings, noted above, as a key link between the two, but more evidence will be needed before these questions can be answered.

Another question that must be left open concerns the Nabatean title מבקרא. Although it is well attested, its interpretation "is not at all certain."¹⁰⁷ As a result, the connection between the Qumran מבקר and the Nabatean מבקרא is far from clear.

Most of the attestations of the latter are from one site: a Nabatean sanctuary at Jebel Moneijah in Southern Sinai.¹⁰⁸ The sanctuary contains stele-shaped stones carved with inscriptions commemorating various individuals, who are accorded titles such as כהנא, אכפלא/אפכלא, and מבקרא. Since the first two are clearly sacerdotal titles, it is generally agreed that מבקרא is one as well.¹⁰⁹

The title מבקרא is applied to four different individuals in four different inscriptions. In one of the four inscriptions, the name is of interest in addition to the title. It reads דכיר אלמבקרו בר וידו מבקרא.¹¹⁰ If this individual was given the Arabic name אלמבקרו at birth in the expectation that he would eventually hold the office of מבקר, then the office was probably hereditary among the

¹⁰⁶ Both of these readings are possible, according to E. Qimron, "The Text of CDC," in *The Damascus Document Reconsidered* (ed. M. Broshi; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1992), 35. The latter is preferred by *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (ed. F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:572. The former, by *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth et al.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), 2:54 and 55, n. 199; J. M. Baumgarten, *Qumran Cave 4 XIII: The Damascus Document (4Q266–273)* (DJD 18; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 109; C. Hempel, *The Laws of the Damascus Document: Sources, Tradition and Redaction* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 114, 122.

¹⁰⁷ A. Negev, "A Nabatean Sanctuary at Jebel Moneijah, Southern Sinai," *IEJ* 27 (1977): 221.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 219–31.

¹⁰⁹ The only exception that I know of is J. Levinson, "The Nabatean Aramaic Inscriptions" (doctoral diss., New York University, 1974), 140, where it is taken to mean "visitor."

¹¹⁰ Negev, "Nabatean Sanctuary," 223.

Nabateans. Outside of Jebel Moneijah, the title מִבְקָרָא is rare, but the name מִבְקָרָא Ἀλμοβακκερου is widespread.¹¹¹

What precisely was the function of the מִבְקָרָא? Since the texts provide no answer to that question, scholars have fallen back on etymology. They have usually assumed that he was “a priest who was in charge of examining the sacrificial victims.”¹¹² This assumption finds some support in rabbinic literature. In the Mishnah (*Tamid* 3:4, *Arak.* 2:5), בִּקֵּר refers to examination of animals before they are sacrificed to ensure that they are unblemished. And it is reported in the name of the third-century Palestinian *amora* R. Ammi that the מְבַקְרֵי מוֹמִין שְׁבִירוּשָׁלַם, “examiners of blemishes in Jerusalem” (*b. Ketub.* 106a), or the מְבַקְרֵי מוֹמֵי קִדְשִׁים, “examiners of blemishes of sacrificial animals” (*y. Šeqal.* IV, ii, 48a), were paid for their services with coins withdrawn from the Shekel Chamber.

At the same time, this rabbinic usage raises serious doubts about Mowinckel’s conjecture that the Nabatean term “is used about a cultic person, probably a vaticinator of the sacrifice.”¹¹³ Mowinckel’s attempt to extend this conjecture to the *Damascus Covenant* is even less convincing:

In the sect of Damascus *mēbhaqqēr* is known to indicate the administrative and judicial leader of the sect, corresponding to *episkopos*. Among other things he is to “instruct (the priest) in the interpretation of the tora” and see to it that the “casting of lots” . . . was performed in the proper way, when matters of dispute were to be decided. This seems to suggest that *mēbhaqqēr* originally indicated the person who “distinguishes,” “discriminates” between the oracular tokens, who gives oracles of some kind or other.¹¹⁴

This conjecture has rightly been ignored by Qumran scholars. Indeed, the conventional view of the function of the Nabatean מִבְקָרָא makes it difficult to find a connection with the מִבְקָר at Qumran. Weinfeld’s view that the Nabatean מִבְקָרָא was a supervisor¹¹⁵ makes matters simpler, but it too is only a conjecture at the moment. New evidence will be required to clarify the function of the Nabatean מִבְקָרָא.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 227; J. Cantineau, *Le nabatéen* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1930–32), 38 (top); DNWSI, 187.

¹¹² Negev, “Nabatean Sanctuary,” 229. Similarly, DNWSI, 187 s.v. *bqr*. Cf. already the suggestion that the meaning of Nabatean *mubaqqiru* is “vielleicht Opferschauer” in G. von Rad, “‘Gerechtigkeit’ und ‘Leben’ in der Kultsprache der Psalmen,” in *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), 430 n. 1.

¹¹³ S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship* (trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 2:54 n. 5.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Weinfeld, *Organizational Pattern*, 21.

HADASSAH BAT ABIHAIL: THE EVOLUTION FROM OBJECT TO SUBJECT IN THE CHARACTER OF ESTHER

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Several commentators have claimed that Esther is the only character in the scroll that experiences growth and development, and that, unlike other figures, her character is not built around a single trait.¹ Most of the attention to Esther's development has focused on the events of ch. 4 and the transition from her initial reluctance to her ultimate acquiescence to appeal to the king on behalf of her people. It is this writer's contention, however, that the events of ch. 4 constitute only the initial stages of her evolution and that in Esther we are witness to a process of inner struggle and growth that extends all the way through the scroll's final verses. The present study draws heavily upon the work of Simone de Beauvoir concerning gender relations in a patriarchal society. Moreover, it employs studies of the psychology and sociology of persons who endure the process of disclosing their true, stigmatized identity in an inimical environment as a lens through which to understand the figure of Esther. The process of coming out among gays and lesbians has been of sustained academic interest for over thirty years and offers a model with which to analyze Esther's own "coming out" as a hidden Jew.²

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¹ See, e.g., David J. A. Clines, *The Esther Scroll* (JSOTSup 30; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1984), 145; Michael V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 196; Frederic W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1996), 319.

² Throughout his earlier work on Esther, Timothy Beal employs the term "coming out" to refer to the moment of Esther's divulgence in 7:1–3 (*The Book of Hiding: Gender, Ethnicity, Anni-*

My characterization of Esther is intimately bound to the question of the scroll's comment concerning Jewish identity in a Diaspora setting. The issue has engendered much discussion and I should like to locate my position within this discussion at the outset. One position maintains that the scroll heralds the rich and creative possibilities of leading an integrated identity as a Jew who fully participates in the life and leadership of the host culture.³ A second camp adopts a more sanguine approach to the question. Jewish survival and even success are available to the Diaspora Jew. The scroll's message, however, is that this is achieved only through clever, careful, and clandestine manipulation of the powers that be.⁴ A third view explores the issue of Jewish identity in a Diaspora setting, not in terms of the possibilities of survival and success, but in ontic and existential terms: What becomes of Jewish identity and the self-concept as Jew under the strains of Diaspora existence? It is on this score that Edward L. Greenstein and Alice Bach have written that the scroll accentuates the inherent tensions engendered by dual loyalty to Jewish tradition, on the one hand, and temporal authority, on the other.⁵ This position has been argued in expansive fashion by Timothy Beal in his two recent works on Esther.⁶ My contribution here is an attempt to broaden further the avenues opened by Beal in this regard.

I. Esther 2:1–4:11:

Simone de Beauvoir and the Notion of the Other

My characterization of Esther begins with a probe of Esth 2. The process by which young virgins are conscripted for the king situates Esther in a milieu that has been characterized as patriarchal in the extreme.⁷ What may we say of

hilation and Esther [London: Routledge, 1997]). The implication is that "coming out" is fundamentally an event. The social scientific studies cited here suggest otherwise: that coming out is a process. The same, I believe, is true for Esther as she struggles to disclose her stigmatized identity.

³ See, e.g., W. L. Humphreys, "A Life-Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *JBL* 92 (1973): 216; John Craghan, *Esther, Judith, Tobit, Jonah, Ruth* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazer, 1982), 9.

⁴ See, e.g., Sidnie Ann White, "Esther: A Feminine Model for Jewish Diaspora," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. Peggy L. Day; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 167; Susan Niditch, "Esther: Folklore, Wisdom, Feminism and Authority," in *A Feminist Companion to Esther, Judith and Susanna* (ed. Athalya Brenner; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 41; Lilian Klein, "Honor and Shame in Esther," in *Feminist Companion to Esther*, ed. Brenner, 175.

⁵ Edward L. Greenstein, "A Jewish Reading of Esther," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 234–37; Alice Bach, *Women, Seduction, and Betrayal in Biblical Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 192.

⁶ Beal, *Book of Hiding*; idem, *Esther* (Berit Olam; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999).

⁷ See, e.g., Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 24–37; Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 34, 197; Jon D. Levenson, *Esther* (OTL; London: SCM, 1997), 63.

Esther's personality throughout this? What indications does the text offer as to what Esther has become? Michael V. Fox, among others, has said that Esther here is passive, and indeed the syntax of much of ch. 2 underscores this.⁸ She is *taken* in the roundup of virgins (2:8) as she is *taken* to the king's palace (2:16). In preparation for her night with the king she is, as Beal puts it, "utterly deferential," asks for nothing, and takes only what Hegai advises her.⁹

Esther may have been simply a passive person. Turning to Simone de Beauvoir's typology of the "Other," however, I suggest that her passivity be understood as an outgrowth of situation. To be Other, suggests Beauvoir throughout her work, is not only to be treated as object but ultimately to submit—in mind and in temperament—to becoming an object. In a strongly patriarchal culture, the woman who wishes to survive has no choice but to accord and accede to Otherness and thereby forgo subjectivity, transcendence, and a will of her own. She must adopt a posture of submissiveness and complicity.¹⁰ Her very femininity, from the perspective of the One male, is predicated upon them. Only by making herself object and prey can the Other woman realize her femininity in the eye of the Absolute, Essential male.¹¹

The observation has acute implications for the narrative of Esth 2. In the wake of Vashti's banishment Ahasuerus sought a new wife who would be beautiful, but who would also be prepared to be what Vashti was not: the consummate Other, a wife prepared to surrender entirely her own subjectivity and will. The passivity discerned in Esther's behavior reflects an adaptation strategy fitted to the realities of her situatedness. In order to survive and rise beyond the seraglio, Esther assumes the mind and temperament of the objectified, inessential Other.

Beauvoir asserts that the Other woman gains value in men's eyes "by modeling herself upon their dreams," and that in readying herself she must "repress her spontaneity and replace it with the studied grace and charm taught by her elders," as self-assertion diminishes her femininity and attractiveness.¹² The comment is illuminating of 2:15–17. In contrast with the virgins who preceded her, Esther asks for no special aids, and accepts only what Hegai suggests. It is this expression of Esther's yielding and conformity that immediately precedes the phrase in 2:15, "and Esther won the admiration of all who saw her."¹³ They

⁸ Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 198.

⁹ Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 69.

¹⁰ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (French original, Paris: Gallimard, 1949; Eng. trans., New York: A. A. Knopf, 1952), 18.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 691.

¹² *Ibid.*, 359.

¹³ This, in contrast to the JPS translation, which reads, "*yet* Esther won the admiration." The word *yet* is out of place. It was her deference and submission that contributed to her femininity as Other in the world of Ahasuerus's palace.

admired her for her beauty. No less, however, they saw in her that trait that Vashiti so critically lacked: the capacity to “model herself in others’ [i.e., Ahasuerus’s] dreams.”

The evolution of Esther’s otherness is attested through the numerous appellations ascribed to Esther in 2:15: “When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail—the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter—to go to the king. . . .” What is most significant about these appellations is their inclusion at this juncture. Esther has already been introduced in 2:6 and her adoption by Mordecai already reported. The repetition of these details of identity and relation and the mention of her patronymic name here and not earlier in 2:6 signify that Esther stands at a threshold of identity. She enters the king’s palace as the daughter of Abihail, as the adopted daughter of Mordecai. But she will emerge from those chambers with a new designation: *Esther, the king’s wife*.¹⁴

The years of conforming to the king’s notion of consummate Other continue to influence the next phase of her evolution, the events of ch. 4. Sidnie Ann White notes that at this point in the narrative Esther has already been queen for five years.¹⁵ Put differently, six years have elapsed since the daughter of Abihail, who became daughter of Mordecai, was taken from home on her path to becoming the consummate Other, as the king’s wife. The manifold effects of this extended period of otherness are keenly exhibited in Esther’s refusal (v. 11) to comply with Mordecai’s request. What is most significant in her refusal, perhaps, is what is not said. Rejecting Mordecai’s proposal, she offers no alternative. With sackcloth not an option for the king’s wife, we might have expected her at least to join in the act of fasting (as she only later will). Failing that, she might have openly bewailed the fate of her people, in empathy and commiseration. Her comment, in contrast, relates neither to the Jews, nor to Mordecai at all. She does, to be sure, relate to herself, but above all else her comment centers on the person of the king. No other verse in the MT version of Esther bears the word “the king” as many times as does 4:11:

All the *king’s* courtiers and all the people of the *king’s* provinces know that if any person, man or woman, enters the *king’s* presence in the inner court without having been summoned, there is but one law for him—that he be put to death. Only if the *king* extends the golden scepter to him may he live. Now I have not been summoned to visit the *king* for the last thirty days.

¹⁴ I render the word מלכה here as “king’s wife” as opposed to the conventional “queen” in accordance with the translation of Edward L. Greenstein, “The Scroll of Esther: A New Translation,” *Fiction* 9, no. 3 (1990): 52–81. “Queen” implies an autonomous authority that Esther never displays. The term “king’s wife,” on the other hand, appropriately stresses her subservience to him.

¹⁵ White, “Esther: A Feminine Model,” 170.

Esther herself recognizes that the mission could be successful—if she is fortunate enough to be offered the golden scepter. Why does she lack the courage to make the heroic effort undertaken by the common soldier in battle: to risk one's life for the sake of the greater good? Fox claims that she is "simply concerned for her personal safety."¹⁶ Alternatively, however, Esther's absorption with the king and failure to grasp the moral imperative of the moment are well explained through recourse to Beauvoir. Because woman is fully dependent on Man the One for her material protection, she is easily inclined to forfeit the moral justification of her existence as she becomes a thing.¹⁷ The deep-seated tendencies toward complicity endemic to her otherness deprive her of the transcendence necessary to attain the loftiest human attitudes: heroism, revolt, disinterestedness, imagination, creation.¹⁸ Beauvoir is quick to point out, however, that the Other woman who fails to act heroically is hardly to blame for her failure. The fact that her station is defined as a function of the male power structure perforce limits her horizons: "Her wings are clipped, and it is [unfairly] found deplorable that she cannot fly."¹⁹ Seen in this light, Esther is unjustly accused by Jon Levenson of "allowing the queenship to go to her head."²⁰ Nor should Esther be judged as "too busy with her make-up and other skin-deep activities," as charged by Esther Fuchs.²¹ Esther is not spoiled. Esther is the victim of the ravages to the self-concept suffered through the subjugation of six years of Otherness.

In another passage Beauvoir explores a facet of the dynamic present here in Esth 4: Esther's isolation. To this point (and indeed subsequently through to the end of the scroll, as we shall see) Esther is never portrayed outside the palace. Her isolation from the world of the Jews is so total that even her intense interchange with Mordecai is carried on in a foreign tongue through emissaries. Isolation within the confines of the area that proscribes her Otherness, argues Beauvoir, deprives the Other woman of both the appeal and the benefits of solidarity. She can hardly be expected, then, to transcend herself in the cause of the general welfare.²²

Esther's abject otherness is likewise displayed through her disposition toward the law in her refusal of Mordecai's request. Esther could have made the same substantive argument by merely obliquely referring to the law. Com-

¹⁶ Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 62.

¹⁷ Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 635.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 616.

²⁰ Levenson, *Esther*, 80.

²¹ Esther Fuchs, "Status and Role of Female Heroines in the Biblical Narrative," in *Women in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Alice Bach; New York: Routledge, 1999), 80.

²² Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 616.

pare the text of 4:11 with an alternative phrasing that substantively addresses the same points:

All the <i>king's</i> courtiers and all the people of the <i>king's</i> provinces know that <i>if any</i> <i>person, man or woman</i>	[If <i>I</i>
enters the king's presence in the inner court without summons	enter the king's presence in the inner court without summons
There is but one law for <i>him</i> That <i>he</i> be put to death	<i>I</i> will be put to death
Only if the king extends the golden scepter to <i>him</i> may he live.	unless the king extends the golden scepter to <i>me</i>
Now I have not been summoned to visit the <i>king</i> for the last thirty days.	Now I have not been summoned to visit the <i>king</i> for the last thirty days.]

Esther relates the implications of Mordecai's plan for her not in personal terms but in casuist, legal terms ("any person, man or woman"; "only if the king extends the scepter to *him*"). She explicitly identifies the law as immutable in nature ("there is but one law for him") and elevates the status of the law by expressing its universal acceptance ("All the *king's* courtiers and all the people of the *king's* provinces know"). Esther's disposition toward the law that venerates the One, the Essential king, is illuminated by Beauvoir's comment that the reverence of the Other woman for a man in power will express itself through passionate adherence to the law: "If she belongs to the privileged elite that benefits from the established order, she wants it to be unshakable and she is notably uncompromising in this desire."²³

Here for the first time the subjectivity denied Esther through becoming an Other is associated not only with a loss of self and of transcendence. Rather, and significantly for the scroll's message concerning Jewish identity in the Diaspora, Esther's Otherness is coupled with an implicit desiccation of her Jewish identity. In 4:13–14 Mordecai will censure her, engendering within her intense dissonance. Beauvoir helps us characterize the nature of her struggle: stabilized as an object, the Other woman finds herself conflicted between her aspirations as a subject and the compulsions of a situation in which she is inessential.²⁴

We have only begun to trace the struggle and dissonance that brew within Esther between her identity as the consummate Other vis-à-vis Ahasuerus and

²³ Ibid., 616. The same lack of empathy and veneration for law are evidenced earlier in Esther's response to the news that Mordecai is adorned in sackcloth at the palace gate. On the earlier verses in this vein, see Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 70; idem, *Esther*, 60.

²⁴ Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 29.

her subjective identity as a Jew. It is my claim that this tension is not resolved in 4:16 when she accedes to Mordecai's call, as many scholars have held. Rather this tension remains a paramount issue for her and is left only partially resolved even at the end of the story.

II. Esther 4:12–16: The Overcast Dawn of Esther's Emergent Self

As we proceed from here through the closing verses of ch. 4, the prism of Beauvoir's work becomes insufficient. Liberation for Beauvoir would simply be to overcome all of the handicaps of being the Other woman. She would become, instead of object, subject; instead of immanent, transcendent; instead of inessential, essential. The emergence from Otherness is an emergence into the sunlit world of being the One with all its attending benefits for the psyche and the persona. Yet as Esther begins slowly to shed her status as the consummate Other woman within Ahasuerus's power structures, the identity that she is beckoned to take on is anything but a sunlit, serene status as the One. Mordecai calls upon Esther to adopt a subjective identity more fully and publicly, yet it is an identity that is highly stigmatized—an identity marked for death.

To assess the evolution of Esther's character, therefore, we must appreciate that at play here are social and psychological processes of integrating a new and stigmatized identity. Before engaging the narrative of Esth 4:12–16, I pause for a moment to consider issues raised in the social-scientific literature concerning the establishment of a positive minority identity and the complexities involved in the disclosure of a stigmatized identity in an inimical environment.

In her study of Jewish identity and self-esteem, Judith Weinstein Klein confirms general theories by Kurt Lewin that the concealment of one's identity correlates with low self-esteem.²⁵ Klein found that respondents who agreed with the statement "when dealing with certain Gentiles it is best not to advertise the fact that one is Jewish" were found likely to display other markers of low self-esteem.²⁶ Thus, Mordecai's call to Esther to act on her Jewishness challenges her to marshal self-esteem and assertiveness severely diminished through not one, but two concomitant experiential processes in the king's palace. First, her self-esteem had been eroded through the six-year adaptation of her self-concept as Other woman. Her self-esteem had been further chal-

²⁵ Judith Weinstein Klein, *Jewish Identity and Self-Esteem* (Ph.D. diss., Wright Institute, 1977; Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1980); Kurt Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflict* (New York: Harper, 1948).

²⁶ Klein, *Jewish Identity*, 110.

lenged, however, through the vigorous efforts of concealment and attendant fear of exposure that she had endured concerning her true identity as a Jew. For Esther to act on Mordecai's call (as opposed to merely acceding to it verbally, as she does in 4:16), she will need to engage in measures that will foster her diminished self-esteem.

The inner tasks that await Esther are well understood through G. J. McDonald's comments on the tasks involved in the process of coming out concerning a stigmatized sexual identity:

Coming out involves adapting a non-traditional identity, restructuring one's self-concept, reorganizing one's personal sense of history, and altering one's relations with others and with society . . . all of which reflects a complex series of cognitive and affective transformations as well as changes in behavior.²⁷

Applied to Esther, McDonald's comments suggest that disclosure of her stigmatized identity (let alone an identity that marks one for annihilation), comprises several psychological processes. She must consider which of the many contradictory labels available to her currently shade and color her identity: Is she Jew or Persian? Is she marked to be annihilated, or by extension through Ahaseurus an accomplice to the act of annihilation? Is she wife of Ahasuerus or adopted daughter of Mordecai? Is she the king's wife or is she an orphan in exile?

From McDonald's study, moreover, one can deduce that when challenged to disclose a stigmatized identity to an unsuspecting audience one must reassess one's perception of personal history. McDonald's theory is well illustrated within the narrative of Esth 4. When calling upon Esther to appeal on behalf of her people, Mordecai explicitly urges Esther to reconsider the interpretation that she has given to her rise to the crown (4:14). The comment is more than moral reproof. Mordecai understands that Esther will be able to embrace the challenge he sets before her only if she engages in the task of restructuring her sense of personal history.

Finally, the disclosure of a stigmatized identity marks a point of no return. With the truth out, one perforce must alter a spectrum of relations with others and with society. Even if she is granted the golden scepter, Esther faces an uncertain future. The dynamic of her relationship with Ahasuerus and the court will be altered as a result of her disclosure and of the now exposed efforts of concealment and, perhaps, even deception that she had undertaken.

In light of these reflections concerning the difficult inner task that awaits Esther, the present writer finds unpersuasive her depiction here by many commentators. Esther's affirmative response (4:16) to Mordecai's call is widely cast

²⁷ G. J. McDonald, "Individual Differences in the Coming Out Process for Gay Men: Implications for Theoretical Models," *Journal of Homosexuality* 8 (1982): 47.

as a near metamorphosis; the change in her is characterized as “abrupt”²⁸ and engenders a strategic plan carried out with “determination”²⁹ and “firm conviction.”³⁰ The notion that inner processes of struggle are resolved in Esther instantaneously is open to serious challenge. Such sanguine assessments are incongruent with intonations found in Esther’s own statement at the end of 4:16: “Then I shall go to the king, though it is contrary to the law; *and if I am to perish, I shall perish!*” Contrary to Mordecai, who expresses faith that her mission will succeed and that it is explicitly for this that she has risen to the crown, Esther seems quite pessimistic.³¹ Resolved to accede to Mordecai, she is torn asunder by her six-year subjugation as the consummate Other, on the one hand, and by her experiment with a nascent sense of subjectivity, on the other. Equally telling is the intermediate clause that she adds here: “Then I shall go to the king, *though it is contrary to the law*; and if I am to perish, I shall perish!” The law to which she refers is already well known by this juncture in the narrative and has been vigorously debated by the protagonists. Esther’s reiteration here informs neither Mordecai nor the reader of any new information. The clause is significant, though, for what it reveals about one source of Esther’s trepidation. It articulates once again her preoccupation with and veneration for the law as endemic of the One, the Essential to whom she has subordinated her existence for so many years. Far from heralding the emergence of a confident heroine, Esther’s last words in this chapter underscore feelings of inner turmoil and dissonance as she commits to a plan of action for which she lacks the necessary inner resources.

Against this backdrop her call for a public fast at the opening of 4:16 needs to be closely scrutinized. On a primary level Esther’s call for a fast in the face of doom is in line with a well-established biblical tradition of intercessory fasts in circumstances of crisis (cf. 1 Kgs 21:27; Jonah 3:5–8; Neh 9:1). Yet as the king’s wife takes the first steps toward reconnecting with her subjective, essential, Jewish identity, the social implications of her call to fast are enormous as well. Frederic W. Bush has written concerning her call for the fast, “she . . . issues commands that the *local community* . . . *should join her* and her maids in a three-day twenty four hour fast” (emphasis mine).³² Her declaration to Mordecai, however, implies strangely that it is *she* who will be joining *them*: “Go, assemble all the Jews who live in Shushan, and fast on my behalf; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens will observe the same fast.”

²⁸ Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 199; Bush, *Ruth, Esther*, 321.

²⁹ Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 199.

³⁰ Bush, *Ruth, Esther*, 320; cf. White, “Esther: A Feminine Model,” 170.

³¹ See Sandra Beth Berg, *The Book of Esther* (SBLDS 44; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 39.

³² Bush, *Ruth, Esther*, 400.

Esther's fast expresses her solidarity with the Jews, at least as much as it does their solidarity with her.

Moreover, fasting at this juncture in the narrative of Esth 4 has a well-developed history. Esther is calling upon the Jews to fast, when they have already fasted, as attested in 4:3. Fasting constitutes behavior that has been marked in our story as the Jewish response to impending doom. In calling for a new fast, Esther is embarking upon a mode of behavior that is paradigmatically Jewish, and in so doing she joins ranks with her fellow Jews.

Esther could have undertaken other symbolic gestures of allegiance with her people. Fasting, it would seem, was chosen in a highly deliberate manner. She could not don sackcloth (4:2) nor offer verbal supplications, for those would be visibly discernible. By joining ranks with the Jews of Shushan through fasting, she experiences solidarity with them while still maintaining her spatial and social distance from them and from Mordecai. At the same time that she fosters a sense of solidarity that is highly palpable for her (i.e., through the ceaseless and deepening experience of hunger), she does so in a fashion indiscernible to the observer. This allows her to continue to "pass" publicly as the queen of Persia while establishing inner distance from her identity as object, as Ahasuerus's Other woman. V. Cass has observed within the context of coming out that passing allows individuals time to absorb and manage an ever-growing commitment to a new self-image and that this can prove a relatively easy task because it entails simply continuing in old patterns of behavior.³³ Note the extreme duration of the fast—three days. No doubt, the Jews of Shushan understood this as indicative of the need to achieve maximum intercessory efficacy. Yet considering her inner struggle, the extended period of time also buys Esther a stay in which to assimilate her commitment to her newfound identity within the security of modes of behavior that will arouse no suspicion. Concerning the balance between her Persian and Jewish identities, she embarks on an inner journey whereby she is outwardly "in" even as she is increasingly moving inwardly "out."

A third and final component of Esther's fast is the company in which she carries out her fast: "I and my maidens will observe the same fast." The maidens will be the first group to which Esther, in effect, confesses her true identity. E. Coleman's study of the social aspects of the coming out process illuminates the vital role played by the maidens at this juncture. Seeking external validation, homosexual individuals risk disclosure to others. The vulnerability of the self-concept during the coming out stage mandates that such individuals choose carefully to whom they disclose their homosexual identity. It is impor-

³³ V. Cass, "Homosexual Identity Formation: A Theoretical Model," *Journal of Homosexuality* 4 (1979): 226.

tant, Coleman writes, that these first persons be people who will accept the client's homosexuality, so that the existential crisis can begin to resolve in a positive direction.³⁴ Esther's ultimate test, of course, will be at the moment that she reveals her identity to Ahasuerus. But that is a step that she is not yet equipped to take; witness the three-day interval of fasting and the delays that she takes during the two days of feasting in ch. 5, to which we will attend shortly. When Esther drafts her maidens to join her for a seventy-two-hour intercessory fast, one can only assume that she shared with them the cause for and purpose of this monumental undertaking. In so doing she created for herself a coterie of confidants who accept her disclosure that she is a Jew, a sisterhood of solidarity that remains faithful to her throughout the process.

The first step of the disclosure process, then, has been successfully navigated. The maidens' implicit acquiescence bolsters Esther's self-concept as both a legitimate person and an accepted Jew. The step is a crucial one, for as P. Davies has written, disclosure and the emergence of a strong self-identity interact in a reciprocal relationship: disclosure bolsters self-esteem, and in turn, greater self-esteem paves the way for the process of even wider disclosure to continue.³⁵ Esther may now embark upon the process of disclosure to the king himself through the events that unfold in ch. 5.

III. Esther 5:1–8: Milestones along the Road to Denouement

Esther 5:1 relates that on the third day of the fast Esther donned royal apparel in preparation for her entrée to the king. Through several embellishments, the midrash has astutely homed in on several implications within the text:

Esther put on her most beautiful robes and her richest ornaments, and she took with her two maidens, placing her right hand on one of them and leaning on her, *as is the royal custom*, while the second maiden followed her mistress bearing her train *so that the gold on it should not touch the ground*. She put on a smiling face, concealing the anxiety in her heart (emphasis mine). (*Esth. Rab.* 9:1).³⁶

³⁴ E. Coleman, "Developmental Stages in the Coming Out Process," *Journal of Homosexuality* 7, no. 2/3 (1981/82): 34.

³⁵ P. Davies, "The Role of Disclosure in Coming Out Among Gay Men," in *Modern Homosexualities: Fragments of Lesbian and Gay Experience* (ed. Ken Plummer; London: Routledge, 1992), 76.

³⁶ *Midrash Rabbah Esther* (trans. Maurice Simon; London: Soncino, 1939), 109.

To quell her anxiety, Esther, according to the midrash, asks the assistance of two maidens. The MT, of course, makes no mention of these maidens. It may be that the midrash has understood the central role played by the maidens in 4:16. The social support they generate there is transposed in the midrash into physical and psychological support as Esther approaches the king. Yet notice also the midrashic embellishment here concerning the robes and ornaments: they are beautiful (perhaps, as to be expected), and thereby they indicate, as Beal suggests, that Esther wished to look her best for the king, which is to say she wished to appear the consummate Other in his male-ogle eye.³⁷ More significant is the embellishment of the midrash on another point: Esther's attention to court etiquette. She is escorted by one maiden on her right, who supports her "as is the royal custom," while accompanied by another behind her, whose task is to take care that none of the royal garments brush the floor. The midrash is sensitive to what we suggested is latent in 4:11: Esther gives paramount veneration to the king's law as a signal of her fealty to him. Read back into the text of 5:1, an overall message of tension and balance emerges. Even as Esther is defiant of the king and his laws through her trespass, she seeks ways visually to counterbalance that impression by donning robes that accentuate her fidelity to the throne.

Alice Bach has correctly written that Esther here senses the power of her beauty over the king.³⁸ Returning to Beauvoir, however, we can see an interpretation of the "hold" of beauty that tempers that sense of power with a reading more in line with the spirit of Esther's highly tentative advance toward the king. Beauvoir writes that in the relation of master to slave the master has the capacity to satisfy his need of the slave at will. Because of his dependence, however, the slave is always conscious of the need he has for his master. Even if the need is at bottom equally urgent for both, it always works in favor of the oppressor and against the oppressed.³⁹ Ahasuerus can remain in this scene relatively relaxed. Esther, ever the consummate Other, has always been available upon request. By contrast, Esther here is in dire need of Ahasuerus. The encounter spawns not empowerment but awe in Esther's heart. Esther, then, overcomes the first hurdle when the king extends the scepter. She asserts herself and her subjectivity by crossing the threshold of his chamber uninvited, and lives to move on to the next moment. Her courageous act emboldens her to take the next small step.

Ahasuerus effectively offers her *carte blanche* in 5:3, yet Esther demurs and asks only that he attend the drinking feast she has prepared. Commenta-

³⁷ Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 77–78.

³⁸ Bach, *Women, Seduction*, 197.

³⁹ Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 20

tors, rabbinic and modern, have assessed this on a tactical level.⁴⁰ Yet the risks involved in passing up the king's offer suggest the need for interpretation here from psychological perspectives. Esther cannot yet bring herself—in spite of the king's offer—to divulge her true, stigmatized identity and to fully assert herself as a subjective being. She cannot muster the temerity to look him in the face and state: "I am a Jew." She therefore takes another small, yet significant step. Until now Esther, as the consummate Other, has always been the one who *is called* (nay, not even that—4:11!). Now, for the first time, she experiments with the mode of subjectivity in her direct, verbal relationship with the king; she is now the one who is doing the calling. The stance of transcendence and of control over him is alien and is by itself an enormous step in the promotion of her self-concept. Esther therefore issues an innocuous request, one that will be easy for the king to grant: attendance at a banquet in his honor. Esther's first disclosure was carefully orchestrated so that it would be in front of a receptive audience, the maidens. In like, deliberate fashion, Esther, in her first stance as subject in front of the king, poses a request that will likewise be met with receptivity, slowly nurturing her emerging subjectivity and self-esteem.

The invitation advances Esther's growth in a second fashion. She moves the venue of encounter with the king to her own turf. Unlike the throne room, the (unidentified) venue of the drinking banquet will be a space not nearly as rigidly organized by the king's royal power structures.⁴¹ It will be a space defined by Esther's will rather than Ahasuerus's authority.

At the same time that Esther has sustained growth she has all the while maintained her outer role as the consummate Other. She dons royal garb to show her fealty to the king; she touches the head of the scepter in deference and submission. She invites him in a gesture whose ostensible purpose is to demonstrate her esteem and veneration for him. The modalities of behavior, her conception of self, as the "old Esther"—the consummate Other—suddenly loom large indeed as she stands before the king face to face. The entire passage, therefore, finds Esther in a stage of "passing." Yet passing is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, as mentioned before, it allows the individual the opportunity to absorb and manage a new identity while maintaining the outward modalities of the old one and thus to avoid external conflict. On the other hand, however, passing engenders tremendous internal conflict, as the individual experiences cognitive dissonance that feelings and behavior are not consistent with self-definition.⁴² Esther in 5:7–8 is in a state of crisis. Hers is the dissonance of being outwardly "in" and inwardly out.

⁴⁰ See *b. Meg.* 15b and the recent discussion by Levenson, *Esther*, 90.

⁴¹ See White, "Esther: A Feminine Model," 171.

⁴² See B. M. Dank, "Coming Out in the Gay World," *Psychiatry* 34 (1971): 192.

From here, we proceed to a crucial, if enigmatic, episode in the saga of Esther's development: her request at the drinking party that the king and Haman attend yet a second party to be held the next day. Again the risks involved make it seem that tactical considerations were not at the fore here,⁴³ and thus again Esther's inner struggle provides the key to understanding the request.

In his commentary on 5:8, the fifteenth-century Spanish commentator R. Isaac Arama writes that, having tested the king by trespassing the throne chamber, Esther now searches for ways in which she can discern how far she can push him. Indeed, her introductory supplications to the invitation to the second drinking party (5:8) are much more elaborate than those made before she invited the king to the first banquet in 5:4. The king's favorable reply signals to her that the time is ripe and that she may divulge her secret at the second banquet. He has been pushed and has still expressed his desire to grant her any wish. Yet the reply also bears consequences for Esther's self-image as subject and essential; once again she has asserted her will, her agenda, before the One.

Finally, Esther's desire to re-create the same setting the next day may be seen in light of clinical theories regarding the significance of role playing in the coming out process. Advising clinical counselors, L. Lewis cautions that the moment of disclosure to significant others is likely to be fraught with tension.⁴⁴ The counselor can facilitate the process of disclosure by role playing with the client. Within therapy the client should be encouraged to recite the lines to be said to the significant other. The counselor, in turn, aids the client by retorting with the anticipated responses. The rehearsal reduces the tension that will be experienced at the actual moment of disclosure, as the client has already endured the situation, if only partially, in simulation.

This model may be transposed onto the situation at hand for Esther. Esther, of course, has no "therapist" available with whom to role play Ahasuerus's anticipated, or feared, responses. Nonetheless, Esther's request for a repetition of the same encounter the next day may be seen as an attempt to garner the psychological fortification outlined by Lewis, by transforming the first banquet into a "dress rehearsal." In therapy, a client may mouth the lines, but the context of counseling is fully safe, for the words are spoken not to the significant other but to a confidant. Here the dress rehearsal works, but under precisely inverted circumstances. Within her own self-perception, Esther stands in the presence of Haman himself at the first banquet for the first time as a Jew

⁴³ Tactical explanations are offered in *b. Meg.* 15b; Amos Hakham, *Esther* (in Hebrew; Da'at Mikra; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1990), 37; the premises of these arguments are refuted in Clines, *Esther Scroll*, 179 n. 6.

⁴⁴ L. Lewis, "The Coming Out Process for Lesbians: Integrating a Stable Identity," *Social Work* 29, no. 5 (1984): 468.

marked for annihilation. She observes the interaction between her sovereign, in whose hands her fate lies, and his chief advisor. All of this occurs in the forum and setting that she has chosen and that will be replicated on the second day. Even the king has mouthed the line that he will speak at the second banquet: "What is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half the kingdom, it shall be fulfilled" (5:6).⁴⁵ The dress rehearsal is complete except for the lines that Esther must speak. The extra day of abeyance allows Esther to continue "passing," a mode that allows her time to absorb and manage her ever-growing commitment to her Jewish and subjective self-image.

She has thus far taken five constructive steps in reclaiming her subjectivity and self-image. She resigned herself to carry out Mordecai's bidding and verbally committed to do so. She then won the approval and legitimization of the maidens, as they joined her in her arduous fast. She further mustered the temerity to cross the threshold of the inner chamber and win the king's grace. From there she asserted her subjectivity and made an initial request of him. Finally, she maneuvered events in such a way that the party would transpire at a location of her choosing. Esther has engaged in successive acts of subjectivity whose overall impact upon her emerging self-concept is cumulative and progressive. The postponement, we now see, also allows her to internalize the familiarity she has gained with what will be her ultimate proving ground at the second banquet in ch. 7.

IV. Esther 7:

The Failure of Esther's Disclosure

Esther's disclosure would seem to mark a clear victory on a number of scores. The divulgence of her identity and her appeal are high points in the emergence of her self-esteem. Haman's execution marks a clear victory in her crusade to save her people. Nonetheless, in terms of the dynamics of how one expresses Jewish identity in the Persian court, the narrative of ch. 7 points to at least as many failures—on the personal and public fronts—as achievements.

⁴⁵ In fact, note the precise language of 7:2: "On the second day, the king *again* asked Esther at the banquet, 'What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half the kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.'" The word "again" bears a double valence. On the primary level it signifies to Esther that the king is truly sincere in his desire to please, at almost any cost. Yet, on a second level, the "again" that prefaces the king's query, may reflect Esther's perspective that the setting is identical to the dress rehearsal of the day before. She is in the same venue with the same guests under the same circumstances; and, as was the case the day before, "again" the king asks his same query, "What is your wish," and so on. As in 5:7, her response opens with the words, "And Esther replied [וַתֵּעַן אֶסְתֵּר]." This time, however, she will articulate her true desire.

I begin my analysis of the chapter with what is *not* written. The argument from Mordecai's heroics is conspicuously absent from Esther's appeal. Esther could have said, "See! The Jews are loyal citizens—they are the *most* loyal citizens!" She realizes, however, that the key to her success here will be to play the card that she has played all along: the card of the consummate Other. "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request" (RSV). Indeed, not only does Esther cast herself as the Other woman, but also the Jewish people by extension become the Other nation; they are not referred to by name, but merely as an extension of her. If they will be spared it is because she is the king's consummate Other. Her people, she claims in collective self-deprecation, have no great worth. Had the decree been a sentence of forced labor, she would not have troubled the king.

Tactically, all this may have been wise, and even necessary. But there are also implications of this strategy for Esther's emerging self-image as a Jew. Even at the moment of her great disclosure, Esther does not say, "I am Jewish." Only after she responds to the king's query in 7:5 as to the identity of the perpetrator does she indicate her identity, and this only obliquely, by implicating Haman, but not by labeling herself as Jewish.⁴⁶ The Jews, as a named, identifiable people, in fact, go entirely unmentioned. Thus, Esther grows in her subjectivity: for the first time, she makes a plea that has nothing to do with honoring the throne (as was ostensibly the case with the banquets), but is exclusively expressive of her own agenda. Conversely and paradoxically, however, Esther achieves this by accentuating her status as object.

Beal has effectively summed up the status of Esther's self-concept as Jew following the disclosure. While she has disclosed her Jewishness, she does not return—neither here nor at any point throughout the rest of the story—to a state of being solely Jewish,⁴⁷ or, I would add, fully Jewish. This, says Beal, is evident in the epithets given the main protagonists. Whenever Esther and Mordecai are mentioned together, they are set apart by their appellations. Mordecai is always Mordecai "the Jew"; Esther, "the king's wife" (8:7; 9:29, 31). B. M. Dank has written concerning the process of coming out, that the public expression of identity disclosure signifies to the individual the end of the iden-

⁴⁶ This, in spite of the fact that she already knew Haman to be a semi-vanquished foe. The textual basis for this presupposition is found later on, in 8:1, when Mordecai presents himself before the king, "for Esther had revealed how he was related to her." The king is introduced to Mordecai in light of his heroic deeds and is at least familiar with his name. Esther merely fills in the still hidden details, that they are, in fact, cousins. This episode transpires on the same day as the second banquet and thus implies that already at the banquet Esther was aware of Mordecai's rise and Haman's fall.

⁴⁷ Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 100.

tity search.⁴⁸ Yet even following disclosure, Esther is neither fully Persian nor fully Jewish, for she has made her disclosure in halfhearted fashion. As Lewin has written, minority members suffer loss of self-esteem not because they belong to two identities, but out of an *uncertainty* of “belongingness.”⁴⁹

Esther is now the “outed” Jew, who in her behavior and mentality remains the consummate Other. The challenge now facing her is shifted. The question is no longer, Will she tell, or won’t she? Will she appeal on behalf of her people, or won’t she? The question that now confronts our analysis of Esther’s character is a subtler one. What role will her newly revealed Jewishness play in her overall persona? Alternatively, to borrow a contemporary idiom, the question may be phrased, will the necklace bearing her Star of David rest prominently over her royal garb, or will it be tucked away underneath, for no one to see, except when necessary?

The ensuing events of ch. 7 offer Esther no secure setting in which to work out these tensions. Beal has argued that Esther cannot know whether Haman has been executed because of her revelation and assertion of her Jewishness or for quite a different reason: he was caught ostensibly making an advance on the king’s wife.⁵⁰ The answer was clear to at least one party here—Harbona. When Esther unmasks Haman, Harbona is nowhere to be found. But when the king accuses Haman of assaulting the queen, he suddenly knows exactly where to find a tall stake in the waiting. Harbona understood the king’s desire to execute Haman as a function of the violation of his prized object. This could serve only to reinforce her demeanor as consummate Other. Moreover, as many commentators have pointed out, while her life has been spared, the king has yet to say a word that would indicate that he intends to revoke the decree; indeed, he has not referred to the decree at all.

This brings us to the first three verses of ch. 8. It is now—and only now—that Esther reaches for the Mordecai card, and makes the introduction. The reasons are clear. She has played her best hand, her status as consummate Other in her appeal of 7:1–3, and has come up short; she is redeemed but not a word has been said of her people. In fact, as Levenson points out, the king has even taken measures beyond those she requested, but they are not the ones that Esther stipulated. She requested clemency for her people. The king, however, chooses to bestow special favors as he sees fit. To Esther, he gives Haman’s estate (8:1).⁵¹ It is precisely now that she subtly introduces Mordecai; perhaps the king will see the two of them as representative. If both Esther and Mordecai are Jews, then perhaps the Jews are not so demonic after all. The introduc-

⁴⁸ Dank, “Coming Out,” 190.

⁴⁹ Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflict*, 179.

⁵⁰ Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 99.

⁵¹ Levenson, *Esther*, 107.

tion of Mordecai to the king is not carried out in a spirit of celebration, a happy denouement. Rather, it is a tactical ploy initiated by Esther under the duress that will spill out into the open in her plea of hysteria in 8:3.

But the hoped-for gesture never comes. The king never translates his affinity for Esther the (new) Jew and Mordecai the (well-known and trusty) Jew into a generalization about the Jews as a whole and the decree to annihilate them. Instead, the king deals with them solely on an individual basis. Having spared Esther, he now grants Mordecai the ring taken from Haman, signifying the transfer of high office.

In their study of coming out, Martin S. Weinberg and Colin J. Williams identify a crucial distinction in the process of disclosing a stigmatized identity: the distinction between mere tolerance, on the one hand, and genuine acceptance, on the other. Genuine acceptance will correlate with a stronger self-concept and will induce individuals freely to label themselves in terms of the disclosed identity, in light of their acceptance.⁵² In the narrative of Esth 7:1–8:2, Esther and Mordecai have been saved. Still, the question looms large, particularly for Esther: Has she been merely tolerated as a Jew or genuinely accepted? The king's total obliviousness to the plight of the doomed Jews suggests for Esther that her Jewishness has been overlooked and excused, but not more than that. Perhaps the king perceives a hierarchy of Jews. Jews are a threat, as Haman claimed. But then there are some good Jews, like Esther and Mordecai—Jews by descent who nonetheless display fealty to the throne and hence demonstrate behavior not typologically “Jewish.” Esther can only conclude, then, that she has been merely tolerated. It should be of no surprise to us, as we begin the next episode at 8:3, that we see Esther rushing headlong back to her posture as consummate Other in order to save her people.

V. Esther 8:

Esther's Misconception of Her Otherness

Esther's plea to the king at this point is without rival in terms of its expressions of Otherness. In previous appeals she uses a maximum of two introductory supplications; here, crying and stumbling, she uses four (RSV): (1) if it please the king, (2) and if I have found favor in his sight, (3) and if the thing seem right before the king, (4) and I be pleasing in his eyes. She concludes in singular fashion, linking her request to the king's desire or care for her: *and I be pleasing in his eyes*.⁵³ Here, as previously, the Jews are not mentioned by name;

⁵² Martin S. Weinberg and Colin J. Williams, *Male Homosexuals: Their Problems and Adaptations* (New York: Penguin, 1974), 155.

⁵³ Carey A. Moore, *Esther* (AB 7B; New York: Doubleday, 1971), 78; Bush, *Ruth, Esther*, 445.

rather they become “Othered.” They will be spared, assumes Esther, only if the king deems it pitiful for his prized object to have to witness the obliteration of her people and her kindred.

The king’s response in 8:7 is dramatic both in terms of the psychodynamics of Esther’s Otherness and in terms of the process of reading and interpreting Esther. Thus far the king has acted much, but in a fashion that has been consistently open to multiple interpretation. Here the king will explain in his own words the actions he has taken. His statement will enable us to discern retroactively whether Esther correctly interpreted his behavior thus far or not. The construction of the verse is critical:

Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, “I have given Haman’s property to Esther, and he has been impaled on the stake for scheming against the Jews.”

Notice, first, to *whom* the king addresses himself. Esther had thrown herself down in tears and had based her supplication on her status as consummate Other. When the king addresses Esther *and* Mordecai *the Jew*, jointly, it is a sign that perhaps both Esther and we as readers who have perceived the action through her eyes have misinterpreted the king’s initiatives in ch. 7. His address to both Esther and Mordecai attests to the fact that he recognizes Esther not only because of her status as consummate Other. He addresses them as the joint protagonists of the Jews, as he goes on to say in the next verse, “And you [pl.!] may further write with regard to the Jews as you see fit.” Moreover, the steps already taken that he enumerates and their order are highly significant. From Esther’s perspective, the most significant move taken by the king has been that he has spared her life. Yet the king does not even mention this in his list of activities on their behalf. This suggests that the king never contemplated considering Esther as marked for annihilation and so does not include it on his list of graces to the Jewish people. Instead, he mentions the supererogatory step taken to transfer Haman’s estate to Esther’s possession. Finally, and most essentially, we derive from the king’s own comments the reason he had Haman impaled. He mentions nothing of the assault on the queen. Haman was impaled because he schemed not against “her people and her kindred” but against “*the Jews*.” The appellation “the Jews” coming from the king’s mouth here is highly significant. Throughout the two days of banquets, requests, and pleadings, Esther had been careful to deny the Jews an essential status and to refer to them only as an extension of her status in the eyes of the king. Lo and behold, it is Ahasuerus who mentions the unspeakable “J word” first.

The delayed revelation of the king’s inner thoughts is stunning and poignantly underscores the poetics employed by the scroll. Narrative perspective in Esther has taken us through the scroll with Esther’s eyes and with Esther’s psyche. Esther has moved from step to step with a deep-seated sense

of Otherness and an attendant lack of self-concept as a subjective being, and as a Jew. All of her attempts to assert her own subjectivity, agenda, and transcendence are fraught with tension for her. Finally, here in ch. 8, a mask has been removed and it is the king's. We did not recognize his true face because we beheld it through the eyes of an object denied her own identity. What is striking about the sudden realization that it is, colloquially speaking, "cool to be Jewish" in Ahasuerus's kingdom is what becomes of Esther in the remainder of this chapter. The king mandates both Esther and Mordecai to compose royal communiqués (8:8). Only Mordecai, however, participates in this effort (8:9). As the communiqués begin to disseminate, Mordecai triumphantly exits to the streets of Shushan. Esther, we would expect, should join him in what could be described in contemporary terms as Mordecai's ticker-tape parade, yet Esther is strangely absent here as well.

Yet Esther's absence from these roles is not really strange at all. Nowhere in the scroll (to this point) is Esther ever seen outside of the palace or in communication with the wider public outside the palace.⁵⁴ Esther, it would seem, is absorbed in Otherness; her vision of self is, and still remains, as an object of the king. Mordecai knows no such limits. When the king issues ordinances that nearly celebrate the public legitimacy of Jews and Judaism, Mordecai comfortably embraces the opportunity. Esther, however, is reticent to flaunt her Jewishness, lest it be perceived as a retreat from commitment to her role as consummate Other. Mordecai the Jew is the hero of "Salute to the Jews Day" in 8:15; Esther the king's wife cannot even allow herself to attend.

Fox and Clines have both written that the tension of the drama ends at the conclusion of ch. 8.⁵⁵ Beal, in his earlier commentary on Esther, effectively terminates his assessment already at the end of ch. 7. It is true that by this point events seem predestined. The Jews will win; their enemies will perish. But on another plane the tension is still very much alive. The scroll of Esther aims, in part, to address the issue of Jewish identity in the Diaspora under a variety of circumstances. At this juncture in the narrative a new set of circumstances has emerged. Jews and Judaism are not only merely tolerated as we may have suspected in ch. 7. Nor are they even genuinely accepted. They are fully venerated as attested in 8:17: the entire city of Shushan revels in joy, and many of the nations embrace Jews and/or Judaism. The question that still remains is this: Can a Jew who over years adopted a pronounced posture of Otherness vis-à-vis

⁵⁴ This includes her call for the Jews to fast in 4:16. Unlike every other public call in the scroll, Esther's call is never written down, lest her cover be blown. Rather, as the verse itself suggests, Esther told Mordecai that he should initiate and promulgate the fast on her behalf. As far as the public knew, this was Mordecai's call for fasting and not a directive from Esther: "Go, assemble all the Jews . . . and Mordecai went about and did just as Esther had commanded *him*." *Him*, not *them*.

⁵⁵ Fox, *Character and Ideology*, 107; Clines, *Esther Scroll*, 30.

the dominant culture, now shift gears? This is the tension that awaits the reader in the ninth chapter of the scroll of Esther.

VI. Esther 9: The Return of *Bat Abihail*

We next encounter Esther at the interval between the first and second day of fighting in 9:12–13. In v. 12 the king invites Esther to express her additional desires following the news of the Jews' success in the fortress of Shushan. Her response reveals a figure who has begun to blossom into full subjectivity. Esther makes two requests: that the Jews be granted another day to pursue their enemies within the city of Shushan, and that the (already executed) sons of Haman be publicly impaled. Beal has astutely noted that "execution is not so much concerned with death but with the publication of death, including a public claim of responsibility for that death."⁵⁶ Esther's double request manifests and reveals a proactive confidence in her dealings with the king that we have not encountered in her previously. The spirit that comes through in the content of her request is mirrored by the language that she chooses. Her only introductory plea is, "If it please your Majesty," which is used by every character in the scroll when addressing the king (1:19; 3:9; 5:4, 8; 7:3; 8:5; 9:13). Absent here are any of the distinct terms of Otherness that have permeated her dialogue with the king throughout the story (cf. 5:2, 8; 7:3; 8:5). No more does Esther cast herself as a voyeuristic image of the male ogle.⁵⁷ Esther has transcended into her essential, subjective self. And, as we have claimed throughout, subjectivity for Esther in the scroll is equated with a positive self-concept of Jewishness. Previously Esther allowed herself to refer to the Jews only as extensions of her Otherness vis-à-vis the king. No longer appealing on behalf of "her people" or "her kindred," she now accords them an essential identity within her palace discourse as *the Jews* of Shushan.

The transformation of Esther from ch. 8 to ch. 9 is well explained on the basis of the social-scientific literature. In ch. 8 Esther remained passive and was reticent to assert her subjective and Jewish self. Yet nine months elapse between Mordecai's communiqué and the 13th of Adar, when Esther requests the additional day of retaliation. During that time the people of all the provinces become awed by the Jews (8:17), and now even Ahasuerus effusively advances the cause of the Jews in 9:12. Esther's new identity as genuinely accepted is one that is absorbed and managed over time. Esther, growing in self-confidence with each demonstration of regard for the Jews, finally feels

⁵⁶ Beal, *Esther*, 113.

⁵⁷ Bach, *Women, Seduction*, 199.

sufficiently secure to adopt a proactive, nonapologetic posture. Chapter 9 witnesses the final stage in her subjective and Jewish maturation. Following this episode we find no further depiction of Esther's interaction with the king. With the successful assertion of her own subjective identity, closure is achieved.

This takes us to Esther's final action. The letter she co-authors with Mordecai in 9:29 has been the cause for much speculation, as it seems to add nothing beyond that which Mordecai had already dictated in his earlier letter of 9:20. As Levenson has written, no matter how the difficulty of the verse is resolved, the underlying intention is the same: Esther is invoking the authority of her office in addition to that of Mordecai.⁵⁸ And it is precisely here that we return to a name that we have not seen since ch. 2. The communiqué is dispatched by Esther, *daughter of Abihail*. In ch. 2, the scroll stressed Esther's patriny (and her relationship with Mordecai) at the very moment that she entered the king's palace to accentuate the threshold of identity that she was about to cross. It marked the onset of her descent into otherness and consequent loss of subjective, essential, Jewish self. Here, in the closing verses of the scroll, that identity is redeemed and reclaimed. The penning of the letter in 9:29 marks the only event or action recorded in the scroll in which Esther publicly reaches or ventures beyond the palace. Her imprimatur on Mordecai's edict is now in the public sphere. The patriny of *bat Abihail* is not merely a semantic flag that calls upon the sensitive reader to correlate it with the earlier mention in 2:15. Rather, this is how Esther, writing to the Jews "in their script and in their language," actually identified herself in the communiqué. Reaching beyond the palace for the first time, she publicly identifies as a Jew.

The double appellation "Esther the king's wife, daughter of Abihail" at the scroll's conclusion is a tantalizing one. Returning a final time to the literature on coming out, Lewis writes that over time a lesbian woman may successfully integrate her sexual identity into a positive self-concept, in a process that allows her to become increasingly more public about her identity. It becomes one aspect of her life, no longer looming large as it once had.⁵⁹ Extrapolating from these comments to the issue at hand, we may say that Esther has achieved an integration of her identities in a way that had eluded her heretofore. She can more freely express her once stigmatized identity and with little tension. From the palace she can communicate with the Jews "in their script and in their language"—as one of them, as the daughter of Abihail.

"Esther the king's wife, daughter of Abihail," however, also hints at an alternative interpretation. For all the return of her subjective self, the dialectic of identity for Esther is never fully resolved; she never fully returns to a monolithic identity of *bat Abihail* or of *Hadassah* alone. She, unlike Mordecai, can

⁵⁸ Levenson, *Esther*, 129.

⁵⁹ Lewis, "Coming Out Process," 468.

never be labeled “the Jew.” Even at the close of the scroll, when she emerges as *bat Abihail*, she nonetheless remains—nay, is retained in the palace as—“Esther the king’s wife,” a part of her identity forever claimed in the status of otherhood.

Levenson has drawn attention to the juxtaposition of Esther’s personal history in 2:7 alongside the tale of Israel’s history in 2:6 and the great similarity between them. Israel is a people with neither king nor land that has been forced to move to a foreign country. Similarly, Hadassah, who has neither father nor mother, has been granted refuge by her cousin and has taken a foreign name.⁶⁰ The narrative of Esther’s personal identity struggle is a *mise en abyme* of the larger narrative of Jewish existence in the Diaspora. Esther is Everyjew. The tale of Esther’s struggle to reclaim her subjectivity and assertive Jewish identity is a paradigm for Jews everywhere who must demonstrate fealty to a host power, yet inevitably face conflicts of loyalty that engender opposing identities.

⁶⁰ Levenson, *Esther*, 56.

READING ZEPHANIAH WITH A CONCORDANCE: SUGGESTIONS FOR A REDACTION HISTORY

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The germ of the present study is a datum contrary to expectation that has struck my eye—that while Jeremiah was stimulated to model a whole series of turns of phrase on material found in Zeph 1:2–13, there are no antecedents to his phraseology, it would seem, in the “day of wrath” passage, Zeph 1:14–18. The unexpectedness of this datum rests on two circumstances—on the assumption of current scholarship that all of vv. 2–18 of ch. 1 are an authentic part of Zephaniah’s proclamation,¹ and on the multiplicity of occasions on which phrases referring to a culminating judgment of God were crafted by Jeremiah.

Beyond the general assumption of the authenticity of all of 1:2–18, on the other hand, scholars have tended to vary in their judgments as to what is authentic to Zephaniah in chs. 2 and 3;² indeed, Adele Berlin, in her commentary, has deliberately chosen not to try to separate authentic and secondary passages throughout the whole book.³ And, beyond the lack of unanimity on the authenticity of material in chs. 2 and 3, the material in 3:1–13 raises a further uncertainty, namely, where the boundaries of its literary units lie, as one can see by a comparison of the grouping of verses in current Bibles, such as the NJB and the REB (does v. 8 belong with what precedes or with what follows?).⁴

¹ E.g., Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 424; John S. Kselman, “Zephaniah, Book of,” *ABD* 6:1078.

² See Kselman’s careful summary, *ABD* 6:1078.

³ Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah* (AB 25A; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 20: “The book as it stands, whenever it was written—in one sitting by one person or over many years by many people—now presents itself rhetorically and structurally as a unified work (with the possible exception of the superscription) and in its canonical form it was apparently intended to be interpreted as such.”

⁴ The critics are likewise divided; thus Eissfeldt (*Old Testament*, 424) groups the verses as 1–4, 5–7, and 8–13, while Arvid S. Kapelrud (*The Message of the Prophet Zephaniah* [Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1975]) groups the verses as 1–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–13.

It seems appropriate, then, to revisit the question of the literary history of Zephaniah by recourse to data from the rest of prophetic literature, particularly from Jeremiah. Admittedly any attempt to lay out a convincing literary history of fifty-two verses⁵ will fall short of incontrovertibility. Nevertheless, I suggest that the comparisons one can make between the patterns of usage in the text of Zephaniah and those in other prophetic texts can produce a sturdier reconstruction of its redaction history than we have had heretofore.

I shall not linger with questions of chronology of the prophets Zephaniah and Jeremiah: I find no compelling reason to date material authentic to Zephaniah after 622, the year of Josiah's reform. Whatever decision one may reach on the chronology of Jeremiah, I take it for granted that the bulk of that prophet's pronouncements are to be dated after 622, preoccupied as he was with Judah's lapses from the law of Deuteronomy and with the threat of the foe from the north. Thus, in parallels of usage between the two prophets, it will be Jeremiah who is the adapter.⁶

I. Chapter 1

Jeremiah adapts the very first words of Zeph 1:2, where the MT reads קִבֵּץ כָּל בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה; Jer 8:13 reads בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה קִבֵּץ. Both expressions are morphologically and lexically puzzling, leaving one uncertain not only of the soundness of the Masoretic vocalization and of the lexical identity of the words in question but also of the extent to which Hebrew usage allowed a collocation of an infinitive absolute of one verb with a finite form of a second verb of similar sound.⁷ The opening word in both passages appears to be the infinitive absolute of קִבֵּץ *qal* ("gather"), a verb that carries overtones of a final judgment. Whether the finite verb in either passage offers either a putative hiphil stem of the verb קָבַץ, thus "bring to

⁵ I of course exclude 1:1.

⁶ For the date of Zephaniah, see conveniently Kselman, "Zephaniah," 1077; J. J. M. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 163. For a useful discussion of the issues in dating Jeremiah, see Leo G. Perdue, "Jeremiah in Modern Research: Approaches and Issues," in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies* (ed. Leo G. Perdue and Brian W. Kovacs; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1984), 2–10, esp. 2–4. For the majority viewpoint on the date of Jeremiah, see John Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB 21; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), LXXXVI–CXVIII. For two fresh suggestions, see William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26–52* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987), 27; Jack R. Lundbom, "Jeremiah (Prophet)," ABD 3:687–90.

⁷ For the Zephaniah phrase, see Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 167, 169; for the Jeremiah phrase, see William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 283–84. GKC rejects the possibility of an infinitive absolute coupled with a finite verb of another root (§113w, n. 3); I cautiously admit the possibility (*Jeremiah* 2, 75), given another plausible instance in Jer 42:10, for which see *Jeremiah* 2, 300.

an end," or, with altered vocalization, either the qal imperfect of "gather" once more or a presumed hiphil imperfect of סָפַח ("sweep away") is uncertain. In the Jeremiah passage there are further uncertainties: in that passage the LXX reads the second word as an accusative noun, "their fruits," suggesting the vocalization סְפִיחִים ("their ingathering"), and this reading, with its implication of the Festival of Booths, is adopted by many commentators, beginning with Charles François Houbigant in the eighteenth century.⁸ So without being able to be more specific, we may nevertheless suspect paronomasia between the two words in Zephaniah, and/or between the two words in Jeremiah, and/or in Jeremiah's reconception of Zephaniah's phrasing (compare the remarks below on Jer 12:4); fortunately it is not necessary to come to a definitive conclusion in the present study with regard to these details. Since there is no parallel to these phrases elsewhere in the OT, it is at least clear that Jeremiah was offering a variation on whatever antecedent expression Zephaniah used.

In this context the phraseology of Zeph 1:3, "I will gather up humankind and beast, I will gather up bird of the air and the fish of the sea," is picked up in Jer 12:4, "You have swept away⁹ beast and bird," and there is a seeming shift of the identity of the verbs here as well. Further, all three passages (Zeph 1:2–3; Jer 8:13; 12:4) are dependent on the more distant wording of Hos 4:3.

In Zeph 1:5 appears the phrase "those who bow down on the roofs to the host of heaven," which appears to be picked up in a divine word in the course of the prophetic biography of Jer 19: v. 13 of that chapter reads "all the houses upon whose roofs they have sacrificed to all the host of heaven" (and, one may add, the phraseology of 19:13 evidently gave rise secondarily to 32:29). The existence of altars on the roofs of houses is mentioned in 2 Kgs 23:12, but the phraseology of Zeph 1:5 and Jer 19:13 is close enough to suggest the dependence of the latter on the former.

It is likely that the depiction of Yahweh's punishment of a nation as his offering of sacrifice (זָבַח, Zeph 1:7) is reflected in Jer 46:10 with reference to Egypt. There are only two other passages in the OT in which Yahweh is depicted as making a sacrifice as punishment of a nation, Isa 34:6 and Ezek 39:17, 19,¹⁰ and both of these date to a time after Jeremiah. I myself take Jeremiah's oracles against Egypt to be authentic,¹¹ so that 46:10 can be dated to 605 on the basis of v. 2 there.

⁸ So Bernhard Duhm, Carl Heinrich Cornill, Friedrich Giesebrecht, Paul Volz, and Wilhelm Rudolph. See Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 284, and, for a thorough examination of the passage, Michael De Roche, "Contra Creation, Covenant and Conquest (Jer. viii 13)," VT 30 (1980): 280–90.

⁹ Revocalizing to סָפַח with J. D. Michaelis, *Observationes Philologicae et Criticae in Jeremiae Vaticinia et Threnos* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1793), 109.

¹⁰ Bernhard Lang, "זָבַח," TDOT 4:28–29.

¹¹ Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 318.

In Zeph 1:9 appears the striking phrase “And I will punish . . . those who fill their master’s house with violence and fraud [מַרְמָה],” and this phrase is reflected in Jer 5:27, “Their houses are filled with fraud.” Doubtless both passages are more distantly dependent on Isa 3:14, “Goods stolen from the poor are in your houses,” and a metonymy similar to that in the Zephaniah and Jeremiah passages is found antecedently in Amos 3:10 (“those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds”), but the combination of “house(s),” “fill(ed),” and “fraud” does not otherwise occur in the OT.

The phrase שֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל (“great fracture” or “great collapse”) occurs six times in the book of Jeremiah—4:6; 6:1; 14:17; 48:3; 50:22; 51:54; at least the first three of these passages are genuine to the prophet. The antecedent for this phrase would appear to be Zeph 1:10: it is noteworthy that there are no other occurrences of this phrase in the OT.

The expression “thicken on one’s dregs” in Zeph 1:12 may have been picked up in Jer 48:11 by the expression “settle on one’s dregs”; the word “dregs” (שֶׁמֶרִים) appears also in Isa 25:6 and Ps 75:9, but only in Zeph 1:12 and Jer 48:11 does the word occur in the context of an attitude of complacency. Though it is possible that both passages independently rest on some antecedent proverbial expression, to my mind it is more likely that the oracle against Moab in Jeremiah was stimulated by the passage in Zephaniah. My own conclusion is that the passage in Jeremiah is authentic and that vv. 1–4, 6–9, 11–12 were delivered in 605, in the context of the battle of Carchemish.¹²

In Zeph 1:12 occurs the expression “those who say in their hearts, ‘Yahweh will not do good, nor will he do evil.’” This formulation surely stimulated two widely different passages in Jeremiah: 5:12, “They have denied Yahweh and have said, ‘He is nothing,’” and 10:5, “They [the idols] cannot do evil, though doing good is not in them either.” I have defended the authenticity of 10:1–16¹³ and suggested that it might be one version of a communication by the prophet to those Jews in Babylon exiled in 598. The only other expression that speaks of a deity “doing good” and “doing evil” is in Isa 41:23, in which the prophet mocks the pagan gods to do either good or evil.

It is possible that the “futility curse”¹⁴ in Zeph 1:13b, “They will build houses and not live in them, they will plant vineyards and not drink their wine,” stimulated the reversal of that curse in Jer 31:4–5, though at the same time it is clear that the curse in Zephaniah was itself stimulated by the wording of Amos 5:11. I shall return to the Zephaniah verse below.

This series of reminiscences of Zephaniah in the words of Jeremiah, four

¹² Ibid., 354.

¹³ Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 329–30.

¹⁴ For the term, see Delbert R. Hillers, *Treaty Curses and the Old Testament Prophets* (BibOr 26; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964), 28–29.

of them striking and four or five more that are at least possible, drawn from a mere twelve verses of the earlier prophet, is remarkable. But, as I noted at the beginning, what is almost as remarkable is that even though expressions for the day of judgment are found both in the “day of wrath” passage, Zeph 1:14–18, and in the genuine oracles of the prophet Jeremiah, these expressions are not the same. This is, of course, an argument from silence: the verses might be authentic to Zephaniah and the absence of borrowing by Jeremiah might be fortuitous, or such antecedent verses might have offered material that was simply not to Jeremiah’s taste, but I suggest nevertheless that this lack of evidence of imitation calls out for exploration.

Verses 14–18 are marked by the array of occurrences of יום (“day”) in the construct state, eight in vv. 14–16 and one more in v. 18. Now Jeremiah for his part proclaimed a climactic judgment of Yahweh, and he too uses יום in such contexts—several times in his “confessions” with reference to his personal ordeals and to the punishment of his personal enemies (12:3; 17:17, 18), but in contexts of national disaster as well (18:17; 30:7). This phraseology occurs once also in a prose passage (27:22) and several times in the oracles against foreign nations (46:10, 21; 47:4; 50:27, 31; 51:2), passages that may or may not be authentic to Jeremiah himself.

Jeremiah also uses two other words analogously. One is עת (“time”): in 30:7 in parallel to “day,” and in a whole array of passages of national disaster: 2:27, 28; 11:12, 14; 14:8, and in particular with a complement formed from the root פקד (“visit”)—in 6:15 = 8:12 as well as in passages whose authenticity has been controverted (10:15; 46:21; 50:27, 31; 51:18). With a complement formed from the root פקד Jeremiah also uses שנה (“year”): 11:23; 23:12 (as well as in 48:44, part of the oracular material against Moab). But “time” and “year” do not appear in the Zephaniah passage.

It is noteworthy also that עברה (“wrath,” Zeph 1:15, 18) is not used by Jeremiah in these contexts: that noun, without “day,” does appear in the book, but only in 7:29 (“the generation that provoked his wrath”). The word קרוב (“near”) appears twice in regard to the “day” in Zeph 1:14; in Jeremiah that word appears in the context of prediction of disaster or threat only once, but not in regard to a “day” or other temporal term—instead it is in regard to ציד-מוֹאב (“the calamity of Moab,” 48:16).

The only overlap of usage in this phraseology, then, would seem to be יום צָרָה (“day of trouble,” Zeph 1:15) in reference to universal disaster, and Jer 16:19 in reference to the prophet’s personal disaster. In sum: the phraseology of the “day of wrath” passage in Zephaniah does not seem to be a specific source for Jeremiah’s expressions. I suggest that the most likely explanation of this circumstance is that vv. 14–18 are a later addition in the book of Zephaniah, a reinforcement of “day of Yahweh” in v. 7 (and of “day” in vv. 8 and 10).

This possibility is reinforced slightly by another consideration, and that is

the fact that v. 13b is evidently a citation of Amos 5:11. I have suggested elsewhere that the reminiscence of Mic 3:10 in Hab 2:12 is the climactic closure of the sequence of *hōy*-oracles directed originally at Jehoiakim.¹⁵ It may then be that a citation or reminiscence of earlier prophetic material serves as the resonant climax of an oracle here as well.

Now if Zeph 1:14–18 was material added after Jeremiah's time, is there any way to suggest a setting? There are two parallels to the sequence elsewhere. The first is Isa 13:6–9: v. 6 there offers קרוב יום יהוה ("the day of Yahweh is near"), and v. 9 describes the day as עברה ("wrath"). Hans Wildberger dates Isa 13:1–14:2 to the end of the Babylonian empire, and the judgment of Ronald Clements is similar for 13:6–8 and 9–16.¹⁶

The other parallel is Obad 12–15, which contains a series of expressions with "day" in the construct state: in v. 12, "day of his misfortune," "day of their ruin," "day of distress" (יום צרה); in v. 13, "day of their calamity," "day of his calamity" (twice).¹⁷ This sequence is climaxed by the first line of v. 15, "day of Yahweh is near" (קרוב יום יהוה). There is no secure date for Obadiah, but there is general agreement that the book belongs in the first half of the exilic period, thus ca. 585–555.¹⁸

I see no way to sort out any priority among these three passages, but at least they share a common mental framework, and a date early in the exilic period would be a good guess for the three of them. My suggestion is that the data do not favor attributing vv. 14–18 to the prophet—it is far more likely that the verses are an anonymous extension of vv. 2–13 by an early apocalypticist, linked to the earlier sequence by the phrase קרוב יום יהוה in vv. 7 and 14.

II. Chapter 2

The first three verses of Zeph 2, the appeal to the humble of the land, are surely to be attributed to the prophet. They not only offer אף-יהוה ("day of Yahweh's wrath") twice (vv. 2 and 3), a phrase that echoes expressions in 1:2–13, but there is in particular the striking phrase with which the sequence begins,

¹⁵ William L. Holladay, "Plausible Circumstances for the Prophecy of Habakkuk," *JBL* 120 (2001): 123–30.

¹⁶ Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja* (BKAT 10/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 510; Ronald E. Clements, *Isaiah 1–39* (NCB Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 134–35.

¹⁷ It may be worth noting that the LXX text of v. 13 offers three nouns for the repeated "calamity" in the MT and that Hans Walter Wolff accepts this reading (*Dodekapropheton 3: Obadja und Jona* [BKAT 14/3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1977], 15, 18).

¹⁸ Paul R. Raabe, *Obadiah* (AB 24D; New York: Doubleday, 1996), 51–56.

התקששו וקשו. Whatever the precise meaning of this phrase, it would appear to offer a structural parallel to the double expression אֶסְף אֶסְף in 1:2.

Now Jeremiah has no reference to the עֲנִיִּים (“humble”)—the only comparable reference is to the דְּלִים (“poor,” 5:4), and there the tone is altogether different. Nevertheless, Jeremiah has drawn on the rhetoric of Zeph 2:1–3. In my discussion above of אֶסְף אֶסְף in 1:2 I declared that Jer 8:13 is based on it, but now we can go further and suggest that Jeremiah’s frequent collocation of different stems of the same verb (Jer 11:18; 15:19; 17:14; 20:7; 31:4, 18, and compare 30:16)¹⁹ may be reinforced by this phrase הִתְקַשְּׁשׁוּ וקשו in Zeph 2:1. This type of wordplay is not a characteristic of other prophetic material. Though the precise meaning of the phrase may escape us, it surely turns on the background noun קֶשׁ (“stubble”), inasmuch as כְּמֶץ (“like chaff”) occurs in v. 2.²⁰ Given the contemptuous vocative הַגּוֹי לֹא נִכְסָף (“unwanted nation”) and the repeated בְּטָרִם (“before”) and a set of threats in v. 2, one may conclude that the opening phrase too embodies warning, perhaps something like “treat yourselves like stubble and get rid of stubble.”

I suggest that the repeated בְּטָרִם in v. 2 stimulated the occurrence of that expression in the warning in Jer 13:16: there are no other occurrences in the prophets of בְּטָרִם after imperatives of warning. I conclude that Jeremiah drew on Zeph 2:1–3 just as he did on 1:2–13.

When we turn to 2:4–7, the oracle against Philistia, we find that Jeremiah drew from this sequence two sets of expressions, and both of them, strikingly, are found in Jer 6:2–4—while Zephaniah applied both sets of expressions to Philistia, Jeremiah reapplied them to Judah. The first is the ironic use of רְעִים (“shepherds”) for invaders and the related verb רָעָה (“pasture”), along with נוֹה/נוֹה (“pasturage”) for the invaded territory, found in both Zeph 2:6 and Jer 6:2–3, and the second is the parallel of “noon” and “evening” in descriptions of battle, Zeph 2:4 + 7 and Jer 6:4. Neither this use of “shepherds,” “pasture,” and “pasturage” for the enemy’s violation of one’s territory nor the parallel of “noon” and “evening” occurs elsewhere in the prophets.

But the separation of the words “noon” and “evening” in the Zephaniah passage (vv. 4 and 7) raises the question whether there is not a dislocation of text here. Both vv. 4 and 5 clearly refer to Philistia, but the positions of כִּי at the beginning of v. 4 and הוּא at the beginning of v. 5 surely indicate a problem of sequence. Accordingly, J. J. M. Roberts recommends shifting v. 4 after v. 5.²¹ I

¹⁹ See William L. Holladay, “Style, Irony, and Authenticity in Jeremiah,” *JBL* 81 (1962): 46.

²⁰ Hubert Irsigler, *Gottesgericht und Jahwetag: Die Komposition Zef 1,1–2,3, untersucht auf der Grundlage der Literarkritik des Zefanjabuches* (Münchener Universitätschriften: Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament 3; St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1977), 61; Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 186.

²¹ Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 196.

concur with the perception that there is a dislocation, but I would recommend instead restoring v. 4 after v. 6: in this way the assonance of כֶּרֶת (“pastures,” v. 6) is brought close to כֶּרֶתִּים (“Cherethites,” v. 5), and the specificities of the Philistine cities are brought close to “remnant of the house of Judah” (v. 7). If this recommended shift is correct, then the position of “noon” (v. 4) is in proximity with “evening” (v. 7). In any event, there is no reason to question the authenticity of vv. 4–7, proclaimed at a time when the Philistines were still a political force.

In contrast to the situation with regard to Zeph 2:1–3 and 4–7, there are no obvious borrowings by Jeremiah from the oracles against Moab and the Ammonites (2:8–11) and against the Assyrians (2:13–15). Nevertheless, there are cogent reasons to judge the core of both of these to be authentic to the prophet.

With regard to the oracle against Moab and the Ammonites, vv. 10–11 appear to be in prose, and in v. 11 foreign nations are generalized with אֲרָצִים (“coastlands, islands”). One is then on safe ground in concluding that these two verses are secondary. But vv. 8–9 offer several striking features that suggest authenticity. One is the rare word גְּדֻפִּים (“revilings”) in v. 8. The parallelism of this noun with חֲרָפָה (“taunt”) prepares for a nice reinforcement in the following cola with חָרַף piel and with the assonantal variant גָּדַל hiphil. גְּדֻפִּים does not occur at all in the book of Jeremiah where one might expect to see it, even though there are several passages offering a series of words for obloquy (19:8; 24:9; 25:9, 11, 18; 29:18; 44:6, 8, 12, 22).²² The word does occur, however, in Deutero-Isaiah, in Isa 43:28—and (in a feminine form) in 51:7, the latter passage offering the same parallelism with חֲרָפָה (“taunt”) as is found in Zeph 2:8. Can one suggest that Deutero-Isaiah was stimulated by this usage in Zephaniah? I shall return to the question below.

But the most striking feature in the passage occurs in (the Qere reading of) the last colon of v. 9, where, in parallelism with the second occurrence of עַמִּי (“my people”), Yahweh refers to Judah as גּוֹי (“my nation”). The Qere reading here is undoubtedly correct: it is reinforced by the parallelism, and the LXX, Vulgate, and Peshitta read it. But this form, with the first person singular suffix, is a *hapax legomenon* in the OT.²³ (This reading gains slightly in plausibility if a revocalization suggested below, of גּוֹיִם [“nations”] in 3:6 to גּוֹיָם [“their nation”] is accepted.) Does this unique expression imply that Israel has become just one more nation like the others?

Two observations particularly need to be made with regard to this usage in

²² For a discussion of these collections of words see Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 659–60.

²³ Note that its existence is unnoticed in the treatment by Ronald E. Clements of *gōy*, *TDOT* 2:427, 431.

Zeph 2:9. One is that the expression עַמִּי (“my people”) does not occur too often with a poetic parallel: Isa 3:12; Jer 2:13, 31; 4:22 are typical passages in which the expression is unparalleled. And when there is a parallel, if it is not a form of some common noun other than גֵּי, such as נַחֲלָתִי (“my heritage,” Isa 47:6) or לְאֻמִּי (“my nation,” Isa 51:4), then it is often a proper name, “Israel” (Isa 1:3) or “house of Jacob” (Isa 58:7). The second observation is that a nice antecedent to the Zephaniah passage is Isa 1:4; in that verse, a passage of judgment on Israel, גֵּי and עַם are parallel, but these two nouns (and two further parallels, “offspring” and “children”) do not carry personal suffixes, judgment being expressed by attributes: “sinful nation,” “people laden with iniquity.” Given this precedent in Isaiah, one is pressed to ponder the overtones of this unique phraseology in Zephaniah, especially since in the context (1) Yahweh says that his people will plunder Moab and the Ammonites (good news), but (2) it is the “remnant” of his people, the “survivors” of his nation, that will do so (relatively bad news). One cannot avoid the conclusion that in this passage Yahweh’s proclamation of this good news is not only in the context of an anterior decimation of Judah but also, given the cognitive dissonance of the suffixed form “my nation,” with the implication that Judah has deteriorated to an identity like other nations, albeit still distinctive to Yahweh.

One wonders whether the description of the territory of Moab and the Ammonites in v. 9, with two *hapax legomena*, “overgrown [²] with weeds, salt-pits, a waste forever,” did not help stimulate Jeremiah’s extended description of the desert in Jer 2:6, “in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that one passes through, where no one lives”—even though there is no overlap of vocabulary. (The Jeremiah passage was also doubtless stimulated by Isa 30:6, a passage evidently genuine to that prophet.)²⁴

In any event, the wording of vv. 8–9 can hardly be other than authentic to Zephaniah. A verbal link between vv. 8–9 and vv. 4–7 is afforded by “remnant of my people” (v. 9) and “remnant of the house of Judah” (v. 7).

Verse 12 is a fragment on the Ethiopians; there is hardly anything here for literary criticism! And—idle speculation: Is the sudden mention here of “Cushites” (along with the mention of “Cush” in 3:10) due somehow to the name of Zephaniah’s father, Cushi (1:1)?

We now turn to the oracle against the Assyrians (vv. 13–15). Here the most important datum is that the second, third, and fourth cola of v. 15a, namely, the sequence describing Nineveh, הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת לְבִטָּחָה בְּלִבָּבָהּ אֵינִי וְאֵין עֹד, “who sits secure, who says in her heart, ‘I am, and there is no one else,’” is found identically in Isa 47:8 (and with variations in 47:10), describing Babylon; these

²⁴ Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 87; compare Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja* (BKAT 10/3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982), 1150, 1160; Clements, *Isaiah* 1–39, 244.

are the only occurrences in the OT of the suffixed form אֶפְסִי. Now Deutero-Isaiah certainly reused earlier material in a creative fashion,²⁵ but I am not aware of any point at which he cited earlier material word for word. Furthermore the adjective to describe the city in v. 15a, עָלִיז (“exultant”), occurs in the OT to describe a city only otherwise in the Isaiah tradition (22:2 of the “valley of vision”; 23:7 of Tyre; 32:13 of Jerusalem).²⁶ These data suggest that v. 15a is a secondary addition; if it were omitted, the passage offers smooth continuity, an expression of traditional curses, the dwelling-place of animals, the horror of passers-by.²⁷

In this sequence we have a striking series of urban architectural features, “capitals,” “window,” “threshold,” “cedar work” (v. 14). My conclusion is that we can accept the authenticity of vv. 13–14, 15b to Zephaniah.

III. Chapter 3

With the opening verses of ch. 3 we find reminiscences in Jeremiah once more. Indeed, if from Zeph 2:4–7 we located two reminiscences within Jer 6:1–8, then, strikingly, we find no fewer than three reminiscences from Zeph 3:1–7 within Jer 5:1–9. These three are “take correction” (with a negative) in v. 2 (compare v. 7) and Jer 5:3; the parallelism of “lion” and “wolf” in v. 3 and Jer 5:6; and the expression אָמַרְתִּי אֶרֶב (“I said, surely . . .”) in the mouth of God, v. 7 and Jer 5:4. (And there is even one further possible resemblance, the form עָרֵיהֶם [“their cities”] in v. 6 and Jer 5:6: this form, without prefixed conjunction or preposition, is found only in these two passages in the prophets.) And if Jer 5:1–9 contains at least these three reminiscences of Zephaniah, then one is urged to the conclusion that in Zeph 3 the first unit is not closed off by v. 5, as many critics have assumed, but continues through v. 7;²⁸ I shall return to this matter below.

The expression לִקַּח מוֹסֵר with a negative, “take (no) correction,” is found in Zeph 3:2 and Jer 5:3; it is also found in Jer 2:30 (as well as in prose passages in

²⁵ William L. Holladay, “Was Trito-Isaiah Deutero-Isaiah After All?” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition* (ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; VTSup 70/1; Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1997), 193–214; Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

²⁶ For dates on these passages, see Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 812–13, 862–66, 1267.

²⁷ Compare Hillers, *Treaty-Curses*, 44–54, 76–77.

²⁸ Against Kselman, “Zephaniah,” 1079; Michael Weigl, *Zefanja und das “Israel der Armen”*: Eine Untersuchung zur Theologie des Buches Zefanja (ÖBS 13; Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), 156–78; Daniel Hojoon Ryou, *Zephaniah’s Oracles Against the Nations: A Synchronic and Diachronic Study of Zephaniah 2:1–3:8* (Biblical Interpretation Series 13; Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1995), 269.

that book—7:28; 17:23; 32:33; 35:13). The phrase is an idiom of the wisdom tradition, but does not appear otherwise in the prophets.²⁹

With regard to the parallelism of “lion” and “wolf,” v. 3 and Jer 5:6, there is more to this parallelism than the bare mention of two wild animals, inasmuch as the MT of v. 3 reads *זאבי ערב* (“wolves of the evening”), while Jer 5:6 reads *זאב ערבות* (“wolf of the desert”). Indeed, given the LXX reading “wolves of Arabia” for the phrase in Zeph 3:3, some scholars assume a text corruption in the MT here.³⁰ But, given the parallel of “evening” and “morning” in Zephaniah, it is just as likely that Jeremiah is offering a witty shift on Zephaniah’s phraseology.³¹ These are the only two passages in the OT in which the pairing of “lions” and “wolves” represents a threat (the animals are likewise found together in Isa 11:6 and 65:25 in the context of the peaceable kingdom).

With regard to the expression *אמרתי אך* (“I said, ‘Surely . . .,’” v. 7 and Jer 5:3), there are no other instances in the prophets of this sequence spoken by God (nor a comparable instance with prefixed waw + the prefix conjugation of the verb).

But there are other reminiscences outside Jer 5:1–9 to material in Zeph 3:1–7. The negative depiction of the corruption of four classes of leaders in vv. 3–4, *שרים* (“officials”), *שפטים* (“judges”), *נבאים* (“prophets”), and *כהנים* (“priests”), is remarkable, since such a depiction is more than a bare listing. I suggest that such a depiction is reflected in Jer 4:9, where one likewise finds a foursome, a description of the demoralization of the *מלך* (“king”), along with “officials,” “priests,” and “prophets” (and one may also note Jer 2:8, where again there seem to be four classes of officials described).³² There is a triple depiction in Mic 3:11 of *ראשים* (“leaders”) along with “priests” and “prophets,” and of course there are several instances elsewhere of a double depiction of “priests” and “prophets” (e.g., Jer 5:31; Hos 4:4–5);³³ but I am not aware of depictions elsewhere in the prophets of an analogous *quartet* pairing two political classes and two religious classes. The phraseology of Zephaniah may have been stimulated by Mic 3:11, but if it in turn stimulated that of Jeremiah, then it is worth observing that Zephaniah does not include “king” in the list, as Jeremiah does. This circumstance lends support to the dating of Zephaniah to the years of Josiah, whose character was remembered as “doing justice and righteousness”

²⁹ The present study emphatically reverses the assumption I stated in my “Prototype and Copies: A New Approach to the Poetry-Prose Problem in the Book of Jeremiah,” *JBL* 79 (1960): 360, as to the priority of Jeremiah over Zeph 3:1–7.

³⁰ So Elliger in *BHS*, and Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 207.

³¹ Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 179.

³² For the argumentation for four or for three classes here, see Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 88–89.

³³ Thus the two classes “kings” and *רונים* (“rulers”) are found in Hab 1:10, and “rulers” and “judges” in Isa 40:23.

(Jer 22:15—compare the judgment of the Deuteronomistic historian, 2 Kgs 22:2).

It is altogether likely that the occurrence of the *hapax legomenon* פחזות (“recklessness”), used of the false prophets in Jer 23:32, is dependent on the participle פחזים (“reckless”) describing the prophets in Zeph 3:4³⁴ (the participle occurs in the OT only otherwise in Judg 9:4).

I return now to the question of how far the unit extends that begins with Zeph 3:1. The shift in reference to Yahweh from third person to first person in v. 6 at least suggests a fresh start, and the MT reading “nations” demands it. On the other hand, “take correction” (v. 7) implies a reference to the covenant people, a return to the reference in v. 2.

The solution is to accept Roberts’s suggestion to revocalize “nations” in v. 7 to גוים (“their nation”):³⁵ if God refers to Israel/Judah as “my nation” in 2:9, the reference in 3:7 is to the nation whose corrupt leadership is listed in vv. 3–4; thereby “their nation” matches “their battlements,” “their streets,” and “their cities.” By this solution, then, vv. 6–7 round off vv. 1–5.

Verses 8–13 are troublesome. There are in this section no stimuli for the rhetoric of Jeremiah, unless we count the association of מרמה (“deceit”) with לשון (“tongue”) and פה (“mouth”) in Jer 9:7 as an adaptation of פה and לשון תרמיה (“tongue of deceit”) in Zeph 3:13 (both מרמה and תרמיה are derived from the root רמה [“deal deceitfully”]).

But the basic issue in vv. 8–13 is that the passage appears to mix both striking and conventional phraseology. Instances of the former are קומי (“my arising,” v. 8), שפה ברורה (“pure lip”) and שכם אחד (“[with] one shoulder,” v. 9), all unique expressions in the OT. Instances of the latter are “pour out upon [them] my indignation” (v. 8, found also in Ezek 21:36; 22:31); “by the fire of my passion all the earth shall be consumed” (v. 8), which is replicated from 1:18 (with a shift in possessive suffix), and the expression ואין מחריר (“and none shall make [them] afraid,” v. 13), found eleven times in the OT, indeed once otherwise after ורבעו (“and they shall lie down,” Isa 17:2).

As it stands, furthermore, the passage offers cognitive dissonance, in that the expression עליהם (“upon them,” v. 8) suggests that Yahweh will punish “nations” and “kingdoms” (the immediate antecedent) and will purify the speech of “peoples” (v. 9); but the forms in the second person singular feminine such as occur in v. 11 suggest that the punishment and purification are directed after all to the covenant people, not to the nations of the world. The only solution would seem to be that an original passage beginning לכן (“therefore”), linked to vv. 1–7, addressing Judah, has been expanded by additions generaliz-

³⁴ Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 646.

³⁵ Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 208–9.

ing the passage to “nations” and “kingdoms.” I thus accept the proposal of Roberts to emend עַמִּים (“peoples”) in v. 9 to עַמָּם (“their people”).³⁶ In this way “their people” would echo the revocalized “their nation” in v. 6 (see above). (Beyond this link between vv. 1–7 and 8–13 one finds another, that of עֲלִילוֹת [“deeds,” v. 11] with that word in v. 7.) I suggest, then, that the original stratum of Zephaniah consisted of vv. 8a, 9, 11–13a, and that the two half-verses introduced by vv. 8b and 13b, along with the prosaic v. 10 about Ethiopia, are redactional additions.

In this way the structure of vv. 8a, 9, 11–13a itself becomes apparent: two parts of the body in v. 9 (“lip” and “shoulder”) are balanced by two more in v. 13 (“mouth” and “tongue”). Furthermore, there is a balance in the two occurrences of כִּי־אֵל (vv. 9, 11) and in the two occurrences of “in the name of Yahweh” (vv. 9, 12): it is to be noted that “call (קָרָא) on the name of Yahweh” occurs in the prophets only otherwise in Joel 3:5—it is an expression at home in the J-source (Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25).

When one moves to 3:14–20, the impression given by v. 14 is of the style of Deutero-Isaiah: one has the imperatives of “sing” and “rejoice,” each followed by vocatives of the covenant people, close to Isa 54:1 (and compare Isa 44:23; 52:2). Accordingly commentators before 1914, and many since, have been inclined to assume that vv. 14–20 are a late addition to the book.³⁷

But this assumption, I propose, is specious; though the passage is a proclamation of salvation, the vocabulary beyond these imperatives shares little or nothing with Deutero-Isaiah. Thus, the expression in v. 14, “with all one’s heart” (בְּכָל לֵב [ב]), characteristic of Deuteronomic language, is not found in Deutero-Isaiah. The verb פָּנָה piel (“clear away,” v. 15, with object “enemies”) occurs in Deutero-Isaiah only with the object דֶּרֶךְ (“clear the way,” Isa 40:3 [+ Isa 57:14; 62:10]). “In your midst” (בְּקִרְבְּךָ) occurs in vv. 15 and 17 (and compare “from your midst” [מִקִּרְבְּךָ] in 3:11); there is nothing like this in Deutero-Isaiah. The expression בְּשִׂמְחָה (“with gladness,” v. 17) occurs in Isa. 55:12 (and שִׂמְחָה in Isa 35:10; 51:3, 11), but in Zephaniah it is used of Yahweh, whereas in Deutero-Isaiah it is used of the covenant people. The verb אָסַף qal (“remove,” v. 18) does not occur in Deutero-Isaiah; its use here is doubtless an echo of 1:2. In v. 19 one finds participles translated “lame” and “outcast” (צִלְעַ qal; נִדָּה niphal); there are no forms of these verbs in Deutero-Isaiah. The expression שׁוּב שְׁבוֹתָ (v. 20, found also in 2:7), usually translated “restore one’s fortunes,” does not occur in Deutero-Isaiah.

³⁶ Ibid., 210, 216–17; compare Elliger in *BHS*.

³⁷ See J. M. P. Smith in *Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel* (ICC; New York: Scribner, 1911), 261; George Fohrer, *Introduction to the Old Testament, Initiated by Ernst Sellin* (Nashville/New York: Abingdon, 1968), 457. Compare the nuanced remarks in Kselman, “Zephaniah,” 1079.

If this passage does not in general reflect the diction of Deutero-Isaiah, may one suggest that the influence goes in the other direction—that the diction of v. 14a itself stimulated the diction of Deutero-Isaiah? I have proposed elsewhere that the diction of Jer 30:10–11 stimulated similar expressions in Deutero-Isaiah,³⁸ and I have suggested above that the parallel of “revilings” and “reproach” in Isa 51:7 may have been stimulated by Zeph 2:8. One could then propose that 3:14a stimulated similar diction in Deutero-Isaiah.

IV. Conclusion

The data adduced suggest that the following pericopes are genuine to Zephaniah: 1:2–13; 2:1–3, 4–7, 8–9, 13–14 + 15b; 3:1–7, 8a + 9 + 11–13a, 14–20; that the following are secondary poetic additions: 1:14–18; 2:15a; 3:8b, 13b; and that 2:10–11 represents one or more prose additions. Finally one must admit that two verses (2:12 and 3:10) referring to Ethiopia are both secondary and puzzling.

With regard to the secondary poetic additions, there are two patterns to note. The first is that 1:14–18 reflects the diction of Isa 13:6–9 and that 3:13b reflects diction of Isa 17:2. Does one see here the work of a prophetic redactor who was at home with the Isaianic collection against foreign nations? The second is that 3:8b replicates, with a shift of possessive suffix, a sequence in Isa 1:18, and that 2:15a replicates cola from Isa 47:8. On first thought one assumes that a redactor who *adapts full sequences taken from elsewhere* would have been someone other than a redactor who *shapes phrases under the stimulus of diction elsewhere*—but then again, perhaps not.

One may hope that these comparisons with other portions of prophetic literature help to bring into focus the distinctive diction and message of a prophet whose surviving oracles are few.

³⁸ Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 156, 160, 173.

WATCH DURING THE WATCHES (MARK 13:35)

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German scholars assume that *Evening* (ὀψέ), *Midnight* (μεσονύκτιον), *Roostercrow* (ἀλεκτοροφωνία), and *Morning* (πρωί) in Mark 13:35 are widely used in the Greco-Roman world as common designations for the four night watches.¹ S. Krauss describes these names as *Umgangsprache* and classifies them as colloquial rather than proper speech.² After noting that numbers one through four provide the proper designations for the watches, H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck call the names in Mark 13:35 “populäre Bezeichnungen der vier Nachtwachen.”³ Echoing agreement, E. Klostermann notes that Mark 13:35 presents “die vier Nachtwachen nach römischer Zählung mit ihren volkstümlichen Namen.”⁴ Because the Romans divided the night into four watches and the Jews into three, Klostermann assumes that these four names are Roman designations for the night watches. R. Pesch reflects this assumption by commenting, “Die Nachtwachen sind nach der volkstümlichen römischen, allerdings auch in Palästina gebräuchlichen Zählweise.”⁵ These German descriptions of the names of the watches in Mark 13:35 assume that these names are common Greco-Roman designations for the watches.

¹ This article is dedicated in appreciation to the memory of Dr. David J. Wilmot, who introduced me to ancient time-keeping schemes. For a discussion of the twelve-hour day and the four-watch night, see T. W. Martin, “Time and Money in Translation: A Comparison of the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version,” *BR* 38 (1993): 60–69. On time-keeping in general, see T. W. Martin, “Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-Keeping Schemes in Gal 4:10 and Col 2.16,” *NTS* 42 (1996): 105–19; idem, *By Philosophy and Empty Deceit: Colossians as Response to a Cynic Critique* (JSNTSup 118; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 124–34.

² S. Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie* (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, 1911), 2:420.

³ Str-B 1:689.

⁴ E. Klostermann, *Das Markusevangelium* (HNT 3; 4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1950), 139.

⁵ R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT 2.2; Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 315.

English scholars concur with this assumption. Relying upon F. Blass, J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard describe Roostercrow as “vulgar” speech.⁶ H. B. Swete calls the names in Mark 13:35 “popular equivalents” to the numbered watches that are “not to be too strictly interpreted.”⁷ R. H. Gundry states that the Jews originally had three night watches in contrast to the four watches of the Romans and concludes that Mark 13:35 “substitutes Roman watches for Jewish ones.”⁸ Likewise, V. Taylor comments that the temporal expressions in Mark are “popular in character” and “correspond to Roman usage.”⁹ Clearly, both German and English scholars agree that Evening, Midnight, Roostercrow, and Morning are common popular Greco-Roman names for the four night watches.

I. Greek and Roman Usage

The evidence, however, challenges the validity of this assumption. Greek and Roman authors use numbers rather than these names to designate the night watches.¹⁰ The lexicons rarely specifically attest “night watch” as a meaning for these names, and when they do, they cite only Mark 13:35 as an example.¹¹ A Pandora search of each of these names within four lines of φυλα- on the TLG D Disk identifies no authors who place these names in any syntactical relationship to the word *watch* (φυλακή). This search cautions against supplying φυλακή to ἡ ἀλεκτοροφωνία to mean “night watch” as Blass does.¹² Greek and Roman authors avoid adding the word *watch* to specify these names as watches. Evening (ὄψέ) indicates a time “late in the day” in contrast to Morning (πρωῖ), the early portion of the day.¹³ Midnight (μεσονύκτιον) is the time when the sun reaches the midpoint of its night journey, and Roostercrow (ἀλεκτοροφωνία) is the time when roosters crow. The use of these names as less structured temporal references contrasts with the more specific interpretation of these names in Mark 13:35 as watches, which divide the night into four equal segments.

⁶ J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard, *Accidence and Word-Formation*, vol. 2 of *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 271.

⁷ H. B. Swete, *The Gospel According to St Mark* (3d ed.; London: Macmillan, 1909), 318.

⁸ R. H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 797.

⁹ V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St Mark* (2d ed.; London: Macmillan, 1966), 524.

¹⁰ C. H. Mayo, “St. Peter’s Token of the Cock Crow,” *JTS* 22 (1921): 368.

¹¹ LSJ do not specify the meaning “night watch” for any of these four names. BDF only attest “night watch” as a meaning for *Morning* (πρωῖ) and *Roostercrow* (ἀλεκτοροφωνία) but not for *Evening* (ὄψέ) or *Midnight* (μεσονύκτιον).

¹² BDF §123.1.

¹³ BAG s.v. ὄψέ and πρωῖ.

In all of Greek literature to the sixth century C.E., “roostercrow” (ἀλεκτοροφωνία) occurs in only two non-Jewish or non-Christian passages.¹⁴ Strabo uses the term to describe Mt. Athos:

Mt. Athos is breast-shaped, has a very sharp crest, and is very high, since those who live on the crest see the sun rise three hours before it rises on the seaboard. . . . Mt Athos is . . . so high that on its crests the sun is up and the people are weary of ploughing by the time cock-crow begins (ἡνίκα ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἀρχή) among the people who live on the shore. (Strabo, *Geogr. Fr.* 7.33, 35)¹⁵

H. L. Jones includes a note in his translation that identifies ἀλεκτοροφωνία as “the third watch of the night.”¹⁶ The third watch of the night, however, begins around 12:00 midnight, and the crest-dwellers of Mt. Athos would not be plowing before this time. Instead, Strabo’s description associates ἀλεκτοροφωνία with the sunrise. Strabo says that the crest-dwellers experience ἀλεκτοροφωνία three hours before the shore-dwellers. Therefore, they are up and tired of plowing before the rooster hails the break of day for the shore-dwellers. Strabo’s use of the term ἀλεκτοροφωνία refers not to the third watch but to the breaking light of early morn when roosters crow.

The other occurrence of ἀλεκτοροφωνία demonstrates a similar understanding. Aesop recounts the fable of an industrious widow who had several handmaids (Aesop, *Fab.* 55.1.2). The handmaids erroneously blamed the rooster for the widow’s habit of rising to work during the night toward roostercrow (νυκτὸς πρὸς ἀλεκτοροφωνίαν). They killed the rooster, but their action only caused the industrious widow to rise earlier because she no longer had the rooster to inform her of the time. If Aesop uses ἀλεκτοροφωνία to designate the third watch of the night, the widow would be rising before 12:00 midnight to begin her work. This interpretation is absurd, for the widow would be sleeping very little and hardly at all after the death of the rooster. Instead of the third watch of the night, ἀλεκτοροφωνία refers to early dawn when the roosters crow. Aesop says that the widow arose just before this time until her handmaids killed the rooster and then she arose much earlier.

The Greco-Roman world was well aware of the early morning crowing of roosters. In Lucian’s farcical dialogue, Micyllus exclaims to his rooster, who is a reincarnation of Pythagoras, “When you notice that the sun is about to come up, you raise your voice far in advance and give warning of his rising” (Lucian,

¹⁴ A search of ἀλεκτοροφωνία on the TLG D Disk yielded thirteen occurrences of this word outside the NT: eight in Origen’s works, two in Macarius’s *Ser.*, two in Aesop’s *Fab.* 55.1.2, and one in Strabo, *Geogr. Fr.* 7.33, 35.

¹⁵ H. L. Jones, *The Geography of Strabo* (LCL; London: William Heinemann, 1924), 3:354–57.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 357 n. 1.

Gall. 1).¹⁷ One of Aristophanes' characters calls the rooster a κῆρυξ for its ability to herald the dawn (Aristophanes, *Eccl.* 30–31). Athena complains to Zeus that she could not sleep because the frogs croaked all night until the rooster crowed (Homer, *Batr.* 191–93).¹⁸ These texts associate roosters' crowing with the fourth watch, when humans awake to go about their business (Aristophanes, *Av.* 488–90).¹⁹

Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 10.24.46) also associates the crowing of roosters with the fourth rather than the third watch of the night:

Nearly equally proud and self-conscious are also our Roman night-watchmen, a breed designed by nature for the purpose of awakening mortals for their labors and interrupting sleep. They . . . at the fourth camp-watch recall us to our business and our labour and do not allow the sunrise to creep upon us unawares, but herald the coming of day with song.²⁰

A late Greek text confirms Pliny's association, ὀρθρος μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ὥρα τῆς νυκτός, καθ' ἣν ἀλεκτρυόνες ἄδουσιν, ἄρχεται δὲ ἐνάτης ὥρας καὶ τελευτᾷ εἰς διαγελῶσαν ἡμέραν, "For pre-dawn is the period of the night during which roosters crow, and it begins during the ninth hour of the night and ends at sunrise."²¹ Thus, Pliny the Elder and other authors confirm that Greco-Roman culture associates the crowing of roosters with the fourth watch or predawn rather than with the third watch of the night.

These occurrences of Roostercrow thus illustrate how Greek and Roman authors use the names mentioned in Mark 13:35 as temporal references less structured than night watches. According to Greco-Roman practice, these watches are numbered rather than named. The only exception to the numbering system is the fourth watch, which is sometimes called ἡ ἑωθινὴ φυλακή.²² Authors who name the fourth watch still number the other watches first, second, and third.²³ Even the name ἑωθινὴ for the fourth watch demonstrates that πρῶτῃ

¹⁷ A. M. Harmon, *Lucian* (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 2:178–79.

¹⁸ H. G. Evelyn-White, *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns and Homeric* (LCL; London: William Heinemann, 1959), 555.

¹⁹ B. B. Rogers, *Aristophanes* (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 2:176–77.

²⁰ H. Rackham, *Pliny: Natural History* (LCL; 10 vols.; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947), 3:320–23. See G. Bilfinger, *Die antiken Stundenangaben* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1888), 48–49.

²¹ I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca* (3 vols.; Berlin: G. C. Nauck, 1814–21), 1:54; cited by Bilfinger (*Stundenangaben*, 49). The English translation is my own.

²² Appian, *Syr.* 118.2; Dionysius Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 3.56.1.5; Plutarch, *Pomp.* 68.3.1; *Caes.* 43.6.1; *Arat.* 7.5.2; Polybius, *Hist.* 3.67.2.4; cf. LXX Exod 14:24; and Jdt 12:5. See Bilfinger, *Stundenangaben*, 48–49.

²³ Diodorus Siculus, for example, names the fourth watch ἡ ἑωθινὴ φυλακή (*Hist.* 15.84.1.6; 17.56.1.5; 19.93.2.8; 19.95.3.6) but refers to the other watches as first (3.48.1.7; 13.47.2.1;

is not a common Greco-Roman designation for this watch. Thus, the way Greek and Roman authors use the names mentioned in Mark 13:35 as well as their numbering of the watches challenges the validity of the assumption that these names are common popular Greco-Roman designations for the night watches.

Further evidence also challenges this assumption. The names of the Midnight and Roostercrow watches are anomalies in the four-watch Roman system. In this system, the Midnight watch refers to the second quarter of the night, from about 9:00 P.M. to 12:00 midnight. This watch occurs not in the middle of the night but in the first half of the night, as some of the rabbis correctly perceive.²⁴ This anomaly indicates that μεσονύκτιον is not an original Greco-Roman name for this watch, and this inept name never succeeds with Greek and Roman authors.

Similarly, the name ἀλεκτοροφωνία is anomalous in the four-watch Roman system, since it designates the third watch of the night, from about 12:00 midnight to 3:00 A.M., when roosters do not crow. H. Kosmala tries to resolve this anomaly by testifying that during his visit to Jerusalem he heard roosters crowing at 12:30 A.M., 1:30 A.M., and 2:30 A.M.²⁵ Kosmala's explanation is problematic. Even if roosters crow in the middle of the night in modern Jerusalem with its electric lighting, it does not follow that ancient roosters had the same practice. If a rooster were to crow just after midnight, such a confused rooster would likely encounter the same fate as Micyllus's rooster in Lucian's farcical dialogue. After his rooster's surprise crowing just after dark, Micyllus threatens, "I'll pay you back, never fear, as soon as it is daylight, by whacking the life out of you with my stick" (*Gall.* 1).²⁶ In spite of Kosmala's testimony, it is unlikely that roosters crow just after midnight. If they do, Aristophanes could not call them "heralds of the dawn" (*Eccl.* 30–31).

II. Night Watches or General Temporal References?

One is led to ask, then, whether these names in Mark 13:35 refer to the night watches at all. These names could simply be less structured temporal ref-

13.111.1.7; 19.32.2.3; 19.38.3.12; 19.96.4.8), second (14.24.5.1; 17.68.7.3; 18.40.3.3; 19.26.1.4; 20.96.4.2; 20.98.5.2), and third (19.95.5.6).

²⁴ The rabbis discuss whether the night has three or four watches (*b. Ber.* 3b).

²⁵ H. Kosmala, "The Time of the Cock-Crow," *ASTI* 2 (1963): 118–20; see also idem, "The Time of Cock-Crow [II]," *ASTI* 6 (1968): 132.

²⁶ Harmon, *Lucian*, 2:172–73. Mayo mentions the blowing of the *buccina* to mark the transition from one watch to another and proposes that the blast at the end of the third watch was popularly called the *Gallicinium*, to which Jesus' prediction refers ("St. Peter's Token," 367–70). The only supporting text Mayo cites is Apuleius, *Metam.* 8.1. This text more likely mentions the crowing of a rooster rather than the blast of a horn, and a horn blast is not given as a meaning for *Gallicinium* in *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Bilfinger labels each of the horn blasts that separated the night into four parts a *Hahmenschrei* (*Stundenangaben*, 65), but cites no textual support for such a labeling.

erences, as they are in Greek and Roman authors. Several considerations, however, confirm these names as designations for the night watches in the pre-Markan tradition, even though the final redactor(s) of Mark fail to recognize them as such. First, the immediate context of Mark 13:35 relates the names in this verse to the night. The Son of Man will come during a period of darkness (Mark 13:24–25), when humans are prone to sleep (13:36). Jesus exhorts his followers to watch and be alert for the arrival of the master of the house (13:34–37). Even though the language is figurative, the period of darkness when humans are prone to sleep most aptly describes the night, the time when extra vigilance is needed.

Second, the early Christian description of a nocturnal *parousia* also associates the names in Mark 13:35 with the night and, more specifically, with the watches.²⁷ The traditional metaphor of the thief related to the *parousia* suggests a nocturnal *parousia* (Rev 3:3; 16:15). Warning that the Lord will return as a thief in the night, Paul exhorts the Thessalonians not to sleep but to keep awake and be sober (1 Thess 5:2, 6; cf. Rom 13:11–14; Eph 5:14). According to the Q tradition, the thief might arrive during any one of the night watches (Q 12:39–40/Matt 24:43).²⁸ The Lukan version of Q 17:34 likewise envisions a nocturnal *parousia* and does not specify which watch when it records Jesus as saying, “On that night, two humans shall be sleeping upon one bed. One human shall be taken and the other human left” (Luke 17:34). In the special Matthean material, however, the bridegroom in the parable of the Ten Virgins comes in the middle of the night (μέσης νυκτός, Matt 25:6).²⁹ Mark’s account of Jesus’

²⁷ For a discussion of whether this articulation of a nocturnal *parousia* is metaphorical or literal, see A. Weiser, *Die Knechtsgleichnisse der synoptischen Evangelien* (SANT 29; Munich: Kösel, 1971), 156–58. J. Lambrecht says, “Der Redaktor denkt vom Bild einer nächtlichen Heimkehr her (vgl. ἀρπυνεῖτε v. 33). In keinem Fall rät es sich, diese Ausdrücke allegorisch zu deuten” (*Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse: Literarische Analyse und Strukturuntersuchung* [AnBib 28; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967], 246). After investigating the evidence, V. Balabanski concludes: “The reference to the thief metaphor and to the need to keep awake do form a constellation of ideas which attest the tradition of a nocturnal *parousia*” (*Eschatology in the Making: Mark, Matthew and the Didache* [SNTSMS 97; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 32 n. 25). However, Matthew’s two men in the field (Matt 24:40) instead of Luke’s two humans in the bed (Luke 17:34) at the *parousia* suggests the possibility of a diurnal *parousia* and warns against interpreting the nocturnal metaphors too literally. Whether metaphorical or not, the articulation of a nocturnal *parousia* associates the names in Mark 13:35 with the night watches.

²⁸ The Matthean version (Matt 24:43) has ποῖα φυλακῇ and indicates that the ποῖα ὥρα of the Lukan version (Luke 12:39) refers to the periods of the night. Furthermore, every reference or allusion to the *parousia* in Luke assumes a nocturnal *parousia* (Luke 12:35–38; 17:34). J. S. Kloppenborg and others (*Q Thomas Reader* [Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990], 62) accept the Matthean rather than the Lukan version as original to Q as do also J. M. Robinson and others (*The Critical Edition of Q: Synopsis including the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas with English, German, and French Translations of Q and Thomas* [Leuven: Peeters, 2000], 360–61).

²⁹ A. Puig i Tàrrach restricts μέσης νυκτός too narrowly to “exactement au milieu de la nuit” (*La Parole des Dix Vierges* [Mt 25, 1–13] [AnBib 102; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1983],

walking on the water encourages Mark's suffering community to hope in the *parousia* and associates Jesus' arrival with the fourth watch of the night (Mark 6:45–52; cf. Matt 14:25).³⁰ This early Christian description of a nocturnal *parousia* associates the names mentioned in Mark 13:35 with the four night watches.

Third, the traditional material most closely related to Mark's parable of the Porter specifies the return of the master of the house during the night watches. The parable of the Watching Servants in Luke 12:35–38 warns that the master of the house might return from the wedding feast in the second or third watch and exhorts his servants to keep their lamps burning and stay awake. J. Dupont reasons that the same original parable lies behind both the Markan and the Lukan redaction.³¹ Even though these redactions alter various features of the original parable, they do not change the original idea of the master's return during the night watches.³² Hence, Dupont reasonably concludes that the names in Mark 13:35 designate the watches.³³

60–63). Others such as Balabanski (*Eschatology*, 32–33) unnecessarily limit μέσης νυκτός to the Midnight watch. This temporal phrase encompasses the second and third watches in a four-watch system and thus includes a period of about six hours. The second and third watches in Luke 12:38 correspond to Matthew's μέσης νυκτός and articulate an expectation of the *parousia* during one of these two night watches.

³⁰ M. Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 41; R. M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 85–87. D. N. Peterson surveys and criticizes such reconstructions of the Markan community (*The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate* [Biblical Interpretation Series 48; Leiden: Brill, 2000], passim).

³¹ J. Dupont, "La Parole du Maître qui Rentre dans la Nuit (Mc 13, 34–36)," in *Mélanges Bibliques en Hommage au B. Rigaux* (ed. A. Descamps and A. de Halleux; Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), 106.

³² Of course, the precise shape of this parable of the Porter in the pre-Markan tradition is debatable, but almost everyone identifies the elements of application as redactional. See Weiser, *Knechtsgleichnisse*, 142–75; and V. K. Robbins, "Summons and Outline in Mark: The Three-Step Progression," in *The Composition of Mark's Gospel: Selected Studies from Novum Testamentum* (ed. D. E. Orton; Brill's Readers in Biblical Studies 3; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 117. For an alternative view, see E. K. Broadhead, *Prophet, Son, Messiah: Narrative Form and Function in Mark 14–16* (JSNTSup 97; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 149 n. 3. E. J. Pryke lists scholars who think that Mark 13:33, 34a, 35a, and 37 are redactional (*Redactional Style in the Marcan Gospel: A Study of Syntax and Vocabulary as Guides to Redaction in Mark* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978], 21, 146, 171). C. B. Cousar's limitation of the pre-Markan parable to v. 34 is too narrow ("Eschatology and Mark's Theologia Crucis: A Critical Analysis of Mark 13," *Int* 24 [1970]: 332), for the names of the watches in Mark 13:35 are also traditional, as Mark's failure to understand the Roostercrow watch in the passion narrative demonstrates. R. Pesch's argument that these names are redactional because they occur in the passion narrative fails to recognize the redactional misunderstanding of the Roostercrow watch in this narrative (*Naherwartungen: Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* [KBANT; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968], 201). Pesch later changed his mind ("Markus 13," in *L'Apocalypse johannique et l'Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament* [ed. J. Lambrecht; BETL 53; Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1980], 356–57) and in his commentary included Mark 13:35–36 along with v. 34 in the pre-Markan tradition.

³³ Dupont, "Parole," 106 n. 1. Dupont, however, incorrectly identifies the temporal refer-

Finally, the temporal structure of the passion narrative demonstrates that the names in Mark 13:35 designate the night watches in the pre-Markan tradition. R. H. Lightfoot argues that the four night watches as named in Mark 13:35 provide the structure for the passion narrative. He notes that during the Evening watch, Jesus celebrates the Passover meal with his disciples (Mark 14:17). The events and arrest in Gethsemane occupy the Midnight watch, which is not specifically mentioned in the narrative. Nevertheless, Peter denies Jesus in this watch just before the Roostercrow watch (Mark 14:72). In the Morning watch, the council convenes and delivers Jesus to Pilate (Mark 15:1). Lightfoot comments, "It is very noticeable that in the passion narrative of this gospel the last hours of the Lord's life are reckoned at three-hour intervals which is also the method adopted in 13:35."³⁴ This temporal structure of the passion narrative, the original form of the parable of the Porter, the early Christian articulation of a nocturnal *parousia*, and the immediate context of Mark 13 demonstrate that Evening, Midnight, Roostercrow, and Morning name the four night watches in the pre-Markan tradition.

III. Jerusalem Provenance of Night Watch Designations

Since the names for the watches in Mark 13:35 do not originate among the Greeks and Romans, the issue of their provenance arises. The context of Mark 13:35 places these names in the area of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. The entire discourse in Mark 13 arises from a disciple's request for Jesus to consider the temple buildings (13:1). Jesus responds with an oracle of the temple's destruction (13:2). As they sit on the Mount of Olives in view of the temple, other disciples ask Jesus to explain when these events would occur. In his response, Jesus explicitly warns those in Judea to flee to the mountains (13:14). At the end of the discourse, Jesus relates the parable of the Porter (Mark 13:34–36), in which several intertextual echoes such as κύριος, οἰκίας, ἔρχεται, ἐλθών, and ἐξαίφνης recall LXX Mal 3:1, "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple." Malachi 3:10 specifically identifies this temple with the Lord's house. Thus, this parable forms an *inclusio* with Mark 13:1–3; the

ence in Luke 12:38 as Palestinian and in Mark 13:35 as Roman. The use of numbers in Luke 12:38 and names in Mark 13:35 to designate the watches indicates that the reverse is probably true.

³⁴ R. H. Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1950), 53. D. Senior (*The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark* [Passion Series 2; Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1984], 39) concurs with Lightfoot. For evidence connecting Mark 13 as a whole with the passion narrative, see Balabanski, *Eschatology*, 66–69; and F. Dewar, "Chapter 13 and the Passion Narrative in St. Mark," *Theology* 64 (1961): 99–107.

discourse begins and ends with reference to the Jewish temple.³⁵ Even though this parable shifts the focus from the house of the Lord in vv. 1–3 to the Lord of the house, it nevertheless associates the names in v. 35 with the temple in Jerusalem, as does the entire context of the discourse in Mark 13.³⁶

The term ὥψε as a designation for the Evening watch also connects the names in Mark 13:35 with Jerusalem and the temple. When referring to evening, both Matthew (8:16; 14:15, 23; 16:2; 20:8; 26:20; 27:57) and Mark (1:32; 4:35; 6:47; 14:17; 15:42) prefer ὥψια to ὥψε. Nevertheless, ὥψε occurs occasionally in Matthew and Mark. In the thoroughly Jewish temporal expression in Matt 28:1, ὥψε refers to the Evening of the Sabbath, when the women came to Jesus' tomb. Of course, the scene of this pericope is Jerusalem. Mark also uses ὥψε as a temporal reference in scenes located in Jerusalem and more specifically in the temple. Mark 11:19 reports that Jesus, after "cleansing" the temple, went outside the city when Evening (ὥψε) came. If the variant ὥψε is read in Mark 11:11, Mark refers yet again to Jesus' leaving Jerusalem and the temple at this time.³⁷ The other occurrence of ὥψε in Mark is in 13:35 in the context of the temple. Matthew and Mark's use of this designation only in scenes depicting Jerusalem and the temple connects ὥψε, and by association the other names in Mark 13:35, with the environs of Jerusalem.

The anomalies created by the terms *Midnight* and *Roostercrow* in a four-watch system are explained if they are caused by the shift from three Jewish night watches to the four-watch Roman system.³⁸ In the three-watch system,

³⁵ E. Trocmé asserts, "Mark certainly used Palestinian traditions formed at a very early date for the . . . two parables in Mark 13" (*The Formation of the Gospel according to Mark* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975], 43). The present investigation supports Trocmé's assertion at least for the parable of the Porter.

³⁶ Even though the Jerusalem temple provides the inscribed context of Mark 13, it does not provide the implied context of this chapter. Balabanski argues that οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ in Mark 13:14 is a redactional addition locating the implied audience outside Judea (*Eschatology*, 90). D. E. Aune's identification of this entire discourse as a Greco-Roman *Tempeldialog* also suggests an implied context that transcends the temple in Jerusalem (*Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983], 184–87). See also V. K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 178–79.

³⁷ Markan usage suggests that ὥψε is traditional in material associated with Jerusalem and the temple whereas ὥψια reflects redaction. The use of οὐσῆς in the temporal phrase of Mark 11:11 indicates that this phrase belongs to the tradition since Mark elsewhere always uses γενομένης (8:16; 14:15, 23; 16:2; 20:8). The ὥψε of *8* and Origen is more difficult syntactically and probably preserves the traditional form of this temporal phrase, while the ὥψιας of other manuscripts is less difficult since it resolves the syntactical difficulty and conforms to Markan practice.

³⁸ Jewish texts such as Judg 7:19 and *Jub.* 49:10–12, which were written before Roman power extended to Palestine, presuppose a threefold division of the night. Those written later, such as Mark 6:48/Matt 14:25 and Josephus A.J. 18.9.6 §356 and B.J. 5.12.2 §510–11, reflect a fourfold

the middle watch, from about 10:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M., lies midway through the night, and Midnight (μεσονύκτιον) is an apt name for this watch (see Judg 7:19). When a fourth watch is added, however, the Midnight watch is relegated to the first half of the night and no longer occupies its former middle position. In the Jewish three-watch system, roosters crow in the third watch, from 2:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M., and Roostercrow is an apt name for this watch. The addition of a fourth watch, however, relegates the third watch to a time from 12:00 midnight to 3:00 A.M., when roosters do not crow, and the name, although retained, is no longer apropos. These anomalies indicate that Midnight and Roostercrow are most likely relics of the old Jewish three-watch system with the Morning watch added for congruence with the Roman four-watch system.

Several texts substantiate a Jewish provenance for the names in Mark 13:35. The adjective form of πρωι (πρωινή or πρωῒα) modifying φυλακή occurs only in Jewish and Christian materials and suggests that this name arises in a Jewish rather than a Roman context.³⁹ The designation of the third watch as Roostercrow and the second as Midnight as well as the mention of an earlier watch occurs in *m. Yoma* 1:8:

בְּכֹל יוֹם תּוֹרְמִין אֶת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בִּקְרִיאַת הַגָּבֶר אוֹ כְּמוֹד לֵל, בֵּין לִפְנֵי בֵּין לְאַחֲרָיו; בְּיוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים מִחֲצוֹת, וּבִרְגָלִים מֵאַשְׁמוּרָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה; וְלֹא הָיְתָה קְרִיאַת הַגָּבֶר מִנֶּעֱת עַד שְׁחִיתָה הַעֲזָרָה מִלֵּאָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל;

Every day they used to remove the ashes from off the Altar at cock-crow, or near to it, either before it or after it; but on the Day of Atonement [they did so] at midnight, and on the Feast at the first watch. And before the [time of] cock-crow drew near the Temple Court was filled with Israelites.⁴⁰

Beginning with the Roostercrow watch, which is the usual time for the removal of the ashes, this text stipulates an earlier removal of the ashes on the Day of Atonement and an even earlier removal at the feast. The mention of midnight

division of the night. The differing perspectives within such texts prompt the subsequent discussion among the rabbis about whether the night has three or four watches; see *b. Ber.* 3b.

³⁹ A Pandora search of the TLG D Disk with the parameters πρωι- within four lines of φυλακ- identifies only Jewish and Christian occurrences such as LXX 1 Sam 11:11; Ps 129:6; Athanasius, *Expositiones in Psalmos* (PG 27:520.16, 19); John Chrysostom, *Expositiones in Psalmos* (PG 55:376.15) and *Fragmenta in Proverbia* (PG 64:668.32); and Origen, *Selecta in Psalmos* (PG 12:1649). Theodoretus states, φυλακή γὰρ πρωῒα ἡ τελευταία ὥρα τῆς νυκτός, "For the morning watch is the final period of the night" (*Interpretatio in Psalmos* [PG 80:1901]).

⁴⁰C. Albeck, סדר מועד, vol. 2 of ששה סדרי משנה (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1988), 225; H. Danby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 163. I have used Danby's translation rather than J. Neusner's (*The Mishnah: A New Translation* [New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1988], 266) because Danby's translation of the two occurrences of קְרִיאַת הַגָּבֶר in this passage does not replicate the confusion of the Roostercrow watch with an actual rooster's crowing.

(הצות) as a time during the night earlier than Roostercrow (קריאת הנבר) and of the initial watch (אשמורה הראשונה) of the night as earlier than either of these two indicates that this passage refers to the watches of the night.⁴¹ Jewish texts, therefore, such as *m. Yoma* 1:8, use the names in Mark 13:35 to designate the watches of the night.

A textual variant in the Palestinian and Babylonian versions of *m. Yoma* 1:8 even replicates the shift in Mark's Gospel from the singular Roostercrow as a watch of the night (Mark 13:35) to the plural of a rooster's crowing twice during Peter's denial (Mark 14:30, 72). The Palestinian version of *m. Yoma* 1:8 contains the plural construct קרות הנבר, whereas the Babylonian version contains the singular construct קריאת הנבר. The plural construct "crowings of the rooster" changes the meaning of Roostercrow from a watch of the night to an actual rooster's crowing. Even though J. Meinhold prefers the plural, the singular is more congruent with the context.⁴² The removal of the ashes at the Midnight watch on the Day of Atonement concludes the sacrifice. Israelites are more likely to fill the temple court during the sacrificial process in the Evening and Midnight watches preceding the Roostercrow watch than in the early morning before a rooster crows when nothing is happening.

Even though the Babylonian version contains the better reading, its Gemara (*b. Yoma* 20b) on this passage reveals a complete loss of the conception of Roostercrow as a watch of the night by the third century. A dispute between R. Shila and Rab arises over the definition of Roostercrow (קריאת הנבר). Rab insists that it means the "call of a man" (קרא גברא), while R. Shila tenaciously asserts it means the "call of a rooster" (קרא תרנגולא). The dual meaning of נבר as either a man or a rooster forms the semantic basis for this dispute, in which neither participant correctly recognizes קריאת הנבר as a night watch.

Both the presence and the misunderstanding of Roostercrow in these Jewish texts indicate that these names for night watches represent Jewish practice. More specifically, these Jewish texts locate these names in the environs of Jerusalem by linking the Evening, Midnight, and Roostercrow watches to the temple cult prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Jews and others outside these environs as well as Jews of a later time mistake the night watch designation Roostercrow for an actual rooster's crowing. This misunderstanding of Roostercrow by those separated geographically from Jerusalem and temporally

⁴¹ J. Meinhold asserts: "Es ist doch wohl anzunehmen, daß die Nachtwache hier nach der jüdischen Rechnung als 1/3 und nicht nach der römischen auch später von den Juden übernommen als 1/4 der Nacht zu nehmen ist" (*Joma: Der Versöhnungstag* [*Die Mischna*, ed. G. Beer and O. Holtzmann; Gießen: Töpelmann, 1913], 35). F. Avemarie observes that the passage makes sense with either a three- or four-watch system (*Yoma Versöhnungstag*, vol. 2.4 of *Talmud Yerushalmi* [Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995], 36 n. 280).

⁴² Meinhold, *Joma*, 34; see pp. 74–75 for his text-critical evidence.

from the first century limits the provenance of this name, and probably the other names in Mark 13:35 as well, to Jews in the environs of Jerusalem during the Second Temple period.⁴³ Furthermore, the addition of Morning as the fourth watch specifies that the names as they appear in Mark 13:35 are from the Roman era of the Second Temple period, when Jewish practice shifted from three to four night watches.

IV. Redactional Implications

Following W. Marxsen's emphasis on Mark 13 in his study of Mark, several redactional studies of this chapter have appeared.⁴⁴ All of these studies, however, assume that the names in Mark 13:35 are common Greco-Roman designations of the night watches.⁴⁵ The present investigation has challenged this assumption and concluded that these names most likely designate the night watches in Jerusalem prior to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. This conclusion has implications for the redactional study not only of Mark 13 but also of the passion narrative.

The primary problem of Markan redaction is separating the tradition from the redaction.⁴⁶ The similarity of other *parousia* parables (Luke 12:35–46;

⁴³ This conclusion discounts A. J. McNicol's contention that Mark has used Matthew as a "repository of the Palestinian material" ("The Composition of the Synoptic Eschatological Discourse," in *The Interrelations of the Gospels* [ed. D. L. Dungan; BETL 95; Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1990], 183, 198). Mark rather than Matthew preserves the Palestinian names of the watches.

⁴⁴ W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), 151–206. G. R. Beasley-Murray summarizes and critiques studies prior to 1993 (*Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993], 175–349, 377–475).

⁴⁵ This assumption induces many to conclude that the names are redactional rather than traditional. See Lambrecht, *Redaktion*, 246, 250; Weiser, *Knechtsgleichnisse*, 142–43; and F. Flücker, "Die Redaktion der Zukunftsrede in Mark 13," *TZ* 26 (1970): 408. Considering *parousia* parables, however, others such as Dupont ("Parabole," 106) and E. Brandenburger (*Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik* [FRLANT 134; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984], 41, 126, 167) conclude that Mark 13:35b–c is traditional. C. Breytenbach thinks that Mark 13:35 is traditional but that the extent of Markan redaction remains open (*Nachfolge und Zukunftserwartung nach Markus: Eine methodenkritische Studie* [ATANT 71; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1984], 303–4). The present study demonstrates that at least the names for the watches are traditional rather than redactional.

⁴⁶ J. D. Kingsbury, "The Gospel of Mark in Current Research," *RelSRev* 5 (1979): 104. R. H. Stein describes twelve redactional criteria that require the ability to distinguish tradition from Markan redaction ("The Proper Methodology for Ascertaining a Markan Redaction History," in *Composition*, ed. Orton, 34–51). To these twelve criteria, C. C. Black adds two more (*The Disciples according to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate* [JNTSup 27; Sheffield: Sheffield Aca-

19:12–27 and Matt 24:42–51; 25:13–30) to Mark’s parable of the Porter (Mark 13:34–36) suggests—and the names of the watches in Mark 13:35 confirm—that this parable belongs to the pre-Markan tradition, since neither Mark nor any of the other evangelists understands these names as designations of the night watches.⁴⁷ Their misunderstanding indicates that the pre-Markan tradition connects this parable to the passion narrative and uses the names of the watches in Mark 13:35 to structure this narrative.⁴⁸ The evangelists’ misunderstanding is most evident in their handling of the Roostercrow watch in the pre-Markan tradition of Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial and of the actual denial itself.

In the pre-Markan tradition, Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial either mentions the Roostercrow watch or an actual rooster’s crowing. Internal evidence favors the former over the latter. Accordingly, Jesus predicts that before the Roostercrow watch, Peter would deny him three times. Lohmeyer argues that the other temporal references in the immediate context of Jesus’ prediction support this understanding.⁴⁹ The inclusion of “today” (σήμερον, Mark 14:30; Luke 22:34, 61) and “in this night” (ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτί, Mark 14:30; Matt 26:34) with “before Rooster crow watch” (πρὶν ἄλεκτοροφωνίας) marks movement from the longest span of time to the shortest.⁵⁰ “Today” designates

demic Press, 1989], 36–37; cf. 266 n. 64). The present redactional argument that Mark’s misunderstanding of a cultural phenomenon distinguishes tradition from redaction does not precisely conform to any of these fourteen criteria.

⁴⁷ For the parallels, see J. S. Kloppenborg, *Q Parallels: Synopsis, Critical Notes, and Concordance* (FF Reference Series; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1988), 138–39, 196–201. H. T. Fleddermann argues that Mark 13:35 is secondary to the more general reference to “hour” in Q 12:40 (*Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts* [BETL 122; Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1995], 206–8). The present study indicates that the reverse is more likely. For a discussion of how this “Q” material relates to Mark 13:34–36, see Balabanski, *Eschatology*, 81; Beasley-Murray, *Jesus*, 470–71; Dupont, “Parabole,” 97–98; Weiser, *Knechtsgleichnisse*, 174–75; and D. Wenham, *The Rediscovery of Jesus’ Eschatological Discourse* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 15–100.

⁴⁸ The use of the night watches in Mark 13:35 to structure the passion narrative demonstrates that this structure is prior to the redaction that misunderstands the Roostercrow watch for an actual rooster’s crowing. In the debate about whether the passion narrative is a pre-Markan tradition or a Markan creation, the names of the watches in Mark 13:35 favor the former over the latter without precluding Markan redaction. For a discussion of the issues, see W. R. Telford, *Mark* (NTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 55–56; and T. Söding, “Der Evangelist in seiner Zeit,” in *Der Evangelist als Theologe: Studien zum Markusevangelium* (ed. T. Söding; SBS 163; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995), 35–38. For a list of scholars on both sides of this debate, see Broadhead, *Prophet*, 12 n. 1 and 14 n. 1.

⁴⁹ E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (KEK 2.1; 17th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 313.

⁵⁰ Since the final redactor(s) of these versions do not understand the Jewish transition from one day to the next in the Evening, it is more likely they would delete rather than add these temporal references as the tendency in the manuscript tradition indicates. Several later scribes delete σήμερον from Mark 14:30. This deletion associates these scribes with Roman culture, which began

approximately a twenty-two-hour period of time from the moment of Jesus' prediction to the following evening. "In this night," which ends at sunrise, limits the time period to about ten hours. "Before Roostercrow watch," which begins at 12:00 midnight, limits the time period to about four hours. According to Lohmeyer, the increasing specificity of these three temporal references intensifies the seriousness of Jesus' prediction. This intensification only results if Jesus' prediction refers to the Roostercrow watch and not to an actual rooster's crowing.

Some manuscripts also support a similar understanding of Jesus' predictions in the pre-Markan tradition. In place of πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι (before rooster's crowing) in Matt 26:34, 75, a few manuscripts preserve the reading πρὶν ἀλέκτοροφωνίας (before Roostercrow watch). The third-century P³⁷ and P⁴⁵ contain this reading in Matt 26:34 as does a fourth-century parchment codex from Antinoopolis in Matt 26:75.⁵¹ Even though this reading does not have strong external support, G. Zuntz contends that it nevertheless represents the form of the prediction in Matthew's original text since it conforms with the Matthean redactional tendency to reduce Markan phrases to a single word.⁵² Few commentators follow Zuntz in accepting this reading as original with Matthew, but several conclude that this reading actually represents the original form of the tradition, which each of the evangelists misunderstands. W. M. L. de Wette comments on Matt 26:34, "Wenn Jesus diese Worte gesagt hat, so meinte er bloss das Nachtviertheil der ἀλέκτοροφωνία; die Evangg. denken aber dabei an einen wirklichen Hahnenruf."⁵³

Not only Jesus' prediction but also the actual account of Peter's denial in the pre-Markan tradition mentions the Roostercrow watch rather than an actual rooster's crowing. K. E. Dewey explains, "The first denial, Peter's response to the maid (14:68), also appears to be tradition, having no strong evidence of redaction." In contrast, heavy Markan redactional elements occur in the second and third denials. Since the rooster's crowing is connected with

the new day at 12:00 midnight and placed a rooster's crowing in the early predawn hours. For these scribes, Jesus made his prediction before midnight, and Peter's denial occurred in the morning just prior to a rooster's crowing. Accordingly, Jesus did not make his prediction on the same day as Peter's denial. Therefore, these scribes consider "today" (σήμερον) as an incorrect time designation and delete it from Jesus' prediction. Unfortunately, these scribes do not comprehend the original Jewish context of Jesus' prediction.

⁵¹ C. H. Roberts, *The Antinoopolis Papyri* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1960), 1.11.

⁵² G. Zuntz, "A Note on Matthew XXVI.34 and XXVI.75," *JTS* 50 (1949): 182–83.

⁵³ W. M. L. de Wette, *Kurze Erklärung des Evangeliums Matthäi* (KEK 1.1; Leipzig: Weidmann, 1836), 223. Lohmeyer (*Markus*, 313) and A. Plummer (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Luke* [ICC; 5th ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975], 505) express a similar interpretation in their comments on Jesus' prediction in Mark 14:30 and Luke 22:34. The majority of commentators, however, favor an actual rooster's crowing over the Roostercrow watch. See Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 2:383; and C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (CGTC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 429.

Peter's third denial, Dewey concludes, "The traditional story has no cockcrow motif."⁵⁴ This conclusion that a rooster's crowing is absent from the pre-Markan tradition of Peter's denial corroborates the other evidence indicating that Jesus' prediction in the original tradition mentions the Roostercrow watch rather than an actual rooster's crowing.

Neither Mark nor any of the other evangelists, however, recognizes the Roostercrow watch in either Jesus' prediction or Peter's denial.⁵⁵ The prediction occurs twice in each of the Synoptics (Mark 14:30, 72; Matt 26:34, 75; Luke 22:34, 61) and once in John (13:38). Except for the addition of *δὶς* in Mark 14:72, *ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτί* in Matt 26:34 and *σήμερον* in Luke 22:61, all of these versions exhibit exact verbal agreement: *πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρίς ἀπαρνήσῃ με*, "Before rooster's crowing, you will deny me three times."⁵⁶ Mark 14:30 incorporates all these additions into the most complete version of the prediction: *σὺ σήμερον ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτί πρὶν ἢ δὶς ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρίς με ἀπαρνήσῃ*, "Today, in this night, before rooster crowing twice, thrice you will deny me."

Luke 12:34 and John 13:38 further emphasize the rooster's crowing in Jesus' prediction. Instead of the Matthean and Markan temporal phrase *πρὶν* with the infinitive, Luke 22:34 substitutes an indicative statement of fact, *Πέτρε, οὐ φωνήσῃ σήμερον ἀλέκτωρ ἕως τρίς με ἀπαρνήσῃ εἰδέναι*, "Peter, a rooster will not sound today until you deny three times that you know me." John 13:38 replaces the temporal phrase with a prohibition, *Οὐ μὴ ἀλέκτωρ φωνήσῃ ἕως οὗ ἀρνήσῃ με τρίς*, "A rooster will in no wise sound until which time you deny me three times." Both of these evangelists move Jesus' prediction even further than either Mark or Matthew from any possible reference to Roostercrow as the third watch of the night.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ K. E. Dewey, "Peter's Curse and Cursed Peter," in *The Passion in Mark* (ed. W. Kelber; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 100–101, 103.

⁵⁵ Jesus' discourse in Mark 13 plays an important role in the overall narrative. See N. R. Petersen, "When is the End not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark's Narrative," *Int* 34 (1980): 163–66; idem, "The Reader in the Gospel," *NeoT* 18 (1984): 38–51; and W. S. Vorster, "Literary Reflections on Mark 13:5–37: A Narrated Speech of Jesus," in *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W. R. Telford; Studies in New Testament Interpretation; 2d ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 269–88. The pre-Markan tradition connects this discourse or at least Mark 13:35 to the passion narrative and uses the night watches to structure this narrative. By substituting a rooster's crowing for the Roostercrow watch, the final redactor(s) of Mark's Gospel fail to understand the structural significance of the night watches and hence are not responsible for this connection of Mark 13:35 and the passion narrative.

⁵⁶ The word order does vary, however, and *δὶς* probably does not belong to the earliest tradition as Dewey ("Peter's Curse," 104), Mayo ("Peter's Token," 369–70), and G. D. Kilpatrick ("Some Notes on Marcan Usage," *BT* 7 [1956]: 51–52) recognize.

⁵⁷ Peter's recollection of the prediction in Luke is very similar to Matthew's and Mark's version of the recollection. Luke 22:61 reads, *Πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι σήμερον ἀπαρνήσῃ με τρίς*, "Before rooster's crowing today, you will deny me three times."

This misunderstanding intensifies in the actual account of the denial itself, for each evangelist reports a rooster's crowing after Peter's denial (Mark 14:42; Matt 26:74; Luke 22:60; John 18:27).⁵⁸ Many manuscripts report a second rooster's crowing in Mark 14:68. By recognizing Roostercrow as a watch of the night neither in Jesus' prediction nor in Peter's denial, Mark and the other evangelists demonstrate that they understand the names in Mark 13:35 as Greeks and Romans and not as first-century Jews familiar with practices in Jerusalem.⁵⁹

The names of the watches in Mark 13:35 indicate that the pre-Markan tradition of the parable of the Porter and of the passion narrative originate in the environs of Jerusalem during the first century C.E.⁶⁰ Each of the evangelists is a stranger to these environs since each is unfamiliar with these names for the night watches. These redactors use numbers rather than names when designating the night watches (Mark 6:48//Matt 14:25; Luke 12:38) and reshape the material according to their own Greco-Roman understanding of these names as less-structured temporal references.⁶¹ Their redactions misunderstand the original pre-Markan temporal references and transmit this misunderstanding to their broader Greco-Roman audiences.

V. Conclusion

In their assessment of Evening, Midnight, Roostercrow, and Morning, German and English scholars are accurate in some respects but not in others. As designations of the night watches, these names are certainly "*Umgangssprache*," colloquial expressions not accepted as "proper" speech in the broader

⁵⁸ Of course, this statement excludes the three manuscripts mentioned above that contain the reading πρὶν ἀλέκτοροφωνίας, "before Roostercrow watch."

⁵⁹ The final Markan redactor's ignorance of the names of the night watches excludes John Mark of Jerusalem from consideration as the final redactor. However, these names indicate that someone from Jerusalem was responsible for the pre-Markan tradition.

⁶⁰ Beasley-Murray states: "There is good reason, accordingly, to view the core of the parable as an authentic reminiscence of the teaching of Jesus" (*Jesus*, 471). Even though the present study does not conclusively confirm Beasley-Murray's statement, it does prove that the parable arises from an early tradition associated with Jerusalem.

⁶¹ Beasley-Murray (*Jesus*, 471) and others understand the four names in Mark 13:35 as a later variant of the threefold Jewish division of the night in Luke 12:38. This understanding is problematic. First, Luke mentions the second and third watches of the night, not a threefold division of the night, and Luke's numbering rather than naming the watches suggests a four-watch Roman system rather than a three-watch Jewish system. Second, the names in Mark 13:35 are not Roman but Jewish. Finally, the second and third watches in Luke 12:38 correspond to Matthew's middle of the night (Matt 25:6) only if a first precedes and a fourth watch follows. Hence, the temporal scheme in Mark 13:35 is not later than the one in Luke 12:38, and both schemes are four-watch systems.

Greco-Roman world. They are also “*volkstümlichen Namen*,” in that they are ethnic Jewish names. Both Greeks and Romans, if they understand these names at all, no doubt consider them “vulgar” designations of the night watches. However, *populäre Bezeichnungen* of the night watches, they are not. In the end, the evidence refutes the assumption that these names are common Greco-Roman designations for the watches. The names for the night watches in Mark 13:35 are neither common nor indigenously Roman. Instead, these names reflect Jewish practice in the environs of Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period, even though the final redactors of Mark and the other canonical Gospels fail to recognize them as such.

THE SUBVERSION OF “WORLD” BY THE PARABLE OF THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT

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I. The Problem

Is there a “good shamelessness,” or are there circumstances in which shamelessness can be good? Early Christians, such as Clement of Alexandria and John Chrysostom, who believed that “shamelessness is good for godliness,” appear to have derived this culturally reversed perspective from the parable of the Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-8).¹ But contemporary parable interpretation has been restrained in reaching a conclusion that would correspond to such an orientation. The two critical problems posed by the story—the *hapax legomenon* ἀναιδεια, the key word Jesus employs as he breaks into the story with his startling conclusion of 11:8, and the antecedent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ (his), the individual to whom the ἀναιδεια is attributed—remain controversial. The resolutions that are put forward, as Klyne Snodgrass rightly insists in his article “Ἀναιδεια and the Friend at Midnight,” must confront the evidence that the *Thesaurus linguae graecae* offers.² All of the 258 occurrences of ἀναιδεια in the data base of the *Thesaurus* are “demonstrably *negative* except those places early Christian writers have assigned a positive use in dependence on Luke 11:8.”³ “Shamelessness” is the literal meaning of ἀναιδεια, and it refers to conduct that is improper, indeed, conduct that God hates.⁴ “The per-

¹ Klyne Snodgrass, “Ἀναιδεια and the Friend at Midnight,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 509.

² *Ibid.*, 506–10.

³ *Ibid.*, 506–8.

⁴ Snodgrass cites Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 363F, which refers to a carving in the temple of Athena at Sais that symbolically conveys the warning, “God hates shamelessness” (“Ἀναιδεια,” 508).

son guilty of ἀναίδεια does not know where the boundaries are and therefore may be capable of anything.”⁵ But which of the two individuals in Jesus’ story is that person? The petitioner or the sleeper? And how is shamelessness to be construed in this context? These have been the major issues in the various attempts to interpret this story.

Klyne Snodgrass has contributed at least two principal insights to the interpretation of this parable: (1) it is the petitioner and not the sleeper who is guilty of ἀναίδεια, and (2) the ἀναίδεια that the petitioner expresses is not simply persistence but disgraceful conduct.⁶ The reluctance of the sleeper to respond, however, should not be ascribed to the sleeper’s metaphorical referent, God. Snodgrass considers this story to be “a parable of contrast,” an argument from the weaker to the stronger, that juxtaposes the hateful conduct of the petitioner’s ἀναίδεια and God’s eager response to prayer.⁷

It argues as follows: “If among humans a request is granted even when or because the request is rude, how much more will your heavenly Father respond to your requests?”⁸

Like others, however, Snodgrass seems to depend on the *qal wahomer* of 11:13, the movement from a minor to a major premise that Jesus verbalizes in the Lukan context of the parable, in order to identify this story as a “parable of contrast.” But within the parable itself, there is no evidence of a “how much more” argument. Furthermore, the story does not tell of the sleeper’s reluctance to respond, but rather to respond on the basis of friendship. Is it possible that Snodgrass and others have difficulty imagining that God, as the metaphorical referent of the sleeper, might be more affected by cries of desperate need that do not observe the social code of courteous and tactful behavior than by the reciprocity of friendship? If the ἀναίδεια is to be attributed to the petitioner, and if the sleeper responds to him on the basis of that behavior and not on the basis of friendship, what then is the function of Jesus’ story?

It will be argued here that the distinctive function of this parable cannot be ignored in any effort to interpret it or, more correctly, to recover its existential effect; and that effect is nothing less than the subversion of “world.” Both the ideology of reciprocity based on friendship and the world of honor/shame culture are being undermined as the petitioner resorts to shameless conduct in order to obtain the bread needed to provide hospitality for his midnight guest. Accordingly, Luke 11:8 must be the first occurrence of a positive use of

⁵ Snodgrass, “Αναίδεια,” 507.

⁶ Ibid., 510. These two insights were advanced earlier by Klaus Berger, “Materialien zu Form und Überlieferungsgeschichte neutestamentlicher Gleichnisse,” *NovT* 15 (1973): 33–36.

⁷ Ibid., 512.

⁸ Ibid., 513.

ἀναίδεια and not the catalyst that promoted its positive applications by Clement of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, and other early Christian writers.⁹

II. The Lukan Redaction of the Parable

In the Lukan context, the story is introduced immediately after the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer by the redactional formula, καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς ("and he said to them"); and its opening sentence is formulated as a question, "Who of you will have a friend . . ." Brief and simple, Jesus' discourse focuses on what may have been an unusual occurrence in the ancient Middle East. A villager unexpectedly receives a guest near midnight but is unable to offer him the expected hospitality. He knocks at the door of a fellow villager and requests three loaves of bread. But the neighbor is already in bed and refuses to get up in order to fulfill this critical need.

Such a denial of aid would be unheard-of in the interdependent life of an ancient village and would be an outrageous violation of its tradition of friendship and balanced reciprocity, especially if, as Kenneth E. Bailey has observed, "the guest is guest of the community, not just of the individual."¹⁰ The response to the question with which Jesus introduced the story would be a resounding "Nobody."¹¹

At that point, when his audience would be shaking their heads in disbelief that such a violation of tradition could be perpetrated, Jesus steps into the story and concludes it with what must have been perceived as a stunning irregularity:

I tell you, even if he will not arise and give him on account of being his friend,
he will arise and give him as much as he needs because of his shamelessness.
(11:8)

In view of its placement at the end of the Lord's Prayer, it is obvious that in Luke's Gospel this story is intended to teach something about prayer. The logion of 11:9–10 that follows, introduced by the same redactional formula, ὑμῖν λέγω ("I say to you"), but preceded by καὶ γὰρ ("and I") for additional emphasis, extracts a conclusion from the parable that enlarges Jesus' instruction:

⁹ A reversal of Snodgrass's conclusion; see "Αναίδεια," 509.

¹⁰ K. E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 122.

¹¹ There is general agreement on this. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 119–21; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (rev. ed.; London: SCM, 1963), 20; John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 107; Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 87.

Keep on asking, and it will be given to you;
 Keep on seeking, and you will find;
 Keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you.

By means of three present imperatives Jesus urges persistence in prayer. Accordingly, the conduct of ἀναίδεια can be attributed only to the petitioner, for it is his conduct and not the reciprocity of friendship that succeeds in getting the sleeper out of bed. The petitioner, therefore, must be the antecedent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ. He has kept on knocking, and finally the door has been opened to him. Perhaps his persistence has even included rude behavior, as ἀναίδεια implies. For a village context in which friendship and general reciprocity constituted a fundamental way of life, the contrast between receiving bread on the basis of shameless conduct rather than friendship verges on incredulity. What effect would this stunning surprise have on the reader of Luke 11:5–8? The immediate context of 11:13 might diminish the initial shock by its movement from a minor to a major premise.

If therefore you being wicked know to give good gifts to your children, *how much more* the Father out of heaven will give the holy Spirit to the ones asking him.

Yet the resonance of the shock would evoke reflection on the intended aim and function of the parable. That seems to hold true for the early church fathers who cited Luke 11:8 in order to exhort shameless persistence in prayer. But what is the purpose of the story itself?

III. The Pre-Lukan Tradition of the Parable

Do these conclusions remain valid when the story is analyzed apart from its present Lukan context, that is, simply as an independent tradition without attempting to determine its prior usage within the Christian community or its context in the ministry of Jesus? Is the petitioner still the referent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ? Is ἀναίδεια to be construed as the petitioner's rude persistence to obtain the bread he needs for his midnight guest? Does the story convey the same stunning surprise? What is its function as a parable?

Joachim Jeremias, who, in the light of C. H. Dodd's earlier work, set a new course for parable study, differentiated between the Lukan and pre-Lukan versions of the story. While the former focuses on the petitioner, as 11:9–10 indicates, the pre-Lukan form of the story spotlights the sleeper in order to draw a contrast that moves from a minor to a major premise.

The parable is not concerned with the importunity of the petitioner, but with the certainty that the petition will be granted. It becomes clear, then, that the

parable, like that of the Unjust Judge, expects the hearers to draw a conclusion from the lesser to the greater. If the friend, roused from sleep in the middle of the night, without a moment's delay hastens to fulfill the request of a neighbor in distress, even though the whole family must be disturbed by the drawing of the bolt, how much more will God.¹²

If the minor premise or the lesser reality of the story is the action of the sleeper, who fulfills his neighbor's request "without a moment's delay," the "how much more" or the major premise must be expressed by the movement to the greater certainty of God's response. But in what way is God's response implied as the "how much more" of the parable as the sleeper converts the negative quality of shamelessness into an immediate positive action? Moreover, if the sleeper acts "without a moment's delay," how will the petitioner—or the hearer of the story—be able to determine whether the requested bread was given out of friendship or in an effort to avoid potential disgrace within the village? Not only has ἀναίδεια been transformed into a positive term, as K. Snodgrass rightly contends;¹³ the interpretation of the pre-Lukan version of the story is still determined by the Lukan context of 11:13.

Kenneth E. Bailey, in his rich exploitation of the resources of Syriac and Arabic texts in order to recover more of the Middle East culture that the story presupposes, follows Jeremias in identifying the antecedent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ as the sleeper and in characterizing the story as a parable of contrast.¹⁴

When you go to this kind of a neighbor everything is against you. It is night. He is asleep in bed. The door is locked. His children are asleep. He does not like you and *yet* you will receive even more than you ask. This is because your neighbor is a man of integrity and he will not violate that quality. The God to whom you pray also has an integrity that he will not violate; and beyond this, he loves you.¹⁵

On the one hand, Bailey claims that the sleeper is an "ignoble character."¹⁶ On the other hand, he characterizes him as "a man of integrity" who does not like the petitioner but gives him much more than he needs because "the entire transaction was completed in a spirit of good will."¹⁷

Several contrasts appear to be involved in Bailey's discernment of a movement from a minor to a major premise. Like Jeremias and others, he converts the negative character of shamelessness into what he acknowledges to be "a

¹² Jeremias, *Parables*, 159.

¹³ Snodgrass, "Αναίδεια," 506.

¹⁴ Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 130–31, 133.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 129–30.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

positive quality.”¹⁸ The ignoble sleeper exercises his integrity in order to escape disgrace. The petitioner, on the other hand, aware that there is no friendship between them, is confident that his neighbor will fulfill his need because he is a man of integrity. Somehow the sleeper, who is ignoble but has integrity, will give much more than needed because the transaction is “completed in a spirit of good will.”¹⁹

Although there is a contrast between the fulfillment of need based on ἀναίδεια (which Bailey has converted into a positive quality) rather than friendship, how can this movement from a minor to a major premise serve as the “how much more” of God’s love and God’s integrity? If God is the metaphorical referent of the sleeper, how valid is it to draw the implication that there is no prior friendship between the petitioner and God? And to what extent is God comparable to the ignoble sleeper who rises to give more bread than needed in order to avoid potential disgrace. Nothing in the parable intimates that the sleeper is ignoble, that he has integrity, and that he gives more than needed because the transaction is done in a spirit of good will.

Bernard Brandon Scott acknowledges that the parable in its Lukan context “exemplifies persistent request in prayer even though the connection with prayer is secondary.” If, then, ἀναίδεια is translated as “persistence,” it must be ascribed to the petitioner. On the other hand, however, there are indications that Luke “did understand ἀναίδεια to mean ‘shamelessness.’”²⁰ The parable’s “triadic structure” of a chiasmus convinces Scott that the referent of αὐτοῦ must be identified with the sleeper, who acts out of self-interest because “he is afraid he will be disgraced in the village.”²¹

A

B

C

1. he does not give to him / getting up / because he is a friend.
2. because of his ἀναίδεια / rising up / he will give to him whatever he needs.²²

Taking the B terms to be the pivot, Scott regards A and C as constituting the chiasmus. A1 and 2 are identified with the sleeper, while C1 and 2 denote the petitioner. The reversal in Jesus’ story is the unexpected “metaphorical shifts: not the gracious friend but the shameless one furnishes the loaves.”²³ Obviously, the function of parable is a concomitant of parable interpretation for Scott, as it is for other commentators. There is a reversal in the story, and it is

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 89.

²¹ Ibid., 91.

²² Ibid., 88.

²³ Ibid., 91–92.

the shift from acting out of friendship to acting out of shamelessness. Accordingly, “the approved way of attaining the end is subverted.”²⁴ This is a model for envisioning the kingdom of God, and it is intended to teach that the end is always achieved, even if it is not accomplished by approved means.²⁵

But Scott’s triadic structure of a chiasmus can also be interpreted in another way. If A1 and C2 refer to the sleeper, and A2 and C1 designate the reversal that the petitioner experiences, the ἀναίδεια must be attributed to the petitioner. This possibility is supported by determining the referent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ that follows ἀναίδειαν in Jesus’ culminating pronouncement of v. 8 on the basis of the identification of the preceding pronouns.

λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ καὶ οὐ δώσει αὐτῷ ἀναστὰς διὰ τὸ εἶναι φίλον αὐτοῦ,
διὰ γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ ἐγερθεὶς δώσει αὐτῷ ὅσων χρήζει.

I say to you, even if arising he will not give to *him* on account of being *his* friend, on account of *his* shamelessness, arising, he will give to *him* as much as he needs.

Snodgrass has rightly contended, “The pronouns in 11:8 are admittedly somewhat confusing, but in my opinion all four occurrences of αὐτός refer to the petitioner.”²⁶

There is a certainty that the petition will be fulfilled, but not hastily, not “without a moment’s delay.”²⁷ For if initially the sleeper has refused to get out of bed to fulfill the petitioner’s request on the basis of friendship, the motivating factor must be the petitioner’s disgraceful behavior, and not the disgrace that awaits the sleeper on the following morning, if he refuses to help. Because the dynamic of friendship is ineffective in arousing the sleeper out of bed, a more drastic measure becomes necessary in order to avoid the dishonor of being unable to provide hospitality to the midnight guest. The petitioner is forced to resort to ἀναίδεια.

It is evident that every attempt to resolve the problems of this story—the antecedent of αὐτοῦ and the character of ἀναίδεια—is intimately and necessarily linked to the specific function of this parable. Jeremias and Bailey, who attribute ἀναίδεια in the pre-Lukan tradition to the sleeper, maintain that this story functions as “a parable of contrast” which communicates the assurance of God’s integrity and love. B. B. Scott’s interpretation ends in an odd double reversal or metaphorical shift. The petitioner’s expectation that friendship is the basis of village mutuality is shattered by the sleeper’s shamelessness. “The

²⁴ Ibid., 91.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Snodgrass, “Αναίδεια,” 510.

²⁷ Jeremias claims the petition is fulfilled “without a moment’s delay” (*Parables*, 159).

end is achieved through an appeal not to friendship but to shamelessness.”²⁸ But it is achieved by an avoidance of potential disgrace, not by a disgraceful act as such. The improper conduct that characterizes ἀναίδεια is transformed into positive behavior. Snodgrass rightly identifies the petitioner as the perpetrator of ἀναίδεια, but, in view of the positive response of the sleeper, focuses on the function of contrast: “even when or because the request is rude, how much more will your heavenly Father respond to your requests.”²⁹

But, given the cultural reality of village friendship and the potential disgrace of not responding to a cry of need, why is the sleeper motivated by the shameless behavior of the petitioner rather than the relationship of friendship? What is the function of this parable? And what specific function will resolve its exegetical problems?

William R. Herzog II, like others, recognizes the relationship between the content of the story and its parabolic function. His interpretation is dependent on John Dominic Crossan’s narrative typology and specifically the structure of reversal it establishes by placing the genres of parable and myth at opposite ends of the narrative spectrum.³⁰ Myth “establishes world”; parable “subverts world.” Jesus, as a pedagogue of the oppressed, employed “subversive speech” to undermine the social structures that oppressed, exploited, and dehumanized the lower classes of society in which he conducted his ministry. Ἀναίδεια is the subversive element in this narrative that explodes the myth of “friendship” as it “had become entangled in the web of patron-client loyalties.”³¹ The people of the community, in defiance of the values of the ruling elite, embraced ἀναίδεια and “expended [hospitality] on a virtual stranger and gained . . . nothing in return.”³²

Unfortunately, like Jeremias, Bailey, and Scott, Herzog regards the sleeper to be the antecedent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ.

The sleeping neighbor is not motivated by the bond of friendship but by his *anaideian*. If Bailey is right, then the parable coheres; it is the neighbor’s adherence to the code of honor and his desire to avoid shaming himself, his

²⁸ Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 91.

²⁹ Snodgrass, “Ἀναίδεια,” 513.

³⁰ William R. Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994). Although Paulo Freire’s work and his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* are Herzog’s primary source of inspiration for his interpretation of Jesus’ parables, he does draw on Crossan’s typology of story published in *The Dark Interval: Towards a Theology of Story* (Niles, IL: Argus Communications, 1975), 54–62. There is a later edition of this book bearing the same title (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1988), 37–45; compare pp. 25–29 and 46–47 in Herzog’s *Parables as Subversive Speech*.

³¹ Herzog, *Parables*, 214.

³² *Ibid.*

family, and his village that motivates him to “get up and give him whatever he needs.”³³

Here again it must be asked, How can the avoidance of shamelessness be construed as the disgraceful conduct of ἀναίδεια? Moreover, if the sleeper gets up and gives the petitioner whatever he needs in order to avoid dishonoring himself, how will the petitioner—and the hearer of the parable—be able to determine that the fulfillment of his request was motivated by an avoidance of dishonor rather than friendship?

Friendship is indeed the reality that is being subverted by this parable. Herzog’s judgment in this respect is quite correct. But it is not being subverted by the sleeper’s ἀναίδεια, which has been converted into the positive act of responding to an entreaty to escape potential dishonor. It is the petitioner, as it is being argued here, who has violated the boundary of courteous behavior, and it is by his ἀναίδεια that he succeeds in getting the bread he needs, which subverts the social relationship of friendship.³⁴

IV. The Subversion of the “World” of Friendship

It should be evident that the distinctive function of this parable cannot be ignored in any effort to interpret it or, more correctly, to recover its existential effect. That effect, as Herzog has recognized, is nothing less than the subversion of “world.” Of all the characterizations of parable that have been formulated and used, it is J. D. Crossan’s identification of a “structure of reversal” and its subsequent development in his little monograph *The Dark Interval* that potentially offers the most effective experience and interpretation of this parable, perhaps of all Jesus’ parables. By expanding the narrative typology of Sheldon Sacks³⁵ to include the genres of myth and parable but placing them at the opposite ends of this spectrum, he accentuated their identity as “binary or polar opposites.”³⁶ Parables convey reversals of religious and sociocultural values, values that are established by myths that contribute to the social construction of reality. Consequently, parables generate experiences that confront their addressees with the unavoidability of decision. The conditional implication of

³³ Ibid., 209.

³⁴ By identifying the midnight guest of the petitioner as a “virtual stranger,” Herzog has moved beyond the components of Jesus’ story. The petitioner has designated him as a “friend.”

³⁵ Sheldon Sacks, *Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding with Glances at Swift, Johnson and Richardson* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966); see ch. 1, “Toward a Grammar of the Types of Fiction” (pp. 1–69).

³⁶ Crossan, *The Dark Interval* (Argus Communications), 61–62; (Polebridge), 44–45.

parable interpretation, therefore, is that parables must be construed in direct relation to the specific myths of the sociocultural world that they undermine. As Crossan says, "To live in parable means to dwell in the tension of myth and parable."³⁷

The reversal of Jesus' concluding pronouncement of 11:8 is that the sleeper does not give bread on the basis of friendship and the reciprocity it presupposes.³⁸ Yet friendship and especially village neighborliness in the first-century world of Mediterranean culture would naturally presume a relationship of reciprocal obligation, the mutual give-and-take of goods and services.

Village exchanges are more or less vigorously accounted for. Economic anthropology, the social science sub-discipline that concerns itself with non-industrial economic systems, thus speaks of either balanced or general reciprocity as characteristic of village barter. Exchanges are balanced if done on a quid pro quo basis and when the debt is liquidated fairly quickly.³⁹

The natural expectation of the interdependence of village life would be an immediate and unquestioned response to a crisis of need, to a call for help. Accordingly, the sleeper's denial of the petitioner's minimum request for three loaves of bread is an aspect of the parable's referent that would be new and alien to the consciousness of both Luke's readers and Jesus' hearers. It would be a shocking reversal of expectation, for friendship is a decisive value in the context of village interdependence and its attendant ideology of balanced reciprocity.⁴⁰ Its significance is implied by the fourfold use of the word φίλος ("friend") in the story.⁴¹ Friendship, as Halvor Moxnes has observed,

carried many obligations, but first and foremost the moral obligation to help a friend when he was in need. In order to be an honorable man one must fulfill one's obligations to one's friends.⁴²

Since the sleeper is not motivated on the basis of friendship, the petitioner is confronted with the dishonor of being unable to offer hospitality to his midnight guest. In fact, his dishonor may be compounded in the eyes of his visitor

³⁷ Ibid. (Argus Communications), 59; (Polebridge), 42.

³⁸ See Jesus' pronouncement on reciprocity in Luke 14:12–14.

³⁹ Douglas E. Oakman, "The Countryside in Luke-Acts," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (ed. Jerome H. Neyrey; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 156. Oakman goes on to use the three loaves of bread of Luke 11:5 as an example of balanced exchange repaid in roughly equal value by a basket of figs. See also Halvor Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel* (OBT; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 34–35. Bruce J. Malina, *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology: Practical Models for Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1986), 101–9.

⁴⁰ Oakman, "Countryside in Luke-Acts," 166.

⁴¹ Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 90.

⁴² Moxnes, *Economy of the Kingdom*, 62.

by his neighbor's refusal to observe the reciprocity of village friendship. His only recourse is to resort to conduct that will succeed in acquiring the bread he needs to offer hospitality to his unexpected visitor. The irony is that he must become shameless in order to save his honor.

V. The Subversion of Honor/Shame Culture

Jesus does not describe the petitioner's shamelessness but leaves it to the imagination of his audience, who would have no difficulty in constructing a scenario. For the modern reader, however, it is an indeterminacy that may be difficult to resolve. Snodgrass has filled the gap only partially by drawing a range of material from the *Thesaurus linguae graecae* and offering a variety of quotations from Plato and Aristotle, Plutarch and Longinus.⁴³ A particularly pertinent citation is taken from Demosthenes, *Oration 24, Against Timocrates* 65: "It seems to me that, so far as effrontery [ἀναιδεια] goes, such a man is ready to do anything." Anything, of course, means beyond the boundaries of what is considered to be honorable.⁴⁴

Douglas L. Cairns has examined the cultural values of honor (αἰδώς) and dishonor (ἀναιδεια) in Greek literature from Homer to Aristotle, and his work contributes insights that are significant for the analysis of honor/shame culture in biblical texts. With respect to honor he concludes:

... let *aidōs* be an inhibitory emotion based on sensitivity to and protectiveness of one's self-image, and let the verb *aideomai* convey a recognition that one's self-image is vulnerable in some way, a reaction in which one focuses on the conspicuousness of the self.⁴⁵

⁴³ Snodgrass, "Αναιδεια," 507–8.

⁴⁴ See also Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981), 44–45. Also Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), ch. 1, "Honor and Shame in Cultural Perspective"; Halvor Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," in *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation* (ed. Richard Rohrbaugh; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 19–40; David A. deSilva, *The Hope of Glory: Honor Discourse and New Testament Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999). Unfortunately there are no references in these essays on the use or meaning of ἀναιδεια in this parable. Worth noting in this respect is John K. Chance's critique in "The Anthropology of Honor and Shame: Culture, Values and Practice, in *Honor and Shame in the World of the Bible*, *Semeia* 68 (1994): 139–49, that blanket applications of a monolithic model of honor and shame tend to be employed by biblical scholars. "They seem to draw from the same well," namely, the 1966 collection of essays entitled *Honour and Shame*, edited by J. G. Peristiany. Certainly the character and function of shamelessness in this parable should be drawn into the analysis of honor/shame culture in the NT.

⁴⁵ Douglas L. Cairns, *Aidōs: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 2.

Cairns emphasizes the emotional character of αἰδώς, but he also accentuates the cognitive aspect of evaluation that essentially belongs to it.

. . . *aidōs* relates to some perceived attribute of the world “out there,” and such emotions are thus ways of seeing and responding to the world; to experience such an emotion in response to a particular stimulus is to construe the situation, cognitively, in a particular way.⁴⁶

Αἰδώς is a characteristic behavioral response to specific situations. Αἰδώς may cause information to be withheld in order to spare someone's feelings. Αἰδώς can result in the modification of conduct out of fear of criticism. “It is *aidōs*, then, which drives Hector to fight in open battle, in spite of the pity he feels for his wife and child.”⁴⁷ Out of αἰδώς (here having the sense of shame) Oedipus blinds himself because of his inability to look others in the face.⁴⁸ Orestes, in Euripides' *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* tells his sister how, in spite of his pollution, he was eventually given hospitality in Athens by those who had αἰδώς.

The opposite of αἰδώς, namely, ἀναιδεια, is a pejorative term that denotes a reprehensible quality that is liable to attract the censure of others. But, like αἰδώς, it has an emotional character, as is indicated by the narrator of Achilles Tatius's *Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*:

All manner of feelings took possession of me at once—admiration, stupefaction, fear, shame, shamelessness (ἀναιδεια). I admired her tall form, I was stupefied by her beauty, I showed my fear by the beating of my heart; I stared shamelessly (ἀναιδῶς) at her, but I was ashamed to be caught doing so. (1.4.5)

To be charged with shamelessness is to be implicated in disgraceful behavior, and this can result from weakness, failure, or lack of respect for others. Aristotle says, “To be ἀναιδής is to lack respect for oneself as well as for others.”⁴⁹ In Euripides' *Alcestis*, Admetus is guilty of ἀναιδεια by attempting to avoid death and consequently allowing his wife to die.⁵⁰ In Homer's *Iliad*, Agamemnon is shameless because he does not avert his gaze when he is faced with Achilles, whom he has wronged.⁵¹ Ἀναιδεια, like αἰδώς, is an emotional way of seeing

⁴⁶ Ibid., 5–6.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 80.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 217. Shamelessness, as Plutarch emphasizes in *Moralia* 31.2, “is not a counterfeit of shame, but its extreme opposite” (cited by Snodgrass, “Ἀναιδεια,” 508).

⁴⁹ Cairns, *Aidōs*, 212. In n. 138, Cairns cites Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1383b, 15–17, who defines “shamelessness as contempt or indifference in regard to bad things” and in 17–30 offers a long list of bad things that “we think are disgraceful to ourselves or to those we care for.” Among them is “money matters, giving less help than you might, or none at all, or accepting help from those worse off than yourself; so also borrowing when it will seem like begging.”

⁵⁰ Ibid., 269 n. 14.

⁵¹ Ibid., 98–99 n. 151.

and responding to the world, but outside of the boundaries of honor and shame.

Accordingly, the petitioner's ἀναίδεια very likely is some kind of emotional response to his neighbor's outrageous refusal to help. Anger would seem to be the only appropriate reaction in this critical situation, but it must be expressed overtly in order to motivate the sleeper to arise from his bed and give him as much as he needs in order to provide the required hospitality to his midnight guest. B. H. Young seems to be the only commentator to have risked resolving the indeterminacy of ἀναίδεια. Taking the modern Hebrew *chutzpah* or the biblical noun חָצִצְפָּה as an equivalent of ἀναίδεια, he proceeds to characterize the petitioner's behavior: "The man outside the door will be so indignant at the unacceptable behavior of his friend that he will take the house apart to obtain what he wants."⁵² His rude and aggressive behavior in the middle of the night is driven by his desperation to secure bread for his unexpected guest. The circumstances of time, the urgency of need, the default of friendship, and the potential dishonor confronting him have overwhelmed his sense of propriety. "He will pound the door and shout until his contemptible friend opens up. In the end he will receive anything and everything he needs."⁵³ Rudeness, effrontery, impudence, brazenness, boldness violated the standards of honorable behavior and therefore would evoke a negative response. Yet as negatively as "shamelessness" was regarded, it is ironically the behavior by which the petitioner's objective is achieved. However rudely it expressed itself, it arose out of his desperate condition of "I have nothing. . . ." This, incidentally, is also true of the Parable of the Widow and the Judge in Luke 18:2–5. By repudiating the social code of shame, by refusing to submit to authority, by taking the risk of aggressively pursuing her objective, the widow finally obtains justice for herself.⁵⁴

Is it adequate, therefore, to classify the story as a "parable of contrast"? That would preclude the experience of the stunning surprise of the sleeper responding to his neighbor's need not on the basis of friendship and its attendant economics of general reciprocity but on account of his shameless conduct. Here Crossan's characterization of the parable proves to be most apposite. Metaphorically the story contains a radically new vision of world. By its

⁵² B. H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 50.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 48. For Young, however, it is not the rude conduct but the persistence of the petitioner that is effective in arousing the sleeper out of bed.

⁵⁴ Eta Linnemann offers many valid insights in her interpretation of this parable, but without drawing in honor/shame culture (*Jesus of the Parables: Introduction and Exposition* [New York: Harper & Row, 1966], 119–24). "Persistence" is the character that she attributes to the widow, which in an honor/shame society would negate the passivity and subordination that would be expected of a woman.

parabolic power it conveys nothing less than the subversion of honor/shame culture and, at the same time, the cancellation of the reciprocity of friendship. The shocking reversal of expectation, introduced by the declaratory λέγω ὑμῖν ("I tell you") of 11:8, by which Jesus himself enters the story, constitutes it as a parable that spontaneously creates participation in the new and alien world that it references.⁵⁵

VI. The Referent of the Parable as Metaphor

The Lukan redaction of 11:9–13, as already noted, supplements the parable with "lessons" which the Lukan Jesus derives from the story, above all a *qal wahomer*, a syllogism that moves from a minor to a major premise and that in this context establishes the significant difference between the giving of human beings and the giving of God. As a result, however, the teaching that is formulated diminishes the parabolic character of the story and tends to accentuate its function as an illustration.⁵⁶ Although the subversion of the parable is not completely lost, it is significantly reduced. As Jesus' parables are removed from their original sociocultural setting and retold in new contexts, they may lose something of their radical nature and power.

As for the parable itself, as Jesus may have spoken it, the new and alien world that it presents is that God, as the metaphorical referent of the sleeper, does not respond to human beings on the basis of the reciprocity of friendship.⁵⁷ It is not the mutuality of obligation that motivates God to fulfill desperate needs or to relate to human beings.⁵⁸ As honorable as mutual indebtedness may be, it is also enslaving. It subordinates both parties to a contractual arrangement, spoken or unspoken, that can easily become and all too often is a meticulous and arbitrary accounting. God's actions are not determined by the

⁵⁵ Crossan, *In Parables* 13, 15.

⁵⁶ Crossan ascribes two different functions to figurative language: "One is to illustrate information so that information precedes participation (*In Parables*, 15). The other is to create participation so that participation precedes information." The parable of the Midnight Guest creates participation; the teaching that is derived from it in 11:9–13 tends to reduce the parable to an illustration.

⁵⁷ David Daube has raised the pertinent question, "Where is the wife?" His answer leads him to a metaphorical identification of the sleeper with God: "She [the wife] is omitted from squeamishness: one does not announce, 'I am lying with my wife.' In this case, as the man stands for God, her inclusion would be doubly offensive" ("Shame Culture in Luke," in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett* [ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson; London: SPCK, 1982], 358).

⁵⁸ As, for example, the reciprocal relationship between God and Israel that is constituted by the Deuteronomistic covenant.

bonds of obligation. God is free. And in freedom God responds to all human petitions and entreaties, even when they are shouted shamelessly in the night, and especially when, as in this case, they are bellowed in the desperation of “I have nothing. . . .”

But there is more. The sleeper’s response to the petitioner on the basis of the latter’s ἀναιδεια effects the subversion of the meaning-building dynamics of honor/shame culture that constituted oppressive structures of power, sanctioned gender disparity, and promoted dehumanizing relationships.⁵⁹ God, as the metaphorical referent of the sleeper who responds to prayer on the basis of ἀναιδεια—not God’s ἀναιδεια but that of the petitioner—is not offended or dishonored by conduct that honor/shame culture considered hateful. There is a “good shamelessness.” Impudence, effrontery, and dishonorable conduct are divinely legitimated in the pursuit of justice in all the arenas of social life. Although the story of the parable focuses on a villager petitioning a neighbor for bread, its world subversion is not to be limited to prayer. The metaphorical character of the parable validates a more comprehensive application that includes all the exchanges that may occur in the relationship between God and human beings as well as the association that human beings have with each other.

VII. Ἀναιδεια in the Writings of Early Church Fathers

To some extent at least, early Christian theologians appear to have grasped and appropriated this sense of ἀναιδεια from this parable. An early example is found in the *Shepherd of Hermas*. The heavenly Lady chides Hermas for his shameless behavior in desiring more revelations:

Yet you will not cease from asking for revelations, for you are ἀναιδής.⁶⁰

Snodgrass has observed that this use of ἀναιδής implies persistence and that, in view of the similarity of the imperatives in *Hermas Vision* 3.3.2, μηκέτι μοι κόπους πάρεχε (“Don’t trouble me any longer”), and Luke 11:7, μή μοι κόπους

⁵⁹ Noteworthy in this respect, for example, is Claudia V. Camp, “Honor and Shame in Ben Sira: Anthropological and Theological Reflections,” in *The Book of Ben Sira in Modern Research* (ed. Pancratius C. Beentjes; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 186: “The process by which women and their shame are erased and replaced by an ideal cosmos constituted entirely of men finds completion in the depiction of Simon’s glory in Ch. 50.” See also Malina, *New Testament World*, 25–48; Michael Herzfeld, “Silence, Submission, and Subversion: Toward a Poetics of Womanhood,” *Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece* (ed. P. Loizos and E. Papataxiarchis; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 79–97. Synchronically, at least, Malina’s and Herzfeld’s analyses concur.

⁶⁰ Cited by Snodgrass, “Ἀναιδεια,” 512.

πάρεχε (“Don’t trouble me”), it very likely was influenced by Luke 11:8.⁶¹ But “impudence” rather than “persistence” seems to be the sense of ἀναιδής in this context. Earlier in this vision the Lady Revealer had characterized Hermas as πανούργος (Hermas *Vis.* 3.3.1), an adjective with a predominantly negative meaning of “roguish” or “crafty.”⁶² As shameless as it may be to continue to ask for revelations, the Lady commends roguish Hermas for “seeking diligently, and so by seeking you are finding out the truth” (Hermas *Vis.* 3.3.5).⁶³ Shamelessness, therefore, is good when it involves seeking and searching to find the truth.⁶⁴

In the conclusion of his treatise *Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?*, Clement of Alexandria warrants that the shameless and violent pursuit of salvation will be rewarded with everlasting life.

But he who looks for salvation and earnestly desires it and asks for it with ἀναιδείας καὶ βίας (shamelessness and compulsion) shall receive the true cleansing and the unchangeable life. . . .⁶⁵

John Chrysostom cites Luke 11:8 in his homilies on Gen 44 and Ps 43 in order to reinforce shamelessness in prayer that will succeed in gaining God’s benevolence. In the homily on Ps 43 the accent is on persistence rather than rudeness or impudence. Solomon serves as the example to show that shameless persistence will prevail in receiving more than is asked when a pure life is present and the request is spiritual (*Homilies on Psalms* 43.5).⁶⁶ Here the teaching that draws from the parable in Luke 11:9 seems to determine the sense of ἀναιδεία. On the other hand, the homily on Gen 44 cites the episode of the Canaanite woman in Matt 15:22–28 in order to demonstrate that aggressive persistence, like that of the petitioner in Jesus’ parable of the Midnight Guest, will result in a successful response to the entreaty. Chrysostom’s accentuation of the woman’s tenacity in view of Jesus’ continued refusal to attend to her petition intimates the impudence, even effrontery, of the ἀναιδεία of Luke 11:8. The Canaanite woman’s persistence, like that of the widow of Luke 18:2–5, is

⁶¹ Snodgrass, “Αναιδεία,” 512; but recognized earlier by Berger, “Gleichnisse,” 34. A similar phrase occurs in Luke 18:5.

⁶² So also Berger, “Gleichnisse,” 34. The adjective πανούργος is used again in Hermas *Sim.* 5.5.1 to characterize Hermas in his ceaseless appeal for explanations of the parables.

⁶³ But Hermas *Mand.* 11.12 uses ἀναιδής in a strictly negative sense.

⁶⁴ Berger (“Gleichnisse,” 35) also cites Hermas *Sim.* 5.4.2 and 5.5.1.

⁶⁵ “The Rich Man’s Salvation,” *Clement of Alexandria* (trans. G. W. Butterworth; LCL; London: Heinemann, 1919), 365–66.

⁶⁶ The same holds true of Macarius, who refers to Luke 11:8 in order to support his exhortation to persistence in prayer: “In all that has been said in these pages, he has exhorted us to seek from him shamelessly, incessantly, and unflaggingly” (*Fifty Spiritual Homilies, Homily* 4.26–27).

outside the boundaries of honor/shame behavior because honor/shame culture requires “submission to authority, deference, passivity, and restraint.”⁶⁷

Now, we were aroused to bring this story to you so that we might learn that we succeed {in} praying not so much through others as through ourselves, when we make our petition with heat and an alerted mind. For behold, although the disciples interceded for her, she was unable to succeed until she persisted on her own and drew to herself the benevolence of the Lord. (Chrysostom, *Hom. on Gen.* 44.4)

Accordingly, if early Christians could acknowledge that “shamelessness is good for godliness,” that the cultural value of ἀναιδεια is not offensive to God, it is difficult to believe that they naively or compromisingly submitted to the honor/shame culture of their society. Like their pagan contemporaries, they believed that “God hates ἀναιδεια,” as Snodgrass observes in his reference to Chrysostom’s *De Poenitentia* 49.285.⁶⁸ But there is no evidence that they uncritically appropriated the honor/shame values of their pagan culture.⁶⁹ On the contrary, the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Basil, and Macarius clearly indicate that they differentiated between the ethical realm of the Christian community and the pagan culture of the world in which they lived and, therefore, adapted their appropriation of ἀναιδεια to the new moral order of the Christian movement.

Clement of Alexandria, in his treatise *Christ the Educator*, offered catechetical instruction to Christians who desired a deeper understanding of their faith in the context of the liberal culture and humanism of Alexandria. Although steeped in the Greek classics, he constructed a Christian way of life based on a philosophy drawn from the Scriptures. Accordingly, he did not hesitate to

⁶⁷ Malina, *New Testament World*, 45.

⁶⁸ Snodgrass, however, does not appear to differentiate between the Christian and the pagan usage of the negative sense of ἀναιδεια.

⁶⁹ The religious-ethical adaptation of the prevailing negative sense of ἀναιδεια is encountered already in the Wisdom of Ben Sira. In order to preserve the Jewish way of life in the cultural crisis of Hellenization in the early second century B.C.E., Ben Sira intensified the claims of honor/shame culture to promote Jewish commitment to “exclusively Jewish values and behaviors. Honor is established by obedience to the Torah; arrogance and injustice are shameless and result in the greater shamelessness of apostasy. See David A. deSilva, “The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Honor, Shame, and the Maintenance of the Values of a Minority Culture,” *CBQ* 58 (1996): 433–55. There is no evidence here of a culturally reversed perspective of a “good shamelessness,” only the adaptation of the ideology of honor/shame to a Jewish ethos and worldview. In the process of this acculturation of honor/shame, however, Ben Sira has reconstituted Judaism by a masculinizing erasure that vitiates the reputation of women and their positive symbol of shame. See Camp, “Honor and Shame in Ben Sira,” 184–87.

appropriate the negative sense of ἀναιδεια and to apply it to conduct that contradicts the Christian culture he amplifies in his writings.⁷⁰

Chrysostom dramatized this accommodation in his association of the “shamelessness of demons” with the wretched condition of catechumens:

But why do the words of the exorcists—those frightening and horrible words—recall to your memory the Master of us all, the punishment, the vengeance, the fires of hell? Because of the ἀναιδεια of the demons. For the catechumen is a sheep without a seal; he is a deserted inn and a hostel without a door, which lies open to all without distinction; he is a lair for robbers, a refuge for wild beasts, a dwelling place for demons. (*Tenth Instruction* 16)⁷¹

Chrysostom employs ἀναιδεια in its prevailing negative sense, but his Christian perspective predetermines its application to pagan life and morality.⁷² It is obvious in his identification of ἀναιδεια with “the sinner.”

In point of indecency it is not so bad to go about naked as in sin and wrong doing. That is not so great a matter of blame, since it might even be caused by poverty; but nothing has more shame and less honor than the sinner. Let us think of those who come to the justice-hall on some account of extortion, or over-reaching; how base and ridiculous they appear by their utter ἀναιδεια, their lies and audacity. (*Hom.* 5 on John 1:3)

It appears that it was only in the minority culture of early Christianity that ἀναιδεια was used to convey positive as well as negative values, but always within the framework of Christian faith and ethics.

If this interpretation of Luke 11:5–8 is valid, it seems certain that early Christianity’s promotion of a positive sense of “good shamelessness” was derived from Jesus’ world-subverting parable of the Friend at Midnight—as well as his parable of the Widow and the Judge in Luke 18:2–5. By his parables Jesus initiated a radically new sense of “world,” in which human beings, liberated from the oppression of honor/shame culture, would be inspired to challenge authority, to risk daring and bold actions, and to establish new boundaries of social standing, power, and gender status. Within this new vision of “world”

⁷⁰ “If anyone dares mention the Agape with *shameless* tongue as he indulges in a dinner exhaling the odor of steaming meats and sauces, then he profanes the holy Agape, sublime and saving creation of the Lord, with his goblets and servings of soup; he desecrates its name by drinking and self-indulgence and fragrant odors; he is deceiving himself completely, for he thinks that he can buy off the commands of God with such a banquet” (Clement of Alexandria, *Christ the Educator* 2.1.4, in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 23 [New York: Fathers of the Church, 1954], 96).

⁷¹ *St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1963), 155.

⁷² See also *Homily* 84 on John 18:37; referred to by Snodgrass, “Αναιδεια,” 508. Pontius Pilate’s injustice in condemning Jesus to death after acknowledging his innocence three times is denounced as ἀναιδεια: “But O what shamelessness and ill-timed cowardice!”

that the parable of Luke 11:5–8 intimates, the exhortation of John Chrysostom, although long forgotten, continues to have great merit:

... knowing that shamelessness is good for godliness, for if for property many are shameless, for salvation of the soul is it not best to put on the good shamelessness? (*De caeco et Zaecharaeo* 59.601.42–46).⁷³

⁷³ Quoted by Snodgrass, “Αναίδεια,” 509 nn. 12, 13.

PAUL'S USE OF ΔΟΥΛΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ IN ROMANS 1:1

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If someone says that Paul is not a problem, then we can probably guess that they have not understood all of Paul.¹

Rick Hordern's statement is as true now as it was over twenty years ago. The apostle Paul continues to be somewhat of an enigma for serious students of the Bible. This is especially true when it comes to Paul's use of technical terms in his letters. As Hordern goes on to point out: "[Paul] is agonizingly specific at many points, speaking to situations which have long since passed and which we today cannot fully reconstruct, yet at other times he can speak with a universal flair."² This article will focus on Paul's use of one particular term and its possible significance in Paul's letter to the church at Rome. It is my contention that δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ in Rom 1:1 serves as (1) a technical term for the apostle Paul, and (2) that in this particular instance, along with some other significations, it can be understood as an allusion to the *Familia Caesaris*, the household of Caesar, but specifically the slaves and freedpersons that belonged to the imperial household.

I. Δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ as a Technical Term

At the beginning of the Roman correspondence Paul says, Παῦλος δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ, "Paul, slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, having been separated for the gospel of God" (1:1). This term, δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, as a form of self-designation, is not very common in the undisputed Pauline letters. In fact, the only other place this phrase shows up is in Phil 1:1, where Paul says, Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος

¹ Rick Hordern, "Paul as A Theological Authority," *USQR* 33 (1978): 133.

² *Ibid.*

δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Πιλίπποις σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους (cf. Gal 1:10).³ In the Roman correspondence this phrase actually precedes the one Paul most commonly uses, “apostle” (e.g., 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Col 1:1).

The rationale for Paul’s use of this term may lie in the relationship between the Roman correspondence and that to the Philippians. At the end of Philippians Paul writes, ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι, μάλιστα δὲ οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας (4:22). Commenting on this verse, Stanley Stowers says:

In Phil. 4:22, Paul sends greetings from saints in the household of Caesar. These believers were members of the imperial administration that Augustus and his successors organized by patronage and slavery as an extension of the emperor’s household. In the traditional view, Philippians was written from Rome, but in the past few decades a number of scholars have come to favor Ephesus. I agree with Wayne Meeks, John Fitzgerald, and other recent commentators that Rome seems most likely. . . . If Paul mentions believing members of the imperial household in writing Philippians from Rome, then he probably greets some of these individuals in Rom. 16.⁴

If Stowers and others are correct about the place of composition of Philippians, then this reference to the imperial household tells us something substantive regarding the composition of the Roman church. As pointed out above, Philippians is the only other letter in which Paul uses this phrase as a form of self-designation. This does not appear to be a mere coincidence. With his knowledge of the Roman and the Philippian contexts, it appears reasonable to assume that Paul is using this term in a specific or technical manner and that part of the rationale for this technical term may lie in the social, particularly legal, circumstances of the recipients of these letters.

After Philippi’s annexation by the Romans in the second century B.C.E., it was devastated during the Roman civil wars but was later resettled as a *colonia* under the emperor Augustus.⁵ As a *colonia* it had a higher percentage of Roman citizens than most eastern cities in the Roman world.⁶ The cultural ethos of a Roman *colonia* was more Roman than Greek.⁷ In fact, M. Rostovtzeff points out that there were so many Romans in Macedonia that the emperors were able to recruit a fair number of praetorians from the region.⁸

³ The phrase is used also in Col 4:12, where it is applied to Epaphras.

⁴ Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 76.

⁵ C. Bakirtzis and H. Koester, eds., *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after his Death* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1998), 1–35.

⁶ M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), 234.

⁷ M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome: A History* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 315.

⁸ Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History*, 234.

Assuming that the greeting found in Phil 4:22 would have been meaningful to that congregation, it is reasonable to assume that the Philippian church was composed predominantly of Roman citizens, or (at the very least) persons claiming primary allegiance to the Roman system. In fact, if this greeting from the imperial household is more than just an offhand comment or an attempt on Paul's part to impress the Philippians, then we must conclude that there was some substantive connection between the Philippian congregation and the *Familia Caesaris*. Although not enough evidence exists to determine the exact nature of this substantive connection, one may suspect that the phrase δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ functioned as a technical term whose meaning resonated with the Philippians in a way that it would not have among the Galatians or Thessalonians. I believe the same to be true in the letter to the Romans. The composition of the Roman congregation must have been such that δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ would have been meaningful to them as a way of analogically elucidating Paul's self-understanding as an apostle. In short, given the statement in Phil 4:22 and the greetings found at the end of Romans, it appears reasonable to deduce that members of the imperial household formed part of the Roman congregation.⁹

*Modern Discussions of Ancient Slavery
and the Letter to the Romans*

The difficulty with most modern discussions of slavery is that they are generally tainted with the contagion of antebellum slavery in the United States. To be sure, a slave's existence in antiquity was not easy. Slaves labored in all sorts of activities, from mine workers to business managers of estates to secretaries of the empire. The sheer variety of such occupations makes general statements regarding slavery in antiquity difficult. Yet this same variety allows one to argue for a certain specificity with respect to Paul's use of the term in Romans.

The social structure in antiquity made certain forms of slavery a promising and viable social condition for a select few. That is, since Roman social ordering was based largely on land ownership, which was essentially static, one of the few ways non-aristocrats and non-Romans could advance was by means of enslavement to a powerful Roman master.¹⁰ This does not mean, however, that freeborn persons saw enslavement as a preferable means of social advancement. The possibilities for advancement in slavery were far too uncertain for this to have been the case. Social advancement in slavery was essentially context

⁹ This conclusion finds support in recent scholarship regarding the social history of early Christianity. See Ekkehard W. Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement: A Social History of Its First Century* (trans. O. C. Dean, Jr.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 293.

¹⁰ R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations, 50 B.C. to A.D. 284* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1974), 88–120, esp. 92–93.

dependent (i.e., it was entirely dependent on the wealth, character, and needs of the person to whom one was enslaved). In reality, the vast majority of slaves did not have an opportunity for substantial social advancement. Still, ancient slavery was very different from modern and antebellum slavery, and this difference translated into significant social advancement for an elite group of slaves.¹¹

Although there has been no shortage of commentaries on Romans, most deal only with δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ in passing. Those that do discuss the phrase in any depth are outlined by I. A. H. Combes, who says that modern scholars tend to take one of two approaches to understanding this term: either they claim that (1) Paul is making use of the motif of the chosen servant of God from the Hebrew Bible, or that (2) Paul is appealing to the social structures of the empire and claiming the status of a high-ranking slave.¹² Commentators who prefer the Hebrew Bible context for their understanding of this term speak of either the practice of eastern monarchs,¹³ the prophets,¹⁴ or the declarations of Jesus.¹⁵ Commentators who prefer the social-structures approach

¹¹ Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 32.

¹² I. A. H. Combes, *The Metaphor of Slavery in the Writings of the Early Church: From the New Testament to the Beginning of the Fifth Century* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 77.

¹³ E.g., C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2d ed.; BNTC; London: A. & C. Black, 1991); *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with New International Version*, vol. 10 (ed. Frank E. Gaebelin; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976); Barclay M. Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Helps for Translators 14; London: United Bible Societies, 1973); and Walter K. Price, *Revival in Romans: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, Chapters 1 through 8, with Emphasis on Its Evangelistic Thrust* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962).

¹⁴ E.g., William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans* (rev. ed.; Daily Study Bible; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975); C. E. B. Cranfield and W. Sanday, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (repr. with corrections; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1982); Wilber T. Dayton, *Romans* (Wesleyan Bible Commentary 5; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965); James D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC 38A; Dallas: Word, 1988); W. B. Harris, *A Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (Madras: Published for The Senate of Serampore College by The Christian Literature Society, 1964); Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. Geoffrey William Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959); Howard Rhys, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Macmillan, 1961); Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 6; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998); Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994).

¹⁵ E.g., Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament, Explanatory and Practical* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961); Ernest Best, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); Martin H. Franzmann, *Concordia Commentary: Romans* (St.

speak either in linguistic terms,¹⁶ or in social terms,¹⁷ or in both.¹⁸ Almost none of these directly addresses the distinctive use of δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ in Romans and Philippians. Kenneth Wuest comes closest when he says, "There were certain individuals in the Roman Empire designated 'slaves of the Emperor.' This was a position of honor. One finds a reflection of this in Paul's act of designating himself as a slave of the king of kings. He puts this ahead of his apostleship."¹⁹

In addition to the commentaries on Romans, there have been numerous legal and theoretical discussions of ancient slavery in recent years.²⁰ They have signaled a renewed interest by biblical scholars in the role of slaves and the metaphor of slavery in the early Christian movement.²¹ Nevertheless, none of

Louis: Concordia, 1968); Karl Kertelge, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1972); D. George Vanderlip, *Paul and Romans* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1967).

¹⁶ E.g., Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns; London/New York: G. Cumberledge Oxford University Press, 1933); F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (London: Tyndale, 1963); C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans: A Shorter Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955); Archibald M. Hunter, *The Epistle to the Romans: Introduction and Commentary* (TBC; London: SCM, 1955); Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. Carl C. Rasmussen; London: SCM, 1952); and Vincent Taylor, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Epworth, 1955).

¹⁷ E.g., BAGD; Emil Brunner, *The Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (trans. H. A. Kennedy; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959); C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Harper, 1932); J. Theodore Mueller, "Introduction," in *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962).

¹⁸ E.g., Kenneth S. Wuest, *Romans in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Word Studies in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader 16; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁰ E.g., Keith R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (Key Themes in Ancient History; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Francis Lyall, "Roman Law in the Writings of Paul—The Slave and the Freedman," *NTS* 17 (1970): 73–79; idem, *Slaves, Citizens, Sons: Legal Metaphors in the Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1984); Aaron Kirschenbaum, *Sons, Slaves and Freedmen in Roman Commerce* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1987); Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Sociological Studies in Roman History 1; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Thomas Wiedemann, "The Regularity of Manumission at Rome," *CQ* 35 (1985): 162–75; P. R. C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris: A Social Study of the Emperor's Freedmen and Slaves* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Peter Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); M. I. Finley, "Was Greek Civilization Based on Slave Labour?" in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity* (ed. M. I. Finley; Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1960), 53–72; M. I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Chatto & Windus, 1980); Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World from the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (London/Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).

²¹ E.g., Dimitris J. Kyrtatas, *The Social Structure of the Early Christian Communities* (Lon-

these analyses (to my knowledge) strives for any specificity of identification when it comes to this technical term in Rom 1:1.

II. Slavery in Pauline Rhetoric

Slavery serves a powerful theological function in Pauline rhetoric, and this is most certainly true in his use of δούλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Enslavement was one of the central metaphors the apostle used to elucidate his understanding of the relationship between the believer and God (e.g., Gal 1:10; 4:25–26; 5:13; 1 Cor 9:19; Rom 6:16–18 among others). By utilizing this metaphor, Paul was able to illustrate his conception of what it meant to be a believer. In addition, like most metaphors, which are “thick” in meaning potential, enslavement would have conjured up in the readers’ minds several aspects of a slave’s social status. One of the most potent of these aspects involves the legal classification of the slave as *res* rather than *persona*, or, as Orlando Patterson has coined it, natal alienation.²² Upon enslavement, one lost all legal ties of birth, with respect to both one’s forebears and one’s offspring. The slave lost his native status both in society and in legal fiction (the imaginary realm of legal praxis that dictates how the law is supposed to operate), and so he became something new.²³ According to Patterson, a slave was socially dead.²⁴ One can see such a conception of this metaphor at work in Paul’s discussion of baptism in Rom 6:1–23. Other systems of enslavement notwithstanding, Roman slavery created a legally fictive social situation in which the slave lost all meaningful social agency, an idea Paul uses in his discussion of his apostolate in 1 Cor 9:16–18.²⁵ The power of the master over the slave was almost absolute, and Paul’s refer-

don/New York: Verso, 1987); Martin, *Slavery as Salvation*; Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Combes, *Metaphor of Slavery*; Wayne G. Rollins, “Greco-Roman Slave Terminology and Pauline Metaphors for Salvation,” *SBLSP* (1987): 100–110; Jennifer A. Glancy, “Obstacles to Slaves’ Participation in the Corinthian Church,” *JBL* 117 (1998): 481–501.

²² Hans Dieter Betz argues for a similar paradigm in his reading of Paul’s presentation of baptism, a ritual of incorporation into a new community. He says, “There is the *séparation* from the previous way of life and environment, the *marge* or precarious transition from the old to the new status, and *agrégation* or the integration into the new cultic community” (*Works*, vol. 3, *Paulinische Studien* (ed. Hans Dieter Betz; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1994), 263; cf. Willi Marxsen, *Jesus and the Church: The Beginnings of Christianity* (trans. Philip E. Devenish; Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992), 147–71).

²³ For the concept of a legal fiction, see H. L. A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (rev. ed.; Clarendon Law Series; London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 11.

²⁴ See Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 5–7.

²⁵ *The World of Rome: An Introduction to Roman Culture* (ed. Peter Jones and Keith Sidwell;

ence to being under ἀνάγκη (1 Cor 9:16) in his apostolate is one of the ways such a power would have been understood.²⁶

Educated Romans were quite knowledgeable concerning their legal system and its practices.²⁷ As an educated person, perhaps even a Roman citizen, Paul demonstrates on numerous occasions both his knowledge of Roman law and the extent to which such knowledge pervaded the empire.²⁸ For example, Francis Lyall has demonstrated quite effectively that Paul's understanding of slavery was peculiarly Roman in orientation.²⁹ This contextualization of Paul's use of the concept, although it may have been prompted by the social context of his recipients, is nonetheless indicative of his knowledge of the differences in the legalities of slavery and their possibilities for application. By invoking the legal status "slave," Paul is able to communicate effectively a model by which believers could understand their incorporation into this new community. As opposed to other slave systems, the Roman slave system used "natal alienation" as a means of incorporating individuals into the larger social system, that is, as a means of romanizing them.³⁰ Such incorporation was not an effective goal of either the Jewish or Greek legal systems on the issue of slaves. Thus, Paul's understanding of slavery is fundamentally Roman.³¹ Yet this incorporation is an odd one. As Patterson indicates, it involves initially introducing the slave as a legal nonperson.³² Such an understanding sounds reminiscent of Paul's words in 2 Cor 5:17 (ὥστε εἰ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινόν), which appear to draw upon the metaphor of enslavement as an analogy to incorporation into the church. Paul uses the Roman concept of slav-

London: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 258–59; Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1988), 189.

²⁶ Jones and Sidwell, *World of Rome*, 231, cf. 221.

²⁷ Olivia F. Robinson, *The Sources of Roman Law: Problems and Methods for Ancient Historians* (Approaching the Ancient World; London: Routledge, 1997), 79.

²⁸ For a discussion of Paul's understanding of the Roman legal system, see Lyall, *Slaves, Citizens, Sons*, 39–49, esp. 45. For a discussion of the issue of Paul's citizenship, see Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* (trans. Doug Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 144–54; and Stegemann and Stegemann, *Jesus Movement*, 297–302, where the authors conclude: "The historical Paul was a citizen of neither Rome nor Tarsus" (p. 302). I must admit, however, that I do not find the conclusions of the Stegemanns ultimately convincing. Their analysis does not take into account a number of incidental factors that could assist us in determining Paul's status (e.g., the level of literacy in antiquity, the predominance of a rhetorical education among low-status individuals, the use of secretaries by persons of low status, and the rhetoric of philosophical schools, like the Cynics, regarding manual labor).

²⁹ See Lyall, *Slaves, Citizens, Sons*, 39–49.

³⁰ For a discussion of manumission and romanization, see Wiedemann, "The Regularity of Manumission at Rome," 162; and Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 68–70.

³¹ Lyall, *Slaves, Citizens, Sons*, 40; Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 153–56, 173–88, esp. 181–82.

³² Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 38.

ery as a way of elucidating his understanding of incorporation into the Christian community. As the Roman slave becomes a “new creature,” so too does the Christian—with all the attendant ambiguities and problems involved in each.

The Composition of the Roman Congregation

Merely pointing out the use of enslavement as a metaphor and the possibilities for social advancement in the Roman slave system, at least for a select few, does not adequately explain its use in Paul's letter to the Roman church. An adequate explanation must take into account the composition of the Roman congregation. With respect to this context, scholars have debated whether there was a Jewish presence in the Roman church.³³ Such a presence has a bearing on the possible interpretation of δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ because a Jewish presence would lend credence to the idea that Paul was drawing from the Hebrew Bible in his employment of the concept, although it would not be determinative. A Jewish presence, coupled with the idea that Paul would, by necessity, be attempting to communicate effectively with his readers would shift the preponderance of the interpretive weight away from a Greco-Roman source toward a Hebrew Bible source for the locus of the term's use. Thus, it becomes necessary to address the issue.

In his analysis of the so-called two-congregation problem, Chip Anderson argues for a significant and separate Jewish-Christian populace in Rome.³⁴ Anderson places too much emphasis on the supposed Judaic background of 1:2–4 and the light it sheds on Jewish–Gentile relations in the text.³⁵ Of course, Paul was concerned with this relationship; that is evident in chs. 9–11. Nevertheless, such a discussion would not necessitate the existence of a separate Jewish-Christian community, as Anderson argues.³⁶ The status of Judaism constituted a theological problem for Christianity from its inception, and this does not require the existence of a local Jewish or Jewish-Christian community.³⁷ Rather, the issue of Jewish-Christian relations can be mediated through Paul's self-understanding as δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. That is to say that the slave metaphor itself invokes the recognition of an analogy between the legal consequences of slavery (so-called natal alienation) and the theological consequences

³³ E.g., Daniel Patte, *Paul's Faith and the Power of the Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* (ed. Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Chip Anderson, “Romans 1:1–5 and the Occasion of the Letter: The Solution to the Two-Congregation Problem in Rome,” *TJ* n.s. 14 (1993): 25–40.

³⁴ Anderson, “Romans 1:1–5,” 25–26.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 29–35.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

³⁷ *Contra* Donfried and Richardson, *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*, 175–244.

of statements such as συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπειθειαν, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσῃ (Rom 11:32; cf. Gal 3:28). In other words, slavery, at least in legal theory, is the great status equalizer precisely because it is no status at all. Slaves are no longer concerned with the legal discriminations granted free persons, because they no longer participate in society in such a manner. The slave has been stripped of such status indicators, and thus of any positive legal rights. In the eyes of the law, the slave has been stripped of humanity itself, which, according to Cicero, is fundamentally concerned with status (*Off.* 1.4.14). Legally, one slave is no better than another. All slaves are in the same legal category, and thus equal. Paul's employment of slave language serves as a means to undermine the existing social hierarchies—hierarchies created and reinforced by law. The message of the Pauline gospel is that all human beings are of equal status with respect to their legal standing before God (see Rom 2:9–11). Such a concept is quite remarkable, given that the fundamental principle of Roman law was the creation of status.³⁸

The composition of the Roman congregation is at the heart of the meaning of this technical term.³⁹ Stowers makes this claim regarding this congregation: "Romans 16 pictures a group of addressees that is predominantly of foreign origin and from slave backgrounds."⁴⁰ More precisely, Stowers points out that a significant portion of the Roman congregation came from the *Familia Caesaris*.⁴¹ This group was one of the most socially mobile, yet despised, groups in the empire.⁴² It may be true that the Roman church was concerned with Judaism, but this does not mean that there were Jews present.⁴³ Rather, persons in the Roman church seem to have had some of the same concerns as Jews and other ethnic minorities in the empire, for example, the issue of integration into the larger society. Persons in the *Familia Caesaris* were foremost among those who faced the problem of integration, a problem scholars have coined "status inconsistency."⁴⁴ They benefited from the process of romanization. Under the patronage of the emperor, some were able to amass a great deal of

³⁸ Jones and Sidwell, *World of Rome*, 258.

³⁹ I assume ch. 16 to be part of the original letter to the Romans. However, there are a number of scholars who view this chapter as a separate letter altogether. See Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament* (2 vols.; New York: de Gruyter, 1982), 2:138–42; and Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 409–21, for this perspective.

⁴⁰ Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 78.

⁴¹ Ibid., 76–79. Kyratas reaches the same conclusion in his analysis of the composition of the Roman church; see *Social Structure of the Early Christian Communities*, 83–84.

⁴² Jones and Sidwell, *World of Rome*, 136–38.

⁴³ Donfried and Richardson, *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*; and Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 79.

⁴⁴ See Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 73.

wealth and power.⁴⁵ Still, even with their great authority and wealth they were not accepted by the established aristocracy.

The promotion of the members of the imperial household allowed for the growth of imperial power over against the other aristocratic classes, particularly the senatorial class, precisely because of the *potestas* that inhered to the *pater patriae* with respect to his servants. For example, Patterson outlines a rationale for Augustus's promotion of the members of his household by pointing out the power benefits and ideological advantages that accompanied such a strategy of governance, although Patterson's comments here should not be taken without reservation.⁴⁶ Along with the creation of a new governmental system, Augustus and later Roman emperors were very much involved in the process of public self-promotion. Such promotion involved presenting themselves as the ideal Roman citizen.⁴⁷ Oftentimes, this meant treating the members of their household in an exemplary fashion. Members of the *Familia* were some of the most powerful persons in the empire without a doubt, but this power was a double-edged sword because the higher an imperial slave climbed the more he was held in contempt by aristocrats.⁴⁸ It appears that Christianity offered members of the *Familia* a means of compensating for this problem of status.

Servus Caesaris and δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ

It is reasonable to assume that Paul has contextualized his understanding of slavery in Rom 1:1 to refer to imperial slavery rather than just high-status slavery based on three somewhat interrelated factors: (1) the composition of the Roman congregation and its relationship to imperial power, (2) the allusions and analogies that can be made between Christ and the emperors, and (3) Paul's purpose in writing to this congregation.

The Roman Church and Imperial Power

Rome was the seat of imperial power, and it would have been as natural for early Christians to associate it with the governmental structure as it would be for Americans to associate the federal government with Washington, DC. By analogy, it would be quite natural for the early Christians to associate the gover-

⁴⁵ See Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 92.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁴⁷ For more information on imperial self-promotion, see Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (trans. Alan Shapiro; Jerome Lectures; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988); David Stone Potter, *Prophets and Emperors: Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (Revealing Antiquity 7; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 146–82; Jones and Sidwell, *World of Rome*, 49–52, cf. 221.

⁴⁸ Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 305.

nance of Rome with the governance of God—an analogy brought to fruition in Augustine's massive *City of God*. As has been argued, members of the *Familia Caesaris* appear to have comprised a prominent cohort within the Roman congregation. Thus, the odd pro-governmental stance of 13:1–7 becomes intelligible, when one views the composition of the Roman congregation through this lens. To a large extent, the *Familia* functioned as the “governing authorities” (13:1). One could read the exhortation to obedience ch. 13 as an indirect admonition to practice justice in governmental affairs. However, justice in this regard is not to be conceived of as equal treatment before the law. On the contrary, justice in the Roman world was conceived of in relationship to status, although statements regarding justice by persons in the empire could be interpreted as egalitarian in intent (see, e.g., Cicero, *Resp.* 1.34.52–53; 3.22.33; *Dig.* 1.1.10).⁴⁹ Paul says that αἱ δὲ οὖσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσὶν (13:1). The Romans are to be mindful of this obligation: they serve not merely as instruments of the emperor but as instruments of the justice of God (13:4). This culminates in what could be read as a general admonishment to proper citizenship: ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς, τῷ τὸν φόρον τὸν φόρον, τῷ τὸ τέλος τὸ τέλος, τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον, τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμὴν (13:7).

This entire chapter appears out of place until one takes into account the composition of the audience to whom Paul is writing. As elite members of the slave caste, imperial slaves tended to have opportunities that were unavailable to other, even higher-status slaves. It is precisely this type of slavery Paul seeks to highlight in his letter. Δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ functions as Paul's way of relating his understanding of the obligation and power that accompany apostleship. An apostle has a certain authority and power derived from Christ, but this status is predicated upon a certain alienation from one's native group. As the self-conscious apostle to the Gentiles, Paul conceives of himself in such a manner (see, e.g., 1 Cor 9:19–23).

Since a δοῦλος is without meaningful legal relationship with anyone but his master, he did not and could not speak on behalf of himself, at least in the sense that Romans would have valued. Yet a slave of the emperor garnered power in a way that almost no other type of slave could. He could speak only on behalf of his master, but, given that his master was the son of a god and his word was backed by the full power of the Roman military establishment, the slave's word would be a powerful medium indeed. Such power most probably resided in the charismatic influence and beneficial productivity of the slave to the emperor. The slave proved his worth through exemplary service, and this garnered the imperial slave greater and greater influence over the emperor. In some ways, it is a contradictory form of power, at least as power is generally conceived. As Patterson intimates regarding this matter, the power of the impe-

⁴⁹ In this case, the comments of Shelton are especially helpful (*As the Romans Did*, 9–10).

rial slave was one accumulated at the expense of his own legal standing and was dependent on the character of the emperor involved.⁵⁰ A slave served at the pleasure of the master, which is a precarious situation to occupy. Thus, the rationale behind Paul's use of the term δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is to connect his understanding of ministry to their status as imperial slaves in a manner that allows this particular congregation to grasp its nuances and insights. In identifying himself with the Roman congregation on the basis of legal status, Paul is able to create an inroad with this congregation. He identifies his status as analogous to theirs. Furthermore, he implies that the benefits of Christian slavery are in his mind analogous to the benefits of imperial slavery.

The Gospel and Imperial Propaganda

Scholars have pointed out the multiple allusions to imperial propaganda in the Christian proclamation concerning Jesus.⁵¹ What is interesting about such allusions are the possible relationships that can be drawn between Rom 1:2–4 and how the emperors portrayed themselves to their subjects. David Potter points out that emperors often portrayed themselves as prophetically destined to assume the throne.⁵² The goal of such propaganda appears to have been to legitimate the emperor's reign. Potter outlines the rationale: "The monarch had been chosen by the gods, his lot set at conception or birth, and there was nothing that anyone could do about it."⁵³ Paul appears to be doing something similar in his discussion of Jesus as τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (1:4). By stressing God's institution of Jesus as his son, Jesus' connection to prophecy, and his royal lineage, Paul creates a prophetic pedigree for Jesus that sounds similar to propaganda put forth by the emperors regarding themselves.⁵⁴ Because of this pedigree, Jesus deserves the title τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν. This type of rhetorical strat-

⁵⁰ Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 307.

⁵¹ See, e.g., Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992), 3–4 and notes.

⁵² Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 146–82.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁵⁴ See Christopher G. Whitsett, "Son of God, Seed of David: Paul's Messianic Exegesis in Romans 1:3–4," *JBL* 119 (2000): 661–81, esp. 674–78. Whitsett points out the Jewish messianic exegesis that lies behind Rom 1:3–4. In general, I agree with his conclusions, but I do not believe that it is necessary to assume that such sustained Jewish reflection on the messiah would have made an impact on the Roman congregation. It seems to me that Whitsett presumes a significant Jewish-Christian element in this congregation and develops his thesis regarding the import of Jewish messianic exegesis on the Roman congregation in light of that presumption. The fruits of such exegesis could have affected the Roman congregation without the presence of such a group. Greeks and Romans were concerned with prophecy, and they did not limit themselves to prophetic utterances found solely in their own cultural backgrounds. See Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 98–110, 183–212.

egy would have been more meaningful to the Roman congregation than some sort of appeal to Jewish Christians in the assembly, especially given the importance of prophecy in the Greco-Roman world.⁵⁵

The promotion of individuals through appeal to prophecy was common in the imperial period, particularly promotion of the emperor. Potter points out that the persons most actively engaged in the promulgation of imperial propaganda were some of the same people who would have been members of the Roman church, the *Familia Caesaris*.⁵⁶ Members of the imperial household had a vested interest in promoting the image of the reigning monarch. Paul aligns himself with this type of individual through his self-designation as δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. In his role as slave of Christ Jesus, Paul identifies himself as promoter of the Christian message. Thus, in 1:16 Paul is expressing both his conviction regarding the gospel and his solidarity to the lord whose slave and representative he is. In this manner he again demonstrates that his status as δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is analogous to theirs as members of the imperial household.

Paul's Purpose in Writing to Rome

The final point that suggests that Paul is using δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ as a technical term in Romans involves Paul's purpose in writing to this congregation. Paul makes it quite clear at the outset that (a) he wants the Roman congregation to become part of his missionary enterprise (1:11–12) and (b) that he desires that they support his further missionary efforts in a monetary fashion (1:13; 15:20–29). Given this agenda, Paul finds himself in the position of defending his particular interpretation of the gospel while at the same time demonstrating that his gospel is not totally idiosyncratic. He is walking a fine line because he knows that the Roman congregation has already been given a rather negative presentation of his message.⁵⁷ As respondent to these charges, Paul understands that it is important to create some sense of solidarity between himself and the Roman congregation. He must convince them that he has not only been misunderstood, but that this misunderstanding has been motivated by persons envious of his peculiar relationship to Christ, apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul's strategy in this regard is rather clever. He appeals to them based on their own status as slaves of the emperor. As mentioned earlier, slaves in the imperial household, particularly those who were close to the emperor, often

⁵⁵ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 1–57, esp. 2–3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Paul's statement in Rom 3:8: καὶ μὴ καθὼς βλασφημούμεθα καὶ καθὼς φασὶν τινες ἡμᾶς λέγειν ὅτι Ποιήσωμεν τὰ κακά, ἵνα ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀγαθὰ; ὧν τὸ κρίμα ἔνδικόν ἐστιν.

incurred severe criticism from those aristocrats without such a privileged relationship to the monarch. The most famous example, and one that may be relevant to the context of the Roman correspondence, was Narcissus, the *ab epistulis* of the emperor Claudius.⁵⁸ Juvenal focuses on Narcissus as an object for the contempt aristocratic Romans felt for those who rose to prominence through service in the imperial household (*Sat.* 14.329–31). Tacitus makes it clear that Narcissus was forced to commit suicide precisely because of the scorn expressed for him within the nobility:

With no less precipitation, Narcissus, Claudius' freedman, whose quarrels with Agrippina I have mentioned, was driven to suicide by his cruel imprisonment and hopeless plight, even against the wishes of Nero. . . . (*Ann.* 13.1).⁵⁹

In short, the imperial slave or freedperson who proved beneficial to the emperor—and garnered wealth and “social status” because of this—automatically found himself a target for those who desired to reinforce the class structure (*ordo*). Paul's gospel without circumcision presented a similar challenge to the status quo that some sought to enforce in the early Christian movement: that in order to become a Christian one had to become a Jew first. This radical departure from the “Jerusalem” gospel brought with it criticism similar to that experienced by members of the imperial household. Paul was trying to undermine the class system that others were trying to enforce (e.g., Gal 3:27–28). Thus, Paul's strategy of identifying himself with persons in the same situation in Rome was a creative rhetorical tactic. The criticism leveled against him as apostle to the Gentiles was similar to that directed at the *Familia Caesaris*. Such a strategy guaranteed Paul a more sympathetic reading than he may have otherwise received in the Roman congregation. This tactic of creating solidarity appears to be behind Paul's use of δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, although we lack the means of determining its ultimate success.

III. Conclusion

Understanding δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ as a technical term alluding to the *Familia Caesaris* appears to be the best way to explain its use in Rom 1:1. High-status slavery does not appear sufficient to explain Paul's use of the term. Paul is strategic in his use of language, and this is particularly true when it comes to his

⁵⁸ Stowers posits that the household of Narcissus mentioned in Rom 16:11 may be that of the Narcissus who served the emperor Claudius (*Rereading of Romans*, 78).

⁵⁹ Ronald Mellor, ed., *The Historians of Ancient Rome: An Anthology of the Major Writings* (London: Routledge, 1998), 463.

use of δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. The selectiveness of its usage in only two (undisputed) Pauline letters requires that we understand Paul to be referring to something rather specific. Furthermore, the Roman congregation, if my understanding of its discrete composition is correct, would have derived a distinct meaning from this term, a meaning that otherwise might have been taken in a more general sense. This is augmented in the prescript by the reference to Christ's appointment as son of God and the analogies that can be drawn between this prophetic dictum and those expounded in imperial propaganda. Finally, the letter to the Roman church functions as Paul's personal introduction to this congregation and his primary opportunity to persuade them of the validity of his gospel. As a means of accomplishing this task, Paul creates an epistolary context wherein he can elicit both sympathy from and solidarity with the Christians in Rome. The validity of the assertion that δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is a technical term alluding to the *Familia Caesaris* appears solid.

The implications for possible new readings of Paul's argument in Romans is the real benefit of such an understanding of δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Slave language and imagery belong to Paul's presentation in the letter, but what does this language mean when addressed to persons who are the highest of high status slaves in the empire? Further investigation needs to be done in this area. For example, it appears that the Roman congregation would have had a more nuanced understanding of the concept of νόμος than others, given its social location. They would have understood both the positive and negative results of the institution of νόμος. Educated Romans, particularly those in government, understood the power of law in a way that others did not. They understood that law defined status (*ordo*), and that status greatly determined the possibilities available to an individual. Νόμος is not simply the Jewish scriptures; it is the very construction of society itself—the way things are.⁶⁰ Such an awareness would allow for a fuller understanding of Paul's argument regarding νόμος in Romans. Placing the Roman correspondence in its distinctive context can give us a richer understanding of Paul's theology.

⁶⁰ TDNT 4:1022–35; cf. BAGD, 542–43.

BOOK REVIEWS

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Hebrews Between Cultures: Group Portraits and National Literature, by Meir Sternberg. Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998. Pp. xxiii + 730. \$59.95 (cloth).

Having gratefully grappled years ago with Meir Sternberg's magisterial *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), the length of which matched the scope of its subject, I could barely imagine how the inquiry of the book under review, the referent of the thirty-odd appearances of the term "Hebrews" in the Hebrew Bible, could generate a tome of seventy pages, much less seven hundred. I ought to have known better. After working through this difficult volume twice (made more difficult by its prose style), I can testify that the seeming narrowness of the subject affords Sternberg the opportunity not only for engaging in even deeper analysis than in *The Poetics* but also for exploring the wide-ranging implications of the subject for biblical poetics and comparative cultural studies.

The heart of this study is the workings of the "Hebrewgram," Sternberg's shorthand for the grammar, or poetics, of the biblical deployment of the ethnonym "Hebrew." Neither a synonym for "Israelite" (what Sternberg terms the "unicultural" explanation) nor the biblical form of the extrabiblical sociopolitical designation *Hab/piru* (the "cross-cultural" solution), the word "Hebrew" signals foreign or foreign-like discourse about Israelites. This ironclad truth is expressed as the "Law of Intercultural (De)nomination," a complex of four patterns into one of which each appearance of the term falls: (1) "Hebrew" in the voice of a foreign speaker to express his superiority to and derision of an Israelite; (2) "Hebrew" used by an Israelite conversing with a foreigner in order to be perceived as sharing the foreigner's derisive perspective and thus assuming the role of an underdog; (3) "Hebrew" used by the narrator quoting the hidden, unarticulated perspective of foreigners; and (4) "Hebrew" used both in narrative and slave law as a "rhetoric of deterrence" against Israelites who would assume a foreign-like superiority or Hebrew-like inferiority with respect to their fellow Israelites.

So stated, the Hebrewgram appears straightforward enough. But through the demonstration and analysis of these patterns Sternberg develops a poetics of intercultural

tural rhetoric that runs canon-long and distinguishes biblical from extrabiblical discourses of cultural identity. Cracking the code governing the seemingly nonstandard and limited deployment of "Hebrew" turns out to be the linchpin for understanding the Bible's uniquely sophisticated rendering of national consciousness.

Critical to Sternberg's argument is the identification of the "Hebrewers," those foreigners who employ the term against Israelites or in whose presence Israelites do, such as Hamites (Egyptians and Philistines mainly but also Jonah's sailors, for instance). The opposition between Shem and Ham set in Genesis 9 works itself out in the sexual predation of Ham's descendants from Pharaoh and Abimelech toward Sarah and Rebekah to Potiphar's wife, and in the slaver mentality attributed to both main groups. On linguistic ("Hebrew," "uncircumcised"), sociopolitical (sexual assault to enslavement), ethnological (Egyptians as a master race), and geographical (Hebrews as unwelcome settlers in Hamland) axes, the aforementioned law governs the representation of the relationship between Israelites and Hamites but does not apply to other foreigners. On the contrary, Sternberg argues that the non-Hamite *nokhri* ("foreigner") in general cannot be stereotyped as Other, because the Bible paints foreigners in many shades and gives even Hamites their own voices and consciousness. Sander Gilman's "high-level theorizing" about stereotypes comes in for especial attack (pp. 171–81) as an example of "package-dealing," opposed to the "Proteus Principle" that characterizes biblical representation in Sternberg's view.

In his demonstrations of each pattern of the Hebrewgram, Sternberg argues repeatedly against the identification of Hebrew with *Hab/piru* as making no sense historically, linguistically, sociologically and, most of all, in terms of the Bible's own canonical discourse: "... the Hebrew-*Hab/piru* traffic has little to support it beyond good intentions, far-fetched conjecture, and wishful thinking" (p. 39). In fact, nearly all of ch. 7, "Slave Law," is devoted to the severing of this link. On the other hand, the Hebrewgram accounts for all instances within a single web of meaning. To take just one example, the narrator's reference to "Abram the Hebrew" (Gen 14:13–14) in the odd episode depicting Abram rescuing Lot has been taken as an archaism, a sure sign of *Hab/piru* warrior status, or evidence of foreign authorship. But after dismissing these and other suggestions, Sternberg shows this an example of the third pattern. The narrator reveals the mind of the fugitive informant, a local who classes Abram with the other outlanders who have captured Lot. This unique instance in the Abraham stories "suggests a foreign mind at thought within the tale's world (an outsider's built-in involvement as image-maker) rather than a foreign hand within its genesis (an outsider's imported document)" (p. 316).

Among the most ingenious, yet somewhat forced, arguments is that linking the three legal references to the "Hebrew slave" (Exod 21:2–11; Deut 15:12–18; Jer 34:8–17). The general point makes good sense: the texts aim to stigmatize an Israelite who would enslave another by coding him in the role of a Hamite master, as well as tarring an Israelite who would choose servitude over liberty by coding him as a throwback to Egyptian slavery. But Sternberg further argues that the language of each law not only fits its own narrative context but also specifically alludes to texts preceding it canonically. Thus the Exodus version is linked in detail to memory of Joseph's slavery, while Deuteronomy's depends on the passage of time since the exodus and recodes the Exodus version of the law. Sternberg acknowledges that the canonical distance between the three laws

taxes the reader's memory, yet what premodern reader, let alone biblical writer, would have read the Bible straight through this way?

The greatest challenge of this book is its language. On the one hand, Sternberg is a master of diction, choosing words precisely, and frequently using rhythm, consonance and assonance to spotlight his insights. On the other hand, his bafflingly complex sentences are loaded with subordinate clauses and parenthetical phrases, demanding constant parsing. Some paragraphs were finally, for me, indecipherable. As well, though critical of postmodern language and theory, he employs slashes and dashes liberally and creates his own language code (e.g., de-nomi-nation, narrativicide, genarration) to decode the Bible's. Though some readers may be put off by frequent repetitiveness, I was glad for the multiple opportunities to get the point and for the continually fresh language in which Sternberg casts his ideas.

This is a volume to live with for a while, to read and read again. Focusing on the Hebrewgram, Sternberg's subtle and sophisticated interpretations reveal a subtle and sophisticated biblical mode of representing group consciousness. I found both its theoretical argumentation and its detailed close readings no less than revelatory, drawing me past the purple passages to the next turn of phrase that captured the point perfectly. In *The Poetics*, Sternberg explains why the Bible demands a "drama of reading"; this book, in its own way, demands no less.

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Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature, by T. Stordalen. CBET 25. Leuven: Peeters, 2000. Pp. 582. €45.00.

Echoes of Eden is a difficult read, though its payoff is access to enormous spadework and assiduous analysis. With *Echoes of Eden* T. Stordalen intends to stem the tide of neglect that he claims characterizes contemporary scholarship on the Eden narrative in Gen 2–3. The dyke is formidable—582 pages consisting of five parts, sixteen chapters, several appendices, a sixty-seven page bibliography, and twenty pages of indices.

In the first part, Stordalen demonstrates that this is no garden-variety study. He wends his way through numerous semantic and literary categories: lexeme; syntagmatic field; metaphor; simile; metonymic names; allegory; allusion; intertextuality; myth; *Bildfeld*; and communicative competence. The gist of his methodology rests on the premise that texts exhibit conventional sorts of symbolism that were understood by their implied readers. Stordalen is concerned to provide a comprehensive perspective for interpreting Gen 2–3 and other biblical writings by connecting texts—biblical and ancient Near Eastern—that share these symbolic conventions; he rejects a "text-genetic" approach, preferring instead to detect "cognitive resonance between one appearance of a concept (e.g. 'garden') and the use of that concept in a different context" (p. 29).

The purpose of part 2 is "to map the symbolic significance [à la Geertz] of a garden as it may have appeared to a biblical audience" (p. 35). More simply put, Stordalen analyzes various aspects of gardens in ancient Near Eastern literature. In ch. 4 he discusses symbolic gardens, such as royal gardens (pp. 94–102), and in ch. 5 gardens as settings for

death and love (pp. 105–11) and cultic activity, including the Jerusalem temple as garden (pp. 111–36). Chapter 6 comprises in part a refutation of Widengren's view that the temple grove was the garden of paradise; instead, contends Stordalen, in ancient Near Eastern mythic stories gardens symbolize a numinous border between divine and human realms, a mythic place of divine activity—both beneficent and malevolent—in the human realm. Chapter 7 deals with the symbolic significance of trees and vineyards, particularly the trees of Lebanon.

In part 3 Stordalen narrows the focus of his study to Gen 2–3 and shifts his methodological perspective from “story signification” (part 2) to “story narration.” Chapter 8, “Points of Departure,” is essential to this shift; it is here that Stordalen stakes his claim, in two ways, to Eden. First, Stordalen contends that Gen 2–3 is “a coherent literary composition, applying a number of highly symbolic items, popular etymologies with symbolic intent, cast in a certain ironic mode” (p. 473). In other words, though comprised by literary sources, the narrative ought to be studied with an eye toward its literary coherence. Second, this narrative is postexilic and sapiential; it ought to be read primarily in the context of early Persian and, to a lesser extent, late Babylonian priestly and prophetic literature (p. 212).

Having established the postexilic and sapiential character of this relatively coherent narrative, Stordalen undertakes in ch. 9 a selective but serious analysis of the literary features of Gen 2–3 (e.g., the narrator is not omniscient); with the resulting conclusion that the fundamental conflict of Gen 2–3 is that life is a blessing, but life and knowledge together comprise too near an approach to divinity. He then turns in ch. 10—the most fascinating and compelling in the book—specifically to Eden. Eden, which is to be understood as a symbol of blessing (pp. 256–61), is a very old garden created “from the beginning” (*mqdm* in Gen 2:8 does not mean “in the east” [pp. 261–70]). In the ideologically construed map of antiquity, represented by Gen 2:10–14, Eden is located at the earth's rim on the other side of the cosmic ocean at the numinous boundary between the divine and human realms. The rivers run not from the center of the earth outward but from the cosmic ocean formed of Eden's waters and then from the four corners of the earth inward toward the center of the biblical world (pp. 270–86).

The purpose of part 4 is comparatively—and thankfully—quite straightforward, once the reader has traversed further *Forschungsbericht* (pp. 305–17). Stordalen's criteria for analyzing other references to Eden, both overt and covert, are clear. Because Gen 2–3 was written, in Stordalen's opinion, in the late Babylonian or early Persian period, he includes principally other biblical texts from those periods and later. He organizes references, chapter by chapter, in ascending order of complexity, from similes (ch. 12) to metaphors (ch. 13) to allegories (ch. 14) and finally to allusions or intertextual relations (ch. 15). Eden similes include Isa 51:3, Ezek 36:35, Joel 2:3, and Gen 13:10. Eden metaphors include Zion-is-Eden texts (Ezek 28:11–19), Gihon-is-from-Eden texts (e.g., Ezek 47:1–12; Zech 14:8–11; Joel 4:18), and Wisdom-is-from-Eden texts in Proverbs (e.g., 11:30) and Sirach (e.g., 40:27). Eden allegories include Ezek 31, the story within Ezek 28:11–19, and Qoh 2:1–11. Allusions and intertextual connections are too numerous to list, but they cluster around allusions to the Zion-is-Eden metaphor, the view of people as inhabitants of Eden (e.g., Sir 50:12–13), and miscellaneous other aspects of Gen 2–3, such as the vision of animals living in harmony (Isa 65:17–25). This

very important part of Stordalen's study clinches the case for the significance of Eden: Eden is *not* marginal to narrative and symbol in postexilic biblical Hebrew literature.

In part 5, which is mercifully brief, Stordalen proffers a historically informed reading of Gen 2–3. This is a sapiential story about the need to hold firmly to wisdom and Torah, about the pitfalls of human glory, and about the possibility of displaced confidence in human mental faculties.

Although Stordalen invites us to explore Eden, a primeval garden associated with “ultimate blessing and happiness” (p. 473), his spadework is so intrusive that readers may feel as if they have plowed through this book on primeval luxuriance by the sweat of their brow. The author ought to have pruned this book (the table of contents alone expands to eight pages), excising the excessive portions: the fifty-seven-page discussion in part 1 of lexical fields, syntagmatic fields, figurative fields, etc., for example, may tend to discourage readers from proceeding to the core of his analysis. Covering the stark nakedness of his research with something less garish would have been helpful: his introductory discussion of syntagmatic fields, for instance, includes a stultifying six-page list of horticultural vocabulary in the Hebrew Bible, while his analysis of gardens as symbols includes an equally intrusive six-page list of “People-as-Plants” figures of speech (e.g., people-are-grass, people-are-trees), both of which would be extremely useful in the more modest confines of his appendices.

Stordalen is an attentive curator of the data—lexical, ancient Near Eastern, literary, intertextual—but an ineffective tour guide of Eden and its environs. In part 2 of the book, in particular, Stordalen typically launches into extended analyses of ancient Near Eastern data without explaining the significance of these data for interpreting Gen 2–3. Their relevance becomes evident belatedly in the final “Summing Up” portions of chapters. For example, in the conclusion to ch. 4, he writes: “Chapter Ten will argue that the Eden Garden is basically a potent version of this symbolism” (p. 103; ch. 10 is pp. 250–301). Again, he writes at the end of ch. 5 (p. 138), “as regards communicative competence to perform an historically oriented creative reading of Genesis 2–3 (Part Five), the knowledge of cultic oracle trees will prove essential.” Part 5 occurs over three hundred pages later—pp. 457–71. The relevance of the extensive, very complex material that precedes such concluding statements is rarely to be seen in the body of part 2; consequently, the reader uncomprehendingly passes through a thicket of *religions-geschichtlich* data without knowing their relationship to Gen 2–3.

I lodge this complaint so emphatically because the book's ability to confuse and to bemuse blunts the force of its expansive research. Stordalen amasses an impressive array of primary sources, engages secondary sources admirably, evaluates thoughtfully many influential scholarly studies, and provides excellent studies of key topics, such as the location of the four rivers in Gen 2:10–14.

Stordalen is, further, methodologically self-aware, particularly when he adopts potentially controversial positions. He ably exploits different elements of literary theory, e.g., Eden as narrative versus Eden as symbol, or story narration over against story significance in Gen 2–3. On the thorny issue of dating, he expends the energy necessary for a credible defense of a postexilic date and a sapiential milieu for Gen 2–3.

On smaller but vital topics, Stordalen demonstrates both a breadth of knowledge and discernment. For example, he provides judicious rationale for interpreting the word

mqdm in Gen 2:8 as “from the beginning.” He argues forcefully that the recognition of nakedness in Gen 3:7 was regarded as a positive development rather than an entirely negative one. These shorter studies, most of which occur in part 3, are both interesting and provocative.

Given the significant yet exhausting character of this book, I should like to offer a *modus operandi* for benefiting from *Echoes of Eden*. The reader must come to the book with the recognition that its strength is its encyclopedic character; it is best consulted rather than read *seriatim*. Stordalen has facilitated this use of the book by means of detailed indices of sources, modern authors, and topics.

With this in mind, the reader ought to begin with the terse summaries that are found on pp. 34–35, 473–74, and at the beginning of parts 2 through 5 (pp. 80, 186, 304, 456). Having ascertained the essential perspectives espoused in the book, the reader ought to plunge into part 3, in which Stordalen seriously analyzes basic elements of Gen 2–3. Next is part 4, in which Stordalen discusses Eden similes, metaphors, allegories, and intertextual relations. As I said above, Stordalen’s introductory discussion in part 4 (ch. 11) is illuminating; his outline of criteria for determining which texts he will include in his analysis is indispensable (pp. 317–19).

While reading parts 3 and 4, readers ought to attend carefully to the notes, since it is there that Stordalen directs us to relevant discussions earlier in the book. By referring to those portions of parts 1 and 2 that Stordalen records in the notes to parts 3 and 4, the reader will be able to assess essential methodological (part 1) and *religionsgeschichtlich* (part 2) data that pertain to the interpretation of Gen 2–3 (part 3) and other biblical Eden texts (part 4).

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Exodus 1–18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, by William H. C. Propp. AB 2. New York/London: Doubleday, 1999. Pp. xl + 680. \$44.95.

Studies of the book of Exodus have occupied a prominent place in pentateuchal scholarship in large part because of the importance of the exodus theme in the Hebrew Bible and the importance of the figure of Moses in the Pentateuch. The first volume of W. H. C. Propp’s new commentary on Exodus in the Anchor Bible series, covering chs. 1–18, contributes significantly to these studies in a number of ways.

The current volume is the first of a two-volume commentary on the whole of Exodus and is to be followed by another covering chs. 19–40. Five appendices are to appear in volume 2 treating issues that have arisen in Exodus studies. Following the Anchor Bible format, each division of the volume begins with the author’s own translation of the text of Exodus followed by textual notes, source analysis, redaction analysis, notes, and comment. The translation is based on the author’s text-critically reconstructed text and is accompanied by explanatory notes. The translation technique employed by the author seeks to make subtle aspects of the Hebrew text available to the English reader while maintaining a sense of cultural and temporal distance. At times this leads to a very literal rendering of the Hebrew text in what is described as a “hyperliteral” style. Various

Hebrew idioms are rendered literally such as “Jacob’s *thigh*” (1:5), the “Sea’s *lip*” (14:30), and “Yahweh’s *nose*” which has grown angry with Moses (4:14). Another example is found in the use of repetition to render the finite verb with infinitive absolute in Hebrew.

In the section entitled “Textual Notes,” text-critical issues pertaining to the text of Exodus receive a substantial discussion with relevant comparisons being made between the MT, the LXX, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and Qumran texts. From the spectrum of possible readings represented within the textual traditions, the author focuses on those held to affect translation and interpretation. For an example, the reader may see the discussion of the varying numbers given in the textual traditions of those who entered Egypt with Jacob in Exod 1:5, Gen 46:27, and Deut 10:22 (pp. 121–23).

Under the rubric “Source Analysis,” the commentary provides a discussion of the text of Exodus in terms of traditional source- and redaction-critical approaches focusing on the relationship of P, E, and J, while noting the presence of deuteronomistic language. In addition, the author holds that the Song of the Sea (15:1b–18) was originally an independent unit and should be considered another source. The author endeavors not only to distinguish P from JE, but also J from E to the extent possible. One significant contribution of the author’s approach is the contention that more E is present in Exodus than J, since other scholarship has assigned most of the non-P material in Exodus to J. For example, Exod 12:1–13:16 is held to be primarily an amalgam of P and another source, which is probably E. In line with the view that the sources employed in Exodus were already polished works of literary art, the author holds that the role of the redactor is best described as that of a scribe who worked with raw materials rather than that of an author or artist.

While a significant portion of the commentary treats text-, source-, and redaction-critical aspects of the book of Exodus, the commentary’s main methodological focus, as evidenced in the notes and comment, is a narrative study of the text whose principal element is folktale analysis. According to the author, Exodus in many ways follows the plot type of the heroic adventure or fairy tale as described by V. I. Propp. There are significant differences, however, since Exodus has three heroes: Moses, Israel, and Yahweh. Beyond this, the author’s anthropological and cultural approach seeks to understand ancient Israelite social institutions. The author’s interpretation of the *Pesah-Maṣṣot* as a rite of purification and riddance found in the comment on Exod 12:1–13:16 is representative of this approach. Also, Israel’s migration from Egypt to Canaan may be described in terms of a rite of passage, since Israel performs a special blood ritual and leaves Egypt marking its change of status from slavery to freedom. The narrative analysis of the commentary also includes a treatment of the unifying themes in Exodus.

In terms of the ancient Near Eastern cultural milieu, the commentary explores a number of important comparisons. The author suggests it is possible to see a general comparison of the exodus story with the Canaanite Ba’lu myth. Following the Ba’lu myth as a prototype, Exodus could be described as a battle between Yahweh and Pharaoh over who will possess Israel. Another example is the discussion concerning the storm god and the sea in the ancient Near East and their relationship to the narrative of Yahweh’s deliverance of Israel at the sea.

The author’s treatment of the text’s structure is found in the introduction under the heading, “Exodus as Diptych.” Following M. S. Smith, the author sees Exodus as having a

bipartite structure with the mid-point being the entire Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–21). The Song of the Sea begins with Egypt in the sea and summarizes Exodus 1–14. It concludes with Israel camped about Yahweh's mountain sanctum, which anticipates the covenant and the construction of the tabernacle. Thus, the Song of the Sea both concludes the first half of Exodus and opens the second half. The breaking of Propp's commentary volumes between Exodus 18 and 19, therefore, does not reflect his understanding of the structure of Exodus, but is a practical division of the text based on the length of the material. In terms of the subdivisions in the book of Exodus, the author breaks the text for partition at major changes of scene, time, or subject. No structural outline is given in the paragraph that describes "Partition." However, the actual units resulting from the partition of Exod 1–18 are shown in the table of contents. Its main sections are as follows: I. Israel in Egypt (Exod 1:1–11:10); II. Liberation from Egypt (Exod 12:1–15:21); III. Sojourn in the Wilderness (Exod 15:22–18:27). This arrangement raises questions about the relationship of sections I, II, and III to the posited bipartite structure of Exodus as a whole. Beyond this, the text in each main section is further subdivided.

Overall this new commentary volume has many strong points while raising several questions at the same time. A primary question concerns the treatment of the macrostructure of the book of Exodus. Structure is viewed as thematic structure and is discussed within each division, and the basic structure of Exodus itself is viewed as bipartite. However, other understandings of the macrostructure of Exodus have emerged in scholarly discussion such as the proposal of the Sinai pericope as a major structural unit extending from Exod 19:1 to Num 10:10. These proposals invite comment. Further discussion of the place of Exodus within the macro-structure of the Pentateuch would have been an additional asset to the volume's otherwise multifaceted discussion.

As a minor point, the translation style of the commentary may present difficulty for some readers. The knowledgeable reader of the commentary's translations will immediately "feel" the Hebrew text beneath the hyperliteral English translation style employed by the author. Frequently, this translation style gives a surprising sense of what must have greeted the original hearers. Nevertheless, this aspect may actually be lost on general readers who have not had any exposure to Hebrew. However, such readers will find assistance in the author's explanatory notes.

The primary strength of the first volume of Propp's commentary on Exodus is its drawing together of several important analytical approaches into the orbit of its treatment of Exodus. As described above, the commentary includes a wealth of information within its scope, making it a useful volume and a joy to read. Moreover, the sections introducing textual criticism, source analysis, and redaction analysis are written in such a way as to be available to the general reader, while at the same time clarifying the author's position on a number of issues. As such, the first volume of Propp's commentary on Exodus is a fine addition to the Anchor Bible series and to Exodus studies as a whole.

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Joshua Retold: Synoptic Perspectives, by A. Graeme Auld. Old Testament Studies. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998. Pp. X + 179. \$44.95.

Auld, who is writing a commentary on Joshua for the International Critical Commentary, here publishes thirteen essays, written over a period of two decades, all but one previously published. An introductory chapter ("Orientation") attempts to relate the subsequent text-critical and vocabulary studies to one another, and concluding observations ("Reorientation") respond to critics and competing hypotheses.

Many of Auld's opinions flow from his conviction that the Septuagint of Joshua was based on a somewhat shorter and earlier text than the MT. The following illustrates the kind of evidence he is working with: Josh 8:30–35 in the MT is found after 9:2 in the LXX, and Auld notes that it appears in a third position, after 5:1, in one of the Qumran scrolls. He holds that this paragraph, with its close ties to Deut 27, was not an original part of the work. While complimentary toward the work of Max Margolis and his editing of the Greek MSS of Joshua, Auld believes that Margolis was mistaken in consistently favoring the MT over the LXX. Such inattention to the superior features of Joshua in the LXX is also found in Martin Noth, Volkmar Fritz, and other scholars.

Auld believes, with Rudolph Smend and Fritz, and contrary to Noth, that the division of the land in Joshua was a part of the first draft of the book, but he agrees with Noth, partly again on the basis of the LXX, that there was no priestly contribution to the book of Joshua. Turning the Deuteronomistic History hypothesis on its head, Auld asks whether many of the principles now enshrined in Deuteronomy were deduced from portions of the story of the nation in Joshua–Kings.

1 Chronicles 6, in his view, preserves an earlier form of the list of Levitical cities in Josh 21, and the Greek text of Josh 21 is earlier than Josh 21 in the MT. The nine priestly cities in Judah (and Simeon) were the kernel of this material, with the present forty-eight-city list being late and schematic. Chapters 20–21 of Joshua harmonize two approaches: Deut 4:41–43 and 19:1–3 propose that there were three such cities of refuge on both sides of the Jordan; 1 Chron 6 implies that all forty-eight of the Levitical cities were also cities of refuge.

Many of his literary critical stances are in tension with the majority scholarly opinion. Judges 1, he concludes, was composed on the basis of several notes scattered throughout Joshua and is not an early document. The secondary character of Judg 1:1–2:5 is supported by the duplication of Josh 24:28–31 in Judg 2:6–9. Part of Judg 1 suggests that the troubled history of the northern tribes was due to their failures during the time of their settlement in Canaan; another part compensates for the scanty mention of Judah in the rest of the book of Judges. Judges 2:6–3:6, usually considered the deuteronomistic introduction to the book of Judges, is also in this reconstruction a very late composition, and Judg 10:6–16 is indebted to 1 Sam 12, but is not part of the same composition. Another deuteronomistic passage in Judg 6:7–10 is missing in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls and considered secondary. A two-verse supplement at the end of the LXX of Joshua contains materials now found in Judg 2:12; 3:7, 14. While the majority of scholars believe that the Joshua LXX supplement consists of excerpts from the opening part of Judges, Auld holds that Judg 2:10–3:6 "develop[s] from this" [= the equivalent of Judg 2:12 in Joshua LXX]. Most of the stock details of Judg 2:10–3:6, in his opinion, are derived from the Othniel story in Judg 3:7–11, with some significant wording coming

from 2 Kgs 17. Most scholars see 3:7–11 as a schematic narrative about Othniel built on the principles laid out in Judg 2:10–3:6.

Auld believes that the books of Kings must be “deprivileged,” meaning that Kings is not the source behind Chronicles, but that both Kings and Chronicles drew on a common source that was written after the fall of Jerusalem. The book of Kings is a revision of a document that is at the earliest exilic. 1 Kings 8 was in the source document used by Kings and Chronicles and therefore needs to be distinguished from the deuteronomistic sermon on the fall of the northern kingdom we find in 2 Kgs 17. Solomon’s prayer is not a deuteronomistic oration. Auld has developed these ideas more thoroughly in *Kings without Privilege* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), and he expresses an increasing skepticism in this book about the existence of a connected Deuteronomistic History.

The author laments that the critique by other scholars of the textual and literary observations in these essays has hitherto been offered only piecemeal, but there is clearly not space in a review to respond to so many criticisms of widely held hypotheses. I hope to reply critically to his proposal about Kings and Chronicles being based on a common source in another context. Auld, however, may need to shoulder some of the blame for the lack of critique since this publication of unrevised *Kleine Schriften* does not result in a coherent and sustained development of his own argument. In addition, some of his discussions end in rhetorical questions rather than statements (e.g., p. 107), and he occasionally does not supply all the evidence one would need to make an evaluation (e.g., we are not told which parts of Josh 8:30–35 are actually on the leather of the Qumran fragment). Still, these essays offer many resources and challenges to all who want to read Joshua critically.

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The Formation of the Book of Jeremiah: Doublets and Recurring Phrases, by Geoffrey H. Parke-Taylor. SBLMS 51. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000. Pp. xviii + 327. \$45.00.

Professor Parke-Taylor’s work is a close study of the myriad of repeated words, phrases, and word-strings in the book of Jeremiah. The doublets and repeated phrases offer clues to the growing network of intratextual links formed in the long and complex editorial history of the book. These words and word-strings also form increasingly elaborate connections between Jeremiah and an expanding intertextual world dominated by, but not limited to, Deuteronomy and the deuteronomistic texts.

Following an opening discussion of the history of the investigation of doublets and phrases in Jeremiah (pp. 1–12), he analyzes the doublets in the Confessions of Jeremiah (pp. 13–53). He finds that the doublets in the confession confirm the thesis that the Confessions were inserted tendentiously into this collection of prophetic words and have the effect of dramatizing the themes of judgment (cf. A. R. Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987]).

Two sections of this study apply his analysis of doublets and repeated phrases to old paradoxes in the present text of Jeremiah: the ambivalent attitude toward the Judean monarchy and the ambivalent attitude toward Babylon. In both cases, the book of Jeremiah preserves ongoing reflection on the Jeremianic tradition in new and different

circumstances. The doublets in sections dealing with the monarchy (pp. 55–79) bring forward harsh Jeremicanic judgments against the kings of Judah into a new context. In this new context, the hope for an ideal Judean monarch is at the center of the hope for a future for Judah itself. In the words concerning Babylon (pp. 165–84), Jeremiah's conviction that Babylon is the present agent of the divine will is overwhelmed by the elaboration of texts expressing the "inevitable destruction" of Babylon. Jeremicanic words, supplemented by phrases from a larger prophetic corpus, are a critical part of this elaboration of words of disaster concerning Babylon. In the discussion of the growth of the oracles against the nations (pp. 115–64), he describes this as a part of the process of unsystematic growth, expansion, and reordering of the older Jeremicanic tradition under changing circumstances. In this discussion, he finds the idea of a "rolling corpus" (cf. William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah* [2 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986, 1996]) of texts that pick up interpretive expansions in the course of their transmission. Many of these interpretive and reinterpretive elaborations include phrases and sentences not only from the Jeremicanic tradition, but also from broader awareness of a growing body of texts preserving the traditions of earlier prophets. In the oracles against the nations, and particularly in their old introduction, 25:1–13 (pp. 101–14), he uses the shorter text preserved in the Septuagint to identify one stage in the elaboration and expansion of an earlier tradition (cf. J. G. Janzen, *Studies in the Book of Jeremiah* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973]). In the Septuagint *Vorlage*, this is an oracle against Judah, followed by the oracles against the other nations. In the MT of Jeremiah, the poem climaxes in a period of Judean servitude in Babylon followed by judgment on Babylon. This text is a pastiche of Jeremicanic phrases, including late texts reflecting the restoration of the cultus. He finds here and elsewhere a "circle of traditionists" that "not only safeguarded the Jeremiah tradition, but applied this tradition to historical situations well beyond the time of Jeremiah himself" (p. 114).

A series of analyses of the relationship of Jeremicanic rhetoric to a broader intertextual context (pp. 213–92) document the predominance of connections with the deuteronomistic tradition, and incline him to support the thesis of a Dtr edition of Jeremiah. A case in point is the conflict with false prophets who preach "peace" or "lies" (pp. 81–100). This conflict is increasingly rationalized in deuteronomistic terms.

In his brief summary chapter (pp. 292–306), he offers a "tentative" reconstruction of the formation of the book of Jeremiah. He accepts the theory of an "original scroll" of Jeremiah (cf. Claus Rietzschel, *Der Problem der Urrolle* [Gütersloh: Mohn, 1966]), which he dates to 605 B.C.E. This scroll of Jeremicanic words was the common possession of the three waves of deportees to Babylon (597, 586, 582 B.C.E.), the substantial number of people who remained in the land, including Jeremiah and the Jeremicanic deuteronomists, and the fugitives who took Jeremiah to Egypt after the assassination of Gedaliah. They all had scribes with records and traditions of the work of Jeremiah. A common theological concern of the three communities was the development of new norms for life and worship in the wake of the destruction of the temple.

The original scroll now survives in chs. 1–24, a collection of words of judgment enhanced and emphasized by the inclusion of Jeremiah's "memoirs" (the Confessions) in chs. 11–20. The doublets underline this note of judgment. The Judean deuteronomists, by including in stages the prose narratives and speeches in chs. 7–21, carry for-

ward this emphasis on Jeremiah as a true prophet of disaster for Judah. The ideology of the metaphor of the baskets of figs in ch. 24 finally dominates and reinterprets these judgment speeches: only the Babylonian exiles have a legitimate future in the land. Finally, verbal links between chs. 1 and 24 form an *inclusio* emphasizing God's intention to "build and plant" the restored *gôlâ* in the land.

The collection of texts in chs. 25–36, framed by a time note ("the fourth year of Jehoiakim"), is a conscious expansion of a growing book preserving the Jeremic tradition. The Septuagint preserves the original function of 25:1–13 as an introduction to the oracles against the nations, which follow in LXX 25:14–ch. 31. The MT of Jeremiah, after the relocation of the oracles against the nations to the climactic position at the end of the book, has transformed 25:1–13 into a judgment upon Babylon. This introduces a disparate collection of materials added to the growing book of Jeremiah, united by a theme of hope.

Chapters 37–45 begin with an account of events leading to the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E., and the subsequent deportation of the second wave of exiles. This is followed by a narrative of the events leading to the assassination of Gedaliah, not long after his appointment as governor, and the subsequent flight of another group to Egypt. This account arose among the Judeans involved. A later revision by the "Deuteronomistic circle" included the composition of ch. 44 and the addition of details from the account in 2 Kings. The final revision, based on the ideology of Jer 24, expresses the conviction that the Babylonian exiles, restored to the land, are the divinely ordained basis for the new order in the land following the exile (cf. Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978]). Note that the exiles to Egypt have been added anachronistically at 24:8 (p. 297n).

His treatment of the formation of the oracles against the nations and their climax in the unqualified destruction of Babylon (chs. 46–52) has already been discussed. He treats Jer 1 as a redactional overture to the book of Jeremiah that anticipates later themes, including the destruction of the nations.

This cursory summary does not do justice to the detailed analysis of the text and setting of the doublets and repeated phrases in Jeremiah. He sets the doublets in parallel columns, provides a detailed textual analysis, including the issues raised by the Septuagint *Vorlage*. Here, he is generous in his citations of McKane and Janzen. He then analyzes the variants between the two versions of the doublet, and analyzes the relationship of each version to its present context. Once he has determined the original setting of the doublet, he analyzes the function of the secondary version of the doublet in its new context. This lays the groundwork for his analysis of the complex redaction history of the scroll of Jeremiah.

The tireless attention to the details of the text and the ongoing reflection on the setting and function of doublets and formulaic repetition make this a challenging book to read. But the cumulative effect of this demanding study is impressive. The book of Jeremiah becomes the documentation of a century or more of close reflection on the tradition of the words of Jeremiah in various times, locations, and circumstances. The doublets and repetitions have the effect of applying the viewpoint of particular sections of the text to the viewpoint of other sections. The product of this is an intricately interlinked text. Herein the final point of view is an audacious scribal transformation, and even a correction, of the text being transmitted and examined. In the service of this

transformation, earlier words from Jeremiah, words from a growing prophetic corpus, and words from an ongoing deuteronomistic tradition are part of the renewed understanding of the Jeremianic tradition. It is an ambitious beginning, and, despite occasional typographical errors, a valuable reference.

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Micah, by Ehud Ben Zvi. FOTL 21B. Grand Rapids/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000. Pp. xvi + 189. \$35.00.

Volume 21B in the series *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature* presents a form-critical study of the book of Micah. In accordance with the aim of the series the volume examines the structure, genre, setting, and intention of both the individual units and the book as a whole. Ben Zvi argues that the book of Micah presents itself as an authoritative writing that was composed to be read and reread time and again. The primary readership of the book was a group of literati who were competent to read and thus became the intermediaries or brokers of divine knowledge for their illiterate or less competent contemporaries. The importance of the social identity, the world of knowledge, the theology and ideology of the primary readership for the message of the book calls for the identification of this readership. The historical setting of the authorship and readership of these texts are characterized by the social and historical circumstances that allow for the training and maintenance of the cadres of literati and the production, reading and rereading of their works. The emphasis on the catastrophe that befell Jerusalem, the exile and salvation, the Jerusalem-centered theology that permeates the book, as well as the social and economic resources necessary for the production of such literary works, all point to the temple community in the late Persian period. The world in which the book was composed, read, and reread thus differs from the world evoked by the text: the monarchic period. The readership was invited to read the book against the background of the circumstances of the monarchic period, but at the same time they were asked not to historicize the text in such a way that their reading was influenced by any particular event in their recollection of the past. The fulfillment of the announcement of judgment and destruction from the monarchic period as seen from the perspective of the postmonarchic readership served to enhance the authority and validity of the oracles of salvation that had not yet been fulfilled. The primary intention of the book was thus to explain the punishment of the past and to express hope for the future.

The approach adopted by Ben Zvi has serious consequences for the form-critical classification of the whole book and its individual units. The presence in the text of multivalent expressions, multiple connotations, puns, and networks of various readings informing each other, all of which can only be understood by competent literati, entails that the predominant genre in the book is the "prophetic reading." Apart from the book as a whole and the introduction or superscription, all the units and subunits in the book of Micah are in fact characterized as "prophetic readings." A "reading" may be defined as "a literary unit within a larger text written to be read and reread that show[s] textually inscribed markers that were likely to suggest to the intended readership of the book that they were supposed to read and reread these sections of the book as cohesive reading units" (Glossary). The traditional form-critical categories "law-suit," "dirge," "prophetic

announcement of judgment,” or “disputation speech” thus have to give way to the uniform classification of these units as “prophetic readings.” Ben Zvi readily agrees that the various units are written so as to evoke the genre in question, but he hastens to add that the genre is also defamiliarized, as the text does not meet the expectations and associations of the readers familiar with that particular genre. In the “prophetic announcement of judgment” in Mic 2:1–5, for example, the addressees of the accusation in vv. 1–2 are not identical with the persons against whom the judgment is delivered in vv. 3–5. Whereas the indictment in vv. 1–2 addresses a small group of evildoers, the announcement of judgment in vv. 3–5 is directed against the people as a whole, as may be clear from the expression *‘al hammišpāhā hazzō’t* in v. 3a and the reference to the people in its entirety in v. 4ab, ba and perhaps also in v. 5. Moreover, the execution of the sentence is postponed to a later day and time by means of the phrase *kī ‘ēt rā’â hî’* in v. 3bb and the subsequent *bayyôm hahû’* in v. 4aa. In the traditional historical-critical commentaries the parts that cause these discrepancies are normally attributed to a later editor, who applied the prophecies of the eighth-century prophet to the fate of the entire people in the days of the Babylonian exile. Ben Zvi, on the other hand, considers the tensions in the present text as a deliberate ploy to create a multiplicity of readings, which create a tapestry of meanings for the literati who composed, read and reread the book.

The exegesis offered by Ben Zvi may be appreciated as a serious attempt to make sense of the present text of Micah. However, the question may be raised whether an author can really be credited with the composition of this type of incoherent text so full of ambiguity and polysemy. The “literary competence” necessary to understand written and spoken texts first and foremost implies the ability to recognize the genre of the text in question. The communication between writer and reader cannot but fail without at least a common recognition of the genre to which a text belongs. The “defamiliarization” of the genres observed in the texts thus presents a problem. Ben Zvi stresses that the texts offer no indication that they should be read against the background of their proposed redaction history. Be that as it may, the shift from an accusation addressed to a small group of evildoers to an announcement of judgment directed at the people as a whole, may be understood as a conscious attempt to apply the oracles of a eighth-century prophet to the fate of the entire people about a century later rather than as an incoherent utterance of the late Persian period that functions as a secret code aimed at a small circle of initiates competent to decipher the numerous clues hidden in the text.

The substitution of the traditional form-critical categories by the uniform genre designation “reading” may prove disadvantageous in more than one way. The volume turns out to be quite repetitious as the discussion of the genre, setting, and intention of the individual units in the book of Micah time and again yields the same results. Moreover, the use of the traditional form-critical categories may also have something to contribute to the correct interpretation of the individual units. The conclusion of the first “prophetic announcement of judgment” in Mic 2:1–5 may well be considered as a succinct characterization of the punishment: “you will have no one to cast the measuring line by lot,” which refers to the redistribution of land either among those who were not taken into exile or the foreign invaders (cf. Amos 7:17: “your land will be redistributed by the measuring line”). The verse may, therefore, hardly convey a message of hope as Ben Zvi would have it (p. 47). The transition from the quotation of the objections raised by the audience to the refutation of these objections by the prophet/YHWH in the “dis-

putation speech" in Mic 2:6–11, may rather be perceived in the expression *hālôʾ* ("Is it not . . . ?") in v. 7b, as is more often the case in a disputation speech (e.g., Isa 40:28; Mal 1:2b), than at the beginning of v. 8. A traditional form-critical analysis would thus render obsolete the "fluid identification of the speaker" in v. 7 as discourse of both the evildoers and YHWH, assumed by Ben Zvi (pp. 58–59). In a similar vein, the oracle directed against Migdal-Eder in Mic 4:8 is, just as its counterpart in Mic 5:1, addressed to a small town in the vicinity of Jerusalem. The two oracles, whose format may have been derived from the tribal sayings, address the town in the second person masculine singular, followed by a short specification and a prepositional phrase that introduces a statement about the leadership of Israel. Whereas Mic 4:8 envisages the flight of the former king to the last stronghold at the south flank of Jerusalem, Mic 5:1 announces the arrival of a new king from Bethlehem-Ephrathah. A traditional form-critical analysis thus stands in marked contrast to the interpretation favored by Ben Zvi, who argues that the oracle in Mic 4:8 is directed against the city of Jerusalem, which is addressed in the second person masculine singular in v. 8 instead of the second person feminine singular as in vv. 9–10, 14 on account of the context, that is, the link created by the personal pronoun *ʾattâ* ("you") in v. 8 and the adverb *ʾattâ* ("now") in vv. 9, 11, 14 (pp. 109–10).

Although this volume offers many interesting thoughts, the uniform classification of each and every unit in the book of Micah as "prophetic reading" ultimately questions the decision to include it in a series which is devoted to the determination of the typical forms, settings, and functions of OT texts.

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Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel, ed. Klaus Koch and Martin Rösel. Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000. Pp. i + 322. €101.00.

The textual history of the book of Daniel presents the critical reader with a formidable array of problems. The complexity of this history finds expression in the various forms that the literature about Daniel assumed in pre-Christian times: the Old Greek version includes several "additions" to Daniel that are without parallel in the Hebrew/Aramaic version of the book in the MT; likewise, Qumran yielded a number of hitherto unknown texts about Daniel, none of which overlap with the Greek additions. Finally, Josephus appears to have known even more stories about Daniel no longer extant. The literature about Daniel thus assumed different forms in different literary contexts in its earliest stages, that is, immediately after the book reached its final form during the persecutions under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167–164 B.C.E.).

When turning to the book of Daniel in the MT, the divergences between this and the other versions are no less puzzling. Best known, perhaps, are the variants between the MT and the Old Greek in Dan 3–6. These are, in fact, so dramatic that the Greek may well be based on a Semitic original no longer extant, which differed significantly from the MT; strictly speaking, then, we are not dealing with mutually dependent versions in the classical sense, but with duplicate narratives, not unlike those in Dan 6 and in the apocryphal story of "Bel and the Dragon."

The *Polyglottensynopse* presents for the first time a collation of all major versions

of the book of Daniel in the form of a synopsis. The volume opens with a short introduction in which the editors comment briefly on the versions and their major critical editions. The text of Daniel is then printed in five columns in parallel lines: the MT, the Syriac or Peshitta (printed in square "Hebrew" letters and fully vocalized for easier comparison with the MT), Theodotion, the Old Greek, and the Vulgate. The two Greek versions are based on Rahlfs's edition, since, as the editors explain, Ziegler shows the tendency to "correct" the text in accordance with the MT. A good example is the famous and much disputed passage in Dan 7:13 where the Old Greek's identification of the "One Like a Human Being" with the Ancient of Days (cf. Rev 1:13–14) is eliminated by Ziegler, who follows the MT. Critical notes at the bottom of each page collate the information found in the apparatus of the text-critical editions. Finally, the editors chose not to include the "additions," or "deutero-canonical," texts of Daniel because Klaus Koch has already edited these texts elsewhere, also in synoptic form (*Deuterokanonische Zusätze zum Danielbuch* [AOAT 38/1, 2; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1987]). However, in the back of the volume the reader finds the Aramaic text of the additions to Dan 3, the "Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men" (Dan 3:24–90), and the story of "Bel and the Dragon" (Dan 14:23–42), as they are found in the medieval *Chronicle of Jerahmeel*.

The volume, prepared by two of the leading German scholars on Daniel and text-critical studies, will be found most useful on several grounds. Its primary purpose, as stated in the introduction, is to facilitate the comparison of Daniel's most relevant text witnesses for text-critical and translation purposes. Moreover, the editors explain at the outset that most of the critical editions are dated, with the exception of the Vulgate, and do not reflect the latest manuscript discoveries (a notable example is the Chester-Beatty Papyrus 967, of which only parts were available to Joseph Ziegler when he prepared his masterful edition of the Göttingen Septuagint in 1954). The *Polyglottensynopse* therefore not only greatly facilitates the comparison of the most important versions by printing them side by side; it also offers improved readings for most of the versions (even though these improvements are not identified as such and hence are not readily recognizable to the reader).

Not all versions are of equal text-critical value, however. The reader is somewhat surprised that the critical notes to the MT reflect a Babylonian-Yemenite version based on a single manuscript from the fourteenth century, whose text-critical value is relatively small, while other versions which have played a somewhat more eminent role in the text-critical discussion of Daniel, such as the Armenian or Arabic version, are missing. The question of the text-critical value could even be raised with respect to the Vulgate, which largely follows the MT, although Jerome appears to have been aware of earlier translations and shows some influence of Theodotion. The Syriac or Peshitta, like the Vulgate, is based on the MT, with numerous verbatim parallels especially in the Aramaic part of the book, and so its independent value for text-criticism is somewhat limited as well.

None of these observations diminishes the value of the present volume, however. In light of the extraordinarily difficult text-critical problems of the book of Daniel, the *Polyglottensynopse zum Buch Daniel* is a welcome tool, which will greatly facilitate and, hopefully, stimulate the discussion about the formation history of this intriguing biblical book.

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Surviving Lamentations: Catastrophe, Lament, and Protest in the Afterlife of a Biblical Book, by Tod Linafelt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Pp. xi + 180. \$29.00.

Linafelt's study of Lamentations is remarkable in a number of respects. It proposes refreshing reinterpretations of the genre, purpose, and theological significance of the biblical book. It explores a history of subsequent reuse and reinterpretation of Lamentations in subsequent texts from Second Isaiah. It reverses the usual backward direction of diachronic studies through a literary past of a biblical text and, instead, moves forward to study the book's afterlife as it "survives" in the Targum, Midrash, Medieval *Kinot*, and in Cynthia Ozick's contemporary novella, *The Shawl*.

"Surviving Lamentations" is a figure of speech with multiple resonances in Linafelt's work. It means readers' emotional and theological survival of Lamentations' brutality and general hopelessness. It refers to the book's purpose of expressing pain as a mode of survival. It encompasses the book's genre, broadly conceived as survival literature, and finally, it points to the continuing survival of Lamentations in subsequent literature of survival. In the course of this multi-dimensional study, Linafelt engages Holocaust literature and literary and philosophical thinkers, including W. Benjamin, J. Derrida, and J. F. Lyotard.

The book's organization traces Lamentation's survival. After an introduction and a methodological first chapter, the six remaining chapters treat the texts, beginning with Lamentations in ch. 2 and moving through its reuse and reinterpretation in each subsequent text. An appendix contains the *Three Kinot of Eleazar ben Kallir*. Although *Surviving Lamentations* is a revised dissertation (C. Newsom, Emory University), it is blessedly free of jargon and onerous reviews of literature.

Linafelt makes three important contributions to interpretation of Lamentations. First, he classifies Lamentations as literature of survival that shares in common with other survival texts, particularly Holocaust testimonies, the primary purpose of asserting and facing pain and death rather than of interpreting it. This sets him against many classic interpreters of the book. Linafelt sharply rejects views, Christian and Jewish, that make hope and the encouragement of patience in suffering to be the book's theological and rhetorical purposes. Lamentations, instead, seeks to bring the numbing and dignity-denying experience of pain to expression and to "recruit its audience away from neutrality and towards the concerns of the survivor" (p. 21).

Second, Linafelt uncovers the male and Christian biases of interpreters who erroneously privilege the words of the hopeful male speaker of ch. 3 over the equally theologically potent words of Daughter Zion in chs. 1 and 2. Zion, the personified city of Jerusalem, witnesses to pain, moves away from guilt and death toward life, and rails against God. Third, Linafelt draws attention to Zion's desperate concern for her lost children as a major interest of Lamentations. Little noticed in past interpretation, the children's cruel fate and Zion's hopes for their survival symbolize the condition of the nation in the aftermath of the invasion.

Second Isaiah responds directly to Lamentations, quoting it, alluding to it, and revivifying Zion. Linafelt adds to a discussion already under way in Isaian studies the recognition that Lamentations' portrayal of Zion "sets the terms" (p. 79) by which Second Isaiah is able to imagine survival for exiles. Zion's assertive demands upon God for the survival of her children in Lamentations are transformed in Second Isaiah by the children's restoration, an unthinkable possibility in Lamentations.

In his study of *Targum Lamentations*, Linafelt argues that translation is an act of survival that both renews and mutates the original. He finds a more complex and less buoyant interpretation of suffering in the Targum than is usually thought and attends particularly to targumic expansions focusing on Zion and her children. Like Linafelt himself, the Targum “finds the ‘locus of theological actions’” in the first two chapters of Lamentations, which feature Zion.

A similar complex process of reinterpretation and survival occurs in the midrash that also attends closely to Zion and her children and connects her with Rachel as she weeps for her children (Jer 31:15). The medieval *Kinot for Tisha b'Ab*, the feast commemorating the fall of Jerusalem, gathers up fragments of Lamentations, Second Isaiah, *Targum Lamentations*, and the midrash to enact yet another version of survival.

For Linafelt, the paradox of the poetics of survival is how these texts can re-create Lamentations in service of survival without subsuming Lamentations into a happy ending that would falsify the original work, as have some critical interpretations in their exclusive concentration on the limited hope in ch. 3. In Ozick's *The Shawl*, the hopefulness of intervening texts from Second Isaiah to the *Kinot* disappears and the “melancholia” of Lamentations itself reappears in full force. In this long history of survival, Lamentations is revised but never replaced by other texts.

Linafelt's interpretive horizon is the Jewish history of persecution and the fact of the Holocaust that has destroyed theological and literary happy endings. As a Christian scholar he crosses over divides of disciplines, religions, and of centuries of hatred and persecution to find in Lamentations' survival a wellspring of material for expressing the pain of that history. *Surviving Lamentations* is itself an act of compassionate imagination as this Christian reader takes as his and our interpretive horizon the history of Jewish suffering, enacted and reenacted in Lamentations and its literary survivors. Lamentations has indeed won him from neutrality to become an advocate for the literature, and a co-prosecutor before God.

The book is a splendid model of interpretive method, of theological originality, and of biblical interpretation that both uses and breaks with historical-critical method to follow interpretation forward rather than backward in time. Because it is eminently readable, it belongs in classrooms as well as in the hands of scholars and general readers interested in literature of loss, pain, and grief and in the theological void that is the Holocaust.

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La bible d'Alexandrie: Les douze prophètes 4–9, Joël, Abdou, Jonas, Naoum, Ambakoum, Sophonie, ed. Marguerite Harl, Cécile Dogniez, Laurence Brottier, Michel Casevitz, and Pierre Sandevor. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999. Pp. 417. €39.00.

Since 1986, a team of French scholars, superbly directed by Marguerite Harl and her team of colleagues in Paris, has been producing a series of volumes concerning the Bible in Greek, the Septuagint, under the rubric *La bible d'Alexandrie*. The current work is among the latest to appear in that series, which aims to present in due course complete translations and notes for all the books of the Septuagint. The Pentateuch was

published in 1994 and, since then, Joshua (1996), 1 Kingdoms (1997), and Judges (1999) along with the present volume have appeared. Multiple authorship for this single work echoes a long-standing problem surrounding the Greek *dōdekaphēton*—whether to assign one or more authors/translators for these books. In this case, five editors (with three additional collaborators) together prepared the translation and notes for the six prophetic books included in this work, even though specific tasks were delegated among the main editors: Casevitz, philological and lexical comments; Sandevor, the verification of comparisons of Greek with Hebrew; Brottier, work on patristic commentaries; Dogniez and Harl, final editing of the introductions and notes.

The books edited—Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, to use the English/Hebrew designations—constitute the middle six, that is, 4–9, in the Greek ordering of the Book of the Twelve, these being preceded (contra the Hebrew order) by Hosea, Amos, and Micah, and followed (as in Hebrew) by Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Three of the six names in the title of the present work (Joël, Jonas, and Sophonie) reflect traditional French orthography, the others being given transcriptions more faithful to the Greek. A separate general introduction to the entire collection of the Twelve Prophets by a most distinguished scholar will appear at the beginning of the forthcoming first book, Hosea, which itself is being prepared by three editors.

What strikes the reader on opening this volume is the density and richness of its documentation and notes. A general bibliography, subdivided by categories and followed by the expected list of sigla and abbreviations, opens the work. Each book, starting with Joel, begins with a detailed introduction containing (with variations) each of the following subheadings: the Hebrew of the book, the Greek of the book, comparisons of the Hebrew and Greek, special linguistic/structural features unique to that book, the utilization of the book in ancient Judaism and/or Christianity, bibliography peculiar to the book. Then follows the French translation with commentary/notes. The translation appears in a clear type on the upper portion of even-numbered pages, with copious notes, printed in a font too small for comfortable reading, on the lower portion and continuing on the facing page. In order to avoid repetition, the editors utilize small stars after a verse citation within the notes to direct the reader to the primary place where the issue in question is discussed. Three indices facilitate effective utilization of the notes in the entire work: Greek words, scriptural citations, and ancient Jewish and Christian texts.

A work of this magnitude cannot be fully evaluated, or done justice, by even the most thorough review. It is filled with such rich insights that its true worth will only be appreciated in time. Such select portions that were read carefully and probed were incredibly impressive both for their attention to detail and the precision of the translation. One will find, especially in the introductions to individual books, summaries and syntheses of the most important interpretative questions surrounding the Greek versions of these books. This volume, indeed the entire series, should soon be translated into other modern languages. The authors and editors deserve highest praise. The volume and the series will go a long way to elevating the Septuagint to the distinctive place in biblical studies to which it properly belongs.

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Translating the Bible: The Ethiopic Version of the Old Testament, by Michael A. Knibb. The Schweich Lectures for 1995. New York: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2000. Pp. xii +145. \$45.00.

In his Schweich Lectures, Michael Knibb returns to a theme broached some thirty years ago by Professor Ullendorff in his magisterial *Ethiopia and the Bible*, the Schweich Lectures for 1967 (Oxford University Press, 1968). Ullendorff's first lecture, "Bible Translations," described the *status quaestionis* of research into the Ethiopic Bible at that time. But as Knibb notes, the intervening decades have witnessed a tremendous advance in this field. Although a complete critical text is still lacking, a great number of editions of individual books have appeared. (Knibb himself has been actively involved in this work, having edited with Ullendorff the text of *1 Enoch*, and having prepared Ezekiel.) This justifies a revisiting of the questions, which is precisely what Knibb skillfully undertakes.

Knibb begins by returning to the question of the *Vorlage* of the Ethiopic Bible. It is generally agreed that the Ethiopic Bible, once translated, was subject to extensive revisions with the result that scholars have long debated the extent to which various other traditions (Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Coptic) are represented. Conventional wisdom holds that ca. the fifth–sixth century, a translation was made from the LXX, which was revised in the fourteenth century on the basis of Syro-Arabic texts (the "vulgar recension"), and revised once more ca. the fifteenth–sixteenth century on the basis of Hebrew texts (the "academic recension," pp. 2–3). Over the last century and a half, however, this account has been regularly called into question. After summarizing these objections, Knibb responds to them, offering a finely nuanced defense of conventional wisdom (pp. 11–40). Noting that the history of the earliest translations is patchy and often ambiguous, Knibb insists that settling the question of the *Vorlage* can only be done on the basis of internal evidence (p. 17). Knibb claims there are very strong reasons indeed for thinking that the LXX was the basis for this translation: "The fact that the Ethiopic version of the Old Testament follows the Septuagint and its word order very closely and the existence within the Ethiopic of transliterations from the Greek, and of mistakes that can only be explained in terms of the Greek, point conclusively to the view that the Ethiopic version was made primarily, if not necessarily exclusively, from a Greek text" (p. 19).

The balance of the book consists of Knibb's close comparison of the Ethiopic and Greek texts. Here, he examines the techniques used in the process of translation "in order to form a considered view of the character and accuracy of the Ethiopic translation of the Old Testament" (p. 56). In his second lecture, "Translation Techniques," Knibb makes seven observations about persistent features of the Ethiopic. The first is that the Ethiopic translation is generally (often, slavishly) literal; Knibb then notes that this makes the Ethiopic a literal translation of a literal translation—which may account for parallels between the Ethiopic and Hebrew (p. 60). Knibb's second observation is that the Ethiopic prefers verbal constructions to the LXX's nominal constructions. He takes this as evidence for "the instinctive adoption of what seemed normal" (p. 65), since periphrastic substitution of clauses for participles, adjectives, and even nouns is a regular feature of Ge'ez (p. 63).

Third, Knibb notes that the Greek tense system is far more complex than the Ethiopic, which means Ethiopic perfect forms often substitute for Greek aorist forms—

though this is generally without cost to accuracy (pp. 66–67). Knibb observes fourthly that pronominal suffixes or demonstrative pronouns are often arbitrarily inserted in the Ethiopic (pp. 72–75). Fifth, Knibb also finds omissions, some of which purge redundancy but others of which appear to be oversights (pp. 76–79). Knibb's sixth and seventh observations are regarding "free translations" or paraphrases (pp. 79–80) and mistranslations (pp. 81–83). Each of these observations is amply justified with citations. In his third lecture, "Consistency and Diversity," Knibb incorporates the data generated by his survey of translation technique into a working hypothesis that can be summarized in his words: "the approach of the translators was essentially instinctive" (p. 111) and largely accurate.

To be sure, Knibb's results are somewhat conjectural, as must be the case in light of the incomplete data on which they are based. There is certainly nothing objectionable about tentative conclusions. But sometimes Knibb seems to suspend the limitations imposed by the lack of a reliable network of information and to proceed with more confidence than is warranted. This is evident, for example, in his description of one major problem facing anyone who would assess the Ethiopic OT: "if we are to form a judgment about the character and accuracy of the Ethiopic translation, we need to know what Greek text lay before the translators, but in any individual case we cannot be certain that we do know this. In practice, however, we ought to be able to form a fairly clear view overall of the type of text that was used for each book, and this should make it possible to form a reasonable judgment in individual cases" (p. 58). What this means is that, even though many important questions are as yet unanswered, progress can be made *faute de mieux*. But despite the heavy qualifications he issues at the beginning, Knibb draws very general conclusions. This is a hasty thing to do on the basis of such a precarious methodology.

There are grounds for only one serious complaint: the book contains a surprising number of typographical errors. One mistake that occurs with annoying regularity is the substitution of the Roman 's' for the Greek terminal sigma (pp. 27, 30–31, 34, 40, 51–52, 60–69, 71, 75–78, 80–83, 90–103, 107–8, 110–11). In addition to this, we find two straightforward errors ("if" for "is," p. 73; and a colon for a period, p. 94 n. 6) and five horrors ("compariosn," p. 26 n. 3; "manusripts," p. 54; "renderings" and "Greeek," p. 102 n. 1; and "multitutde," p. 108). In light of how slim the book is, this is a simply ridiculous number of mistakes—most of which could have been easily prevented.

While it is accurate to say that Knibb's lectures lack the urbanity that characterizes Ullendorff's, it is to Knibb's great credit that he manages to present a huge amount of frankly repetitious material in a readable way. This is largely because he never allows the reader to lose sight of the relevance of the comparisons of Ethiopic and Greek (and often Hebrew). Throughout, Knibb gives considerable attention to the mechanics of translation, and this will no doubt make the book important for other scholars who are interested in techniques of translation. Paradoxically, Knibb has succeeded, by carefully working through a massive amount of Ethiopic material, in producing a book the significance of which will extend well beyond the realm of orientalists.

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Studies on the Syriac Apocryphal Psalms, by H. F. Van Rooy. JSS Supplement 7. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. v + 170. €64.00.

The number 150 is traditionally the rather sacrosanct number of the biblical psalms attributed to King David. Since the time of the earliest editions of the Greek OT, however, scholars have been aware of additional psalms beyond those canonical 150. The five Syriac apocryphal psalms, numbered 151–155, which constitute the subject matter of this monograph, were only first brought to the attention of the scholarly world when the great Maronite scholars, the brothers Assemani, noted their existence in their catalogue of the Syriac manuscripts in the Vatican Library, published in 1759. Surprisingly, it was not until over a century later that the first text of these psalms appeared. And it was not until 1930 when the first edition of these psalms, utilizing five manuscripts, was first published by the great German scholar Martin Noth. Since this time, Hebrew texts of three of these psalms were discovered among the texts found at Qumran, and a new critical edition of these Syriac psalms was published in 1972, as part of the Leiden Peshitta project (vol. IV.6), which is now nearing completion.

With all this data now available, Van Rooy here offers the first monograph-length study of these Syriac psalms. The volume is not a systematic monograph, but is actually comprised of eleven distinct studies, most of which have previously appeared in print. Studies 8–11 originally appeared in English, while studies 2–4, and 7 first appeared in Afrikaans but were translated into English; each of these eight studies was revised for this volume. Studies 1, 5, and 6 were prepared specifically for this volume during a research leave at the Leiden Peshitta Institute and are published here for the first time. The eleven studies found in this volume include a translation of these five Syriac apocryphal psalms, three studies of various aspects of the manuscripts in which they are found, three studies specifically of the forms and provenance of Ps 151, followed by a single study of each of the remaining psalms, 152–155.

While others have studied these psalms, they were primarily biblical scholars interested in their relation to Greek and/or Hebrew versions. While Van Rooy rehearses these arguments and offers his own thoughts based on his own investigation into these relationships, the real value of this monograph is that it also offers detailed investigations into the provenance of these Syriac psalms within the context of the development of the Syriac biblical text. For example, these Syriac psalms each contain rather lengthy headings that are clearly an inner Syriac development, and contain comments from Eusebius, Athanasius, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Van Rooy demonstrates that in the course of transmission of the Syriac Bible there was little change in the development of the text of these psalms. Though this might not be unexpected for biblical texts, he nonetheless discerns in the few variants, which otherwise seem of relatively little textual importance, a possibility that there was a second Syriac translation of these psalms, perhaps as part of one of the later revisions of the entire Bible; unfortunately, he does little more than proffer this suggestion. He does, however, offer Hebrew retroversions of the two psalms, 152 (pp. 117–18) and 153 (p. 128), where no Hebrew version has yet come to light. In his individual, detailed studies, Van Rooy demonstrates that all five of these Syriac psalms were probably translated from Hebrew, but that they clearly manifest a textual tradition different from, and most likely prior to, that witnessed in the corresponding psalms found among the texts from Qumran.

This volume by Van Rooy marks a significant step in the study of these psalms.

Nevertheless, the volume also displays the shortcomings typically found in such collections of individual studies. To wit, while the small subject matter gives the appearance of a coherent collection, and despite the revision of the individual studies for this volume, there is little to no tangible evidence of any effort to synthesize these studies into a unified collection. From one study to the next, one finds much repetition of the introductory material involving previous work or discussion of the manuscripts—nearly verbatim in some cases. The studies also retain their original tone and intended audience. Thus, in his study of Syriac MS 12t4, one finds explanations of various things pertaining to manuscripts and critical texts that seemed aimed at undergraduates, while in other studies one finds rather lengthy pieces of untranslated, nonbiblical Syriac, clearly presuming an audience of specialists. Perhaps the most glaring example of this lack of harmonization involves his translation of Ps 151. In the introductory chapter, Van Rooy provides an English translation of all five of these Syriac psalms as found in MS 12t4; later, on pp. 94–95, he offers a translation of the same text as found in the same manuscript, yet which differs quite markedly from the one he offers on pp. 4–5. Unfortunately, one also finds far too many errors in spelling, typography, and small grammatical lacunae. A text of MS 12t4 to accompany the translation of the five psalms, as well as a general bibliography, would have been, to this reviewer at least, very useful additions to Van Rooy's monograph.

Despite these problems of layout and organization, these studies by Van Rooy do indeed constitute a significant advance in our understanding of these apocryphal psalms, particularly of their place in the history of Syriac biblical transmission. While the subject matter and the several languages involved render these studies most useful only to the specialist, there is still much contained in them from which the interested student or amateur will greatly benefit.

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1 Maccabees, by John R. Bartlett. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998. Pp. 111. \$14.95.

This volume is in the Guides to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha series edited by Michael Knibb. In a recent review of a companion work, P. C. Beentjes takes to task Richard Coggins, the author of the Sirach volume in the series, because Coggins "was never engaged in extensive Ben Sira research" and thus in his volume "there is no reference whatsoever to a great number of recent Ben Sira scholars" (see *JSJ* 30 [1999]: 331–33). By way of contrast, Bartlett did write a commentary on 1 and 2 Maccabees in 1973 (Cambridge University Press), and he shows in the present volume that he is familiar with the important work on 1 Maccabees. Still, one might wish to add some references to his bibliographies. For instance, with regard to Bartlett's first chapter, in which he discusses both the evidence of Josephus and also the original Hebrew version of 1 Maccabees in regard to the origin of the book, the following could be added with profit to his bibliography for further reading on p. 20: L. H. Feldman, "Josephus' Portrayal of the Hasmoneans Compared with 1 Maccabees," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. F. Parente and J. Sievers; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 41–68; E. Z.

Melamed, "Josephus and 1 Maccabees: A Comparison," *ErIsr* 1 (1951): 122–30 (in Hebrew); and P. Joïon, "Quelques hébraïsmes de syntaxe dans le premier livre des Maccabées," *Bib* 3 (1922): 204–6. On the whole, however, the bibliographies Bartlett provides are sufficient, and, in some cases, such as the material relating to Roman policy in the east and Jewish diplomatic dealings with Rome (p. 84), they are excellent.

Bartlett's book consists of seven chapters and two indices (one of references and one of authors). As I have already mentioned, Bartlett is concerned in ch. 1 with the origin of 1 Maccabees. True to the aims of the series, Bartlett is careful to introduce students to the Apocrypha and to the various versions of 1 Maccabees. He lays out the arguments supporting the idea that 1 Maccabees was originally composed in Hebrew, but notes that no text of the book is extant in that language and our study is thus perforce limited almost exclusively to the Greek text.

Chapter 2 deals with the composition of 1 Maccabees, and Bartlett addresses the author's use of sources and the structure of the book. I will refer to his discussion of sources below. In regard to the structure of 1 Maccabees, Bartlett mentions a number of "clear signs of deliberate arrangement and composition" (p. 23). On the basis of these signs, Bartlett suggests the following arrangement of the book: chs. 1–2 (introduction); 3:1–9:22 (about Judas); and 9:23–16:23 (about Jonathan and Simon). The more standard arrangement of the book separates the third section into two parts: 9:23–12:53 (about Jonathan) and chs. 13–16 (about Simon). It may be that Bartlett has been influenced in his decision to collapse this standard disposition of the book by the discussion of N. Martola (*Capture and Liberation: A Study in the Composition of the First Book of Maccabees* [Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1984]; see esp. p. 279), whom he mentions and praises in the bibliography of ch. 2: "[Martola's book] demands concentration, but is carefully argued and rewarding" (p. 34). This being the only place Martola is mentioned, it is hard to gauge the extent of his influence on Bartlett. This is disappointing, because it would be interesting to find out what Bartlett makes of Martola's observation that 9:1–57 is a "rounded whole" that crosses the putative boundary at 9:22 (see Martola, *Capture and Liberation*, 165). Bartlett also does not address Martola's contention that the bulk of 1 Maccabees concerns a "main story" within 1 Maccabees, which is the origin of an imbalance caused by the occupation of the temple and the construction of the Seleucid citadel, and the restoration of balance through liberation. Given the dominance of this "main story," Martola considers the whole of the book to be, simply, the main story plus some additions (notably, 8:1–32; 12:1–23; and 14:16–16:24). This line of argument may have some important implications for the literary history of 1 Maccabees. (This point is taken up in my own *The Structure of 1 Maccabees* [CBQMS 31; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1999], a book which had not appeared prior to the publication of Professor Bartlett's work and which he therefore could not have known.)

Chapter 3 deals with chronology and sequence, and Bartlett makes an important contribution through his clear summation of the evidence (see especially his helpful charts on pp. 37–38 and pp. 39–42). In short, most scholars have felt that there are multiple dating systems at work in 1 Maccabees, and, as Bartlett notes, "a vast scholarly literature has developed on this problem and its many ramifications" (p. 37). E. J. Bickerman articulated the prevailing view, which is that the author of 1 Maccabees used two systems of dating—one that dates the beginning of the Seleucid era with spring (Nisan) 311 B.C.E. for Jewish events, and one that begins with autumn (Tishri) 312

B.C.E. for political events. Some scholars have used this notion to isolate sources in 1 Maccabees, including an internal Jewish source. Bartlett comes very close to postulating not one but two Jewish sources at work: "There is much to be said for datings from spring 312 B.C.E. for the time of Judas, and much to be said for datings from the spring 311 B.C.E. era for the time of Jonathan and Simon" (p. 44). Bartlett does not develop the idea, however, and it is left as a tantalizing possibility.

Chapters 4 through 6 deal sequentially with the three sections of 1 Maccabees as identified by Bartlett. Although Bartlett maintains that his book is a "study guide [and] not a commentary on 1 Maccabees" (p. 7), he does address the main problems in interpretation, including the location of the Seleucid citadel or Akra; the decree issued by Antiochus IV; the "abomination of desolation"; the identity of the Hasidim; the campaigns in Galilee and Gilead in 1 Macc 5; the date of the death of Antiochus IV; the missions to Rome; the authenticity of the letters from Seleucid kings found in 1 Macc 10–15; and the decree in honor of Simon in 1 Macc 14. Bartlett's treatments of these issues are typically careful and well reasoned.

In his epilogue, Bartlett argues that "the author of 1 Maccabees emerges with credit as a serious historian" (p. 101). One can well suggest that in his guide to 1 Maccabees Bartlett emerges with the same credit. His book is thorough, well written, and tightly packed. While I have expressed some quibbles, the book is highly recommended.

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Rhetorical Argumentation in Philo of Alexandria, by Manuel Alexandre, Jr. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999. Pp. xx + 302. \$34.95.

Alexandre declares that his purpose in this book is to show that ancient rhetorical theories of argumentation can help us understand the "structure and basic literary motivation" (p. xiii) of Philo's discourse. He believes this is the case not only with the speech-like discourses but also with Philo's exegetical comments on scripture.

The book commences with a commendatory preface by Burton L. Mack, after which Alexandre offers a general introduction to the current status of Philonic studies. Part 1 of the book, comprising 80 pages, situates Philo in the context of rhetorical argumentation. In part 2 (150 pages) Alexandre sets out his analysis of the formal structure of *De Vita Mosis* and *Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit* and of five discourses embedded in treatises, for example, *De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 21–44. In ch. 4 of part 2, he tracks the structure of complete arguments in such documents as *Legum Allegoriae II* and *De Ioespho*, as well as the elaborate development of a theme in, e.g., *De Migratione Abrahami*. In ch. 5 he scrutinizes rhythmic and periodic structures in such discourses as *Legatio ad Gaium* 53–56. The work ends with observations on the philosophical character of Philo's rhetorical argumentation as a technique of argumentation and exposition. The book contains a thirty-three-page bibliography as well as indices on passages from Philo, ancient and modern authors, and Greek, Latin, and English rhetorical terms.

In the general introduction Alexandre does an excellent job in short order of depicting the present state of Philonic studies. Though he published a book in Portuguese, *Argumentação Retórica em Filon de Alexandria*, in 1990, he has brought this

1999 English version up-to-date in comment and bibliography. He mentions the work of the major Philo scholars and the Philonic centers in Chicago, Claremont, Berkeley, Lyon, Italy, and Trondheim. Alexandre himself was involved in the first two centers. He declares that this book "is the fullest investigation ever attempted of Philo's knowledge and use of rhetoric" (p. 18). I concur and affirm that any future scrutiny of Philonic rhetoric must commence with this book.

In part 1 Alexandre situates Philo in the context of ancient rhetorical argument. This is an insightful, thorough, and judicious presentation. Alexandre cites not only the appropriate ancient rhetorical works but is abreast of current discussions in Europe and America. He takes up the rhetoricians historically beginning with the Greeks. He notes that the Greeks focused on the differences between philosophical and rhetorical arguments locating the differences, especially after Aristotle, in formal logic and enthymemes. Alexandre, however, is more interested in the formal structures of the manner in which arguments unfold than in those views of the audience that determine the beginning points for arguments, which was the focus of Aristotle's observations. Alexandre writes that the success of the arguments depends upon "the listener's cooperative interaction" (p. 43). I suggest that Aristotle gave the audience a more significant role. For him persuasion was based upon the speaker identifying the premises of the audience and employing them as beginning points for arguments. The premises located in the auditors were, for Aristotle, the grist of enthymemes. The later rhetoricians refocused the enthymeme, centering rather upon the form. Alexandre traces developments from Aristotle through the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero, Quintilian, Aelius Theon, and Hermogenes, ending with a synoptic chart. While such a chart is of help in locating the varying observations, no ancient prepared a discourse employing such a synopsis.

At first I was skeptical of Alexandre's efforts to establish that Philo was educated in and deeply immersed in ancient rhetoric. While unquestionably rhetorical training existed in Alexandria, Robert Smith has shown that it was not as pervasive as elsewhere, and Alexandria produced no rhetoricians of ancient acclaim. Nevertheless, I came away convinced by Alexandre that Philo was to some degree influenced by rhetoric because of his comments on rhetoric and the rhetorical vocabulary Alexandre has pinpointed. His evidence, however, sometimes inadequately supports his case (e.g., p. 98), and he does not give satisfactory attention to the aspects of Philo's discourses that the rhetoricians failed to discuss, for example, the allegorical and analogical.

Given Alexandre's presuppositions and intent, his specific analyses of the argumentative structures in Philo's work are exemplary. He has utilized language and observations from the classical rhetoricians to describe the arguments in the Philonic corpus. For example, in the *Speech on Virtue* (*De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 21–44) he identifies and discusses *narratio*, *propositio*, *ratio*, *confirmatio*, *exornatio*, *exempla*, *complexio*, *res* and *ratio*, *pronuntiatio* and *contrarium*, *simile* and *exemplum*, and *conclusio*. His approach is useful; I am concerned, however, that Philo's discourse is forced into these categories rather than first undertaking an overall assessment of what informs their flow. Alexandre's basic *modus operandi* is to see how many ancient rhetorical features he may identify, while at the same time ignoring the features not discussed by the ancient rhetoricians.

My concerns are two: first, I think it is clear that the ancient rhetoricians set out to

be more descriptive than prescriptive. They did not try to force discourse into a mold; rather they attempted to scrutinize the features of discourses so as to determine how those giving speeches or writing documents actually proceeded. They were more open to differing approaches than synopsis rhetorical analysis admits. Second, they did not examine religious documents, but those having to do with the law courts, the city assemblies, and citizenry praise and blame. Had they examined the exegetical discourses of Philo or the plays of the playwrights, presumably they would have found additional characteristics of written structures. While, of course, it is possible to find features from classical rhetoric in the exegetical discourses of Philo, or in the plays of Aeschylus, I think these insights are quite limited. The rhetoricians did not comment on arrangement that follows the flow of a privileged text and the various rhetorical ploys emerging through doing so. Neither do they comment on the rhetorical features of the sorts of narratives found in the texts Philo explicated. Rhetoricians did not comment on argumentative and persuasive powers of the analogical, metaphorical and allegorical features endemic in Philo's discourses. While I tend to side with H. A. Wolfson, that Philo developed his philosophical system with deep Jewish roots, I do think that something happened in the mix with Middle Platonism. Philo, with some Jewish predecessors, developed a new creative manner of discourse, which enabled them to embrace Middle Platonic predilections through allegorizing. Rhetorical forms may be identified in such discourses, but I do not see the direct influence of ancient rhetoric as a significant factor.

Despite my reservations in regard to the extent to which Alexandre's book helps explain Philo's discourse, granted his purpose and methodology, this book is a monumental accomplishment. It obviously reflects years of exploration and reflection on Philonic studies, the Philo corpus, and ancient rhetoric.

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Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts, by K. C. Hanson and Douglas E. Oakman. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998. Pp. xx + 235. \$21.00.

Studies of Roman and Second Temple Palestine have shifted steadily over the last quarter century in their interpretive approach and focus from historical analysis oriented toward elite society to social-historical and social-scientific analysis directed farther down the social pyramid. *Palestine in the Time of Jesus* lies at the leading edge of this development, and its pronounced social-scientific perspective sets it apart, even from social-historical treatments such as those of S. Freyne. The book is closer in approach to that of R. Horsley, but more explicit and thorough in its use of the social sciences. While Horsely puts social conflict and analysis of it at the center of his work, Hanson and Oakman focus on the social structures of early Roman Palestine, and they ground their treatment of Jesus and the NT in that framework.

Five chapters, a brief preface, and a short conclusion form the body of the book, with the first chapter devoted to the authors' method and the remaining four proceeding logically from that method. The authors conduct a systems analysis, and they bring a cross-cultural perspective to their work, although comparative data come primarily from the Mediterranean world, past and present. The systems or social domains they identify

in Roman Palestine are kinship (ch. 2), politics (ch. 3), economy (ch. 4), and religion (ch. 5). The authors treat the latter two domains as adjuncts of the first two; political and kinship arrangements, not the market, controlled the economy, and religion was tied to the family and the state.

As an example of how the book unfolds, ch. 1 introduces kinship by contrasting the absolute nuclear family typical of modern North America and northern Europe with the endogamous community (or extended) family characteristic of Roman Palestine. The contours of the social order in Roman Palestine become clear as the authors explore the significance of gender, genealogy and descent, marriage, dowry and bridewealth, divorce, and inheritance in this kinship structure. The chapter closes with treatment of the Matthean genealogy for Jesus and the NT references to Jesus' family.

Despite their theoretical approach, the authors intend their book for a wide readership and classroom use. It is meant for "the undergraduate, seminarian, pastor, or generally educated reader" (p. xvii). To that end, they adopt a readable, relatively simple style, and they avoid detailed argumentation and complex analysis. The authors open each chapter with several guiding questions, introduce the models they will apply, then interpret the particulars of Roman Palestine according to those models. Numerous diagrams aid in the presentation of the models. Each chapter also begins with two or more quotations from the NT to which the authors return once theoretical matters are laid out. Concluding each chapter are suggestions for additional reading and a list of questions that point the reader to passages in the NT and other ancient literature that illuminate or are illuminated by the model introduced in the chapter. The book ends with an extensive, tripartite glossary (thoroughly cross-referenced) covering ancient groups, institutions, objects, and events; ancient documents, collections, and authors; and social-scientific and cross-cultural terms. There is also a full bibliography and several indices.

The book succeeds admirably at what it sets out to do, and it also meets or exceeds what readers may expect or ask of it. This book has the earmarks of a good classroom text: it reads well, offers clear explanations reiterated by illustrative charts, and strikes a good balance between generalities and details. Confirming this impression are the experiences of colleagues who have used the book in a course: they get consistently good results and appreciative student feedback. (Several highly recommend the website the authors have constructed to support and augment the text: www.stolaf.edu/people/kchanson/ptj.html.) Hanson and Oakman deserve credit for putting together a text that could enhance and invigorate a course on Jesus, the NT Gospels, or Hellenistic Judaism.

The book also makes a strong case for how explicit choice and thorough application of interpretive models from the social sciences can benefit NT scholarship. Readers may legitimately come to the book with questions such as these: With the many praiseworthy studies on Roman Palestine already in print, do we really need another? Does not attention to models divert readers from the texts and history under consideration? There are indeed many excellent studies of Roman Palestine, especially Galilee, but *Palestine in the Time of Jesus*, in addition to being a fine introduction, offers insights and a new perspective that make it an important supplement or alternative to existing studies. And for all its use of models, the book gives readers (at least this reviewer) a real sense of how Roman Palestinian society worked. The book excels at putting the reader in contact with

the peasant life that Jesus knew, and this concreteness is achieved because of—not in spite of—the heavy reliance on theory.

Not that the book succeeds at every turn. On the whole, the chapters on kinship and politics are better than those on economy and religion. For example, so much attention goes to the Jerusalem temple and its sacrificial system in ch. 5 that religion at the non-elite level gets short shrift. Earlier chapters do not suffer from such unbalanced treatment. Also, the authors occasionally include what appears to be extraneous material. For instance, the recurring attention to Herodian kinship arrangements (pp. 34–37, 44–46, 48–51) seems excessive. At least, the relevance of such matters to village life, the primary focus of the book, is not made entirely clear.

No book can meet every reader's expectations, but this one hits pay dirt many more times than it misses. Scholars looking for an extensive argument from the authors to justify their kind of analysis will be disappointed. The book's level and aim (and relatively short length) preclude such depth. Those wishing to see how models from the social sciences can produce rich, stimulating scholarship and an excellent text for teaching will be very pleased they picked up the book.

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The Making of the New Testament Documents, by E. E. Ellis. Biblical Interpretation Series 39. Leiden: Brill, 1999. Pp. xxiii + 517. \$151.00 (cloth).

Ellis launches a full-scale assault on F. C. Baur's continuing influence in NT studies, an influence manifested primarily in the widely held view that much of the NT is pseudepigraphic and postapostolic. Ellis asserts instead that all twenty-seven of the NT documents emanate from four allied missions, each led by an apostle: the Pauline mission (thirteen epistles, Hebrews, and Luke-Acts); the Jacobean (James, Jude, and Matthew); the Petrine (1, 2 Peter; Mark); and the Johannine (John; 1, 2, 3 John; Revelation). The presence throughout the NT of shared "pre-formed traditions" (a term encompassing teaching originating with the historical Jesus as well as later apostolic instruction) demonstrates the four missions' extensive cooperation and suggests that we should understand the authorship of many of the NT texts as a corporate enterprise. This emphasis on identifying common "pre-formed traditions" in the NT differentiates his work from other studies defending early datings and traditional authorship. The book is arranged in four chapters, devoted, respectively, to the Synoptic Gospels, the epistles (including Hebrews, excluding 1, 2, and 3 John), the Johannine literature (Gospel, epistles, and Revelation), and the chronology of the texts' composition; six appendices, with supporting details, follow.

In light of this thesis, Ellis's primary arguments are not surprising. In each and every case, he claims, the NT texts were written by their traditionally ascribed authors (the anonymous Hebrews is attributed to an unknown colleague of Paul). The NT documents are best understood as roughly contemporaneous; all are pre-70 C.E., except the Johannine epistles (75–90 C.E.) and the Gospel of John (85–95 C.E.). To support these early datings, Ellis cites the NT's purported silence about the destruction of the

Jerusalem temple as well as the familiarity with Paul's letters, Hebrews, and 1 Peter shown in *1 Clement* (which Ellis dates to 69–70 C.E.). Shifts in theology, style, and vocabulary, both within individual documents and between multiple documents attributed to the same author, do not provide evidence for pseudepigraphic authorship, literary dependence, or the combination of multiple documents, Ellis argues. Instead, such features reflect the incorporation of traditional material and the use of amanuenses. Ellis's high regard for the reliability of Luke-Acts (the "Key to the History of Earliest Christianity" [p. 251]) allows him to document and date the interaction between the four apostles and the writers associated with each apostolic mission, interaction that occurred primarily in Caesarea and the vicinity of Jerusalem. Ellis suggests that the four missions were opposed by a united front, a fifth countermission comprised of judaizing and gnosticizing Christians (pp. 314ff.). He finds evidence for such a movement in the fact that texts originating with different apostolic missions employ similar language in describing the beliefs and personal characteristics (e.g., "deceptive," "greedy," "boastful") of "false teachers."

An overview of Ellis's second chapter illustrates his methodology. In reviewing each of the epistles, he finds evidence for the presence of traditions in purported technical terms (e.g., *manthanō*, *paradidōmi*, *paralambanō*, *meinō*); introductory formulas; lexical, stylistic, and theological changes within a passage; and correspondence to materials found in other NT documents (e.g., hymns, vice and virtue lists, *Haustafeln*, interpretations of biblical passages). In his opinion, traditional materials comprise about 17 percent of 1 Corinthians, considered at length as a test case, and are found in every other Pauline book except Philemon, with the proportion of each document ranging from 7 percent in Philippians to 54 percent in Ephesians. His consideration of non-Pauline epistles finds a similar dependence on traditional materials, ranging from 12 percent for James to 72 percent for Jude. Ellis's discussion in the other chapters of non-epistolical documents is less statistical in nature but follows the same basic methodology. His application of criteria almost always reaches a positive assessment when considering whether a given passage includes traditional material.

Ellis's book represents an impressive amount of work. It is comprehensive and ambitious in scope, considering every book of the NT. References to specific verses permeate his every argument; the forty-one-page, double-column index cites biblical passages and bears witness to his mastery of the texts themselves. Similarly, over two thousand footnotes attest to his familiarity with both American and European scholarship. He succeeds in drawing attention to the philosophical presuppositions that underlay eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century scholarly arguments for pseudepigraphic authorship, and he achieves his purpose of highlighting the NT texts' use of traditional materials as an area that deserves more scholarly exploration.

The persuasiveness of Ellis's identifications of "pre-formed traditions" varies considerably, however. Some are unsurprising, such as the Christ hymn in Phil 2:5–11 or the probable baptismal formula in Gal 3:28. Other points need considerably more defense, such as his largely undefended assertions that John's "Amen" and "I am" sayings originated with Jesus himself (pp. 179–81). His handling of canonical virtue and vice lists provides another example of an argument in need of additional support: he explains similarities in wording between them as evidence of shared Christian traditions,

with no investigation of the possibility that such similarities might instead reflect a common familiarity with standard motifs in Jewish lists (p. 232). Ellis devotes more space to identifying traditions within documents than to demonstrating that such traditions were shared among the different missions, though he expends considerable energy on both tasks. When he does the latter, the parallels are sometimes indisputable, sometimes strained (e.g., 1 John 1:5 with Jas 1:15–17 [p. 190]; 1 John 4:21 with Matt 22:37/Luke 10:27 [p. 195]). When discussing parallels (such as similarities between 1 Peter and the Pauline corpus), he often too quickly excludes the possibility of literary dependence, arguing instead for the mutual use of common traditions.

Many readers will also find other key arguments equally problematic. Often, studies that undermine his arguments are simply ignored, and many of his own controversial claims are presented with too little defense. Thus, second-century C.E. sources identifying the authors of the Gospels are regarded as accurate, with little justification given. The historicity of the events described in Acts is assumed, with insufficient interaction with recent scholarship that suggests otherwise. Ellis gives considerable credence to B. Gerhardsson's argument that Jesus' teachings were accurately transmitted in a controlled manner, similar to that of rabbinic sayings, with little acknowledgment of the reasons why most scholars have found this position untenable.

In connecting all twenty-seven books with the circles of Peter, Paul, John, and James, and then looking to Acts to explain the contacts between these circles, Ellis is making exactly the types of connections the final form of the canon encourages. Readers who already share his presuppositions about dating and authorship may find both the broad strokes and the more detailed arguments of his study convincing. Other readers, like myself, who already hold quite different positions on these issues, are less likely to be persuaded by his central thesis or many of his ancillary arguments.

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The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals, by Stanley E. Porter. JSNTSup 191. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. Pp. 304. \$84.00.

Stanley Porter briefly describes the development of five criteria for authenticity—dissimilarity, coherence, multiple attestation, least distinctiveness, and Aramaic background—critiques the ways they are formulated and used, and then suggests three new criteria. He first objects to the notion that there is a “third quest” for the historical Jesus and to the whole “first quest, no quest, new quest, third quest” scenario. The first quest, he finds, was not as uncritical or romanticized as it is often purported to be; there was no lack of scholarship on Jesus during the “no quest” period; and Porter sees a basic continuity of method throughout the twentieth century, linking no quest/new quest/third quest into one “multi-faceted quest of the historical Jesus, with various modifications and adjustments in approach” (p. 56).

In the second chapter, Porter traces the rise of the five criteria, and some of the criticisms lodged against them. He argues that the criterion of dissimilarity can only be

used to prove something is historical, can only deal with content and not wording, and requires "exhaustive detailed knowledge of both Judaism and the early Church" (p. 74). He argues that multiple attestation tells us about common motifs but not absolute wording, and speaks only to the independence of documents and not to their reliability (p. 86). Porter notes that coherence is very subjective, and that it actually argues in the opposite direction from dissimilarity, producing a sort of paradox of methods that many interpreters do not address (pp. 81–82). His most trenchant critique is of attempted retroversions into Aramaic, which he demonstrates is a very chancy procedure.

Porter then turns to the works of John P. Meier and Gerd Theissen, since both have produced extended discussions of the criteria. He describes the way each defines the criteria, and then looks at specific proposals by each to refine them. Meier's criterion of "embarrassment," notes Porter, turns out to be a variant of dissimilarity. His use of the crucifixion as a criterion—the historian must ask what words and deeds of Jesus can explain his being crucified—Porter takes as a more positive step, since "it clearly enshrines a principle of similarity" (p. 112). Theissen's contribution is his "criterion of historical plausibility," which abandons the idea that the historian can recreate what actually happened for a process of testing plausible scenarios. Theissen also turns one half of the double dissimilarity test on its head, stating that goodness of fit with what we know of first-century Galilee makes a tradition more likely to be historical.

Porter's overall criticism is that after decades of use and despite criticism from various quarters, scholars still mostly use the standard criteria without significant alteration. He deems this an "impasse," and offers three new criteria as a way out. I disagree with "impasse" as the proper characterization for using the normal criteria. His critique of the criterion of Aramaic background is convincing enough to dispense with that test, but his treatments of the dissimilarity, coherence, and multiple attestation are inconclusive. It is not true that in order to gain anything from dissimilarity, one must know everything about ancient Judaism and the early church. Once we admit that history is our best guess, based on available evidence, of the most plausible reconstruction of past events, then it relieves us of needing to know everything. Do we know enough about life in first-century Galilee to make inferences about the relative plausibility of historical scenarios? We probably do, but if subsequent discoveries prove us wrong, then we should adjust our thinking. The criterion of dissimilarity has also been offered in a form that eases the paradoxical relationship between it and coherence: material that fits well within what we know of first-century Galilee and that appears to be at odds with the tendencies of the early church is likely to go back to Jesus (see, e.g., J. H. Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism* [New York: Doubleday, 1988], p. 6). Multiple attestation can, in fact, speak to specific wording; his criterion of textual variance is simply a specialized form of this old criterion. Multiple attestation is also a way to account for our imperfect knowledge of the reliability of our sources at any particular point. Once we have independent testimony from several sources, the probability that the datum is reliable is higher than the probability that each account independently invented the same thing.

Even if we are not convinced that Jesus research is currently at an impasse, Porter's suggestions for new criteria are provocative and deserve our attention. The first is the criterion of Greek language. Porter rightly contends that Greek was used in first-century Galilee, and that it is possible that Jesus could have spoken Greek in some contexts. That being so, he asks whether there might not be episodes in the Gospels for

which Greek, rather than Aramaic, was the language spoken (Porter has argued previously that this is the case for Pilate's interrogation of Jesus, and here he argues for six additional episodes where Jesus may have spoken in Greek). The criterion would then work like this: if the topic discussed and the participants involved support the idea that Greek might have been spoken, then we may well have the original words of Jesus. This cannot be used as a stand-alone criterion, obviously, since one must first guarantee the historicity of the framework for Jesus' words; traditionally scholars have thought that the frames are less likely to have been a part of the oral tradition and more likely to have been created by the evangelists. However, Porter makes a good point when he says that the criterion at least argues that if one of Jesus' sayings in such contexts cannot be retroverted into Aramaic, one cannot then say it is therefore inauthentic.

The second criterion Porter calls the criterion of Greek textual variance. In Porter's words, "where there are two or more independent traditions with similar wording, the level of variation is greater the further one is removed from the common source. Conversely, the less variation points to stability and probable preservation of the tradition, and hence the possibility that the source is authentic to Jesus" (p. 191). In my opinion, the criterion as Porter defines it is not terribly useful. First, there is the issue of independent traditions. From the list of seven episodes identified by the criterion of Greek language, Porter selects four where this criterion might apply: Mark 7:25–30//Matt 15:21–28, Mark 12:13–17//Matt 22:16–22//Luke 20:20–26, Mark 8:27–30//Matt 16:13–20//Luke 9:18–21, and Mark 15:2–5//Matt 27:11–14//Luke 23:2–4//John 18:29–38. Only in the last case is there any likelihood of independent traditions; Porter's arguments for Mark–Q overlaps are less plausible than that the editorial work of the evangelists produced the variations. Second, it is not true that distance from the original source always increases the variance between the manuscripts; scribes often harmonized Gospel texts, producing the phenomenon Porter is adducing as evidence. Third, since some indeterminate percentage of variants is produced by chance, a decrease in the number of variants in any single passage cannot be a valid indicator of anything. Finally, stability in the textual tradition may indicate something about stability in the oral tradition, but how would we know? How could we tell the difference between a text that is stable because it was harmonized very early in its transmission and one that was transmitted independently but nearly identically?

The third criterion is called "discourse features," which uses M. A. K. Halliday's concept of authorial register to attempt to isolate parts of documents that seem to differ significantly from an author's normal style. These parts, Porter argues, can thereby be identified as coming from earlier sources. He applies the method to Mark 13:5–37, concluding that it was copied by Mark and lightly edited, thus reproducing an earlier document. Discourse analysis is an important tool for source critics, but its usefulness for historical Jesus research is indirect. Q is an obvious analogy: once critics decided that there was an earlier source behind Matthew and Luke other than Mark, they could not yet draw immediate conclusions about the authenticity of the sayings it contains.

Porter's book will be of interest to those working on the historical Jesus, to source critics of the Gospels, and to those interested in the history of NT criticism.

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Whoever Hears You Hears Me: Prophets, Performance, and Tradition in Q, by Richard A. Horsley and Jonathan A. Draper. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999. Pp. i + 326. \$25.00 (paper).

This book is a collaborative effort between Richard Horsley and Jonathan Draper, with Horsley authoring eleven of fourteen chapters. The authors explore the implications of the oralized communication environment of antiquity for the debate over Q's formation, contextualize the Q materials in the cultural sphere of Israelite tradition and in the social sphere of the agrarian village, and, accordingly, identify in the Q discourses a program of covenant renewal. Their analyses in these areas not only help signpost the way forward for Q research, but also trim the latter of some of its excesses.

Most of the book's detailed proposals relate in some way to its central claim that Q is an "oral-derived text." By this the authors mean it is a "transcript" of an "oral performance" by prophet-performers, with scribalism involved only in the bare transcription of the performance. This hypothesis is singularly indebted to the Parry-Lord oral-formulaic model (derived from field studies of Yugoslav bards, initially applied to analysis of Homeric poetry), which posits the primacy of "composition-in-oral-performance" by bearers of the tradition (see Draper, p. 159). This approach privileges oral performances of poetic traditions as the sites of creative formulation, with textualization assigned marginal status as transcription.

There are reasons to be cautious, however, about the degree to which the "composition-in-performance" model is directly applicable to early Christianity. In this regard it is unfortunate that Horsley and Draper say little about the debate surrounding the oral-formulaic theory. The model is highly contested, with critiques issuing not just from Homeric scholarship, but from scholars in a number of disciplines doing research in the verbal arts. In particular, questions have been raised as to what degree the model can legitimately be generalized outside its application to the production of epic poetry, that is, whether "composition-in-performance," as understood by the oral-formulaic school, has archetypal status for explaining the dynamics of the verbal arts across the board. While confirming the predominance of the spoken word in ancient and traditional societies, research has shown that the relationship between written text and oral performance is affected by complex combinations of cultural and social variables. This creates a number of possible modes of interaction between composition, performance, and text-production. The relationship between written and oral word requires particularly careful scrutiny in the case of societies with a cultural tradition of scribal competence, however restricted that competence might be. Hence with their swift embrace of the "composition-in-performance" model, Horsley and Draper in effect beg the question of the relationship between Q's performance and Q's text.

The application of this model, and the resulting separation of Q from formative contact with scribalism, lead Horsley and Draper to re-conceive of Q's text in terms of "oral patterning," that is, they transcribe the text as a series of balanced, rhythmic lines and stanzas. This exercise has the merit of imaginatively recovering the dynamics of performance. However, if there are reasons to doubt the relevance of the oral-formulaic model to Q, the notion that "oral patterning" somehow recovers the generative dynamics of Q's text can also be questioned. Moreover, Draper and Horsley never show how their "oral patterning" correlates with form-critical characteristics of the Q materials; instead their procedure tends to homogenize the Q traditions, which from a genre-

critical perspective are quite diverse. A case in point is Draper's "oral patterning" of the Baptist materials (3:7–9; 16–17; 20–21), which flat-irons these form-critically complex traditions into three "stanzas" (p. 254). Horsley and Draper appeal to Dell Hymes's studies of oral patterning of narratives by native peoples of the Pacific Northwest, but this violates a cardinal principle of research in the verbal arts; comparisons are best sought among related cultures and genres. Horsley and Draper for the most part bypass rhetorical genres and practices lying to hand in the ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic cultural spheres. In this respect Vernon Robbins's "rhetorical culture" approach may supply a superior methodology for addressing these issues (surprisingly, Horsley and Draper do not engage with Robbins's work).

Horsley defends the application of the "composition-in-performance" model to the Q materials by appealing to the peasant-village environment in which the Q traditions have their origins, a setting having little contact with scribes. Q is thus a specimen of the oralized "little tradition" of the peasantry, which contests the written "great tradition" cultivated by the urban, scribal elites. In effect Horsley argues deductively, using the social location of the Q traditions to draw inferences about compositional characteristics of the text itself. For example, he claims that the appearance of "fish" in Q 11:9–13, which "indicates hearers in villages near the sea," is evidence of "the origins of the discourse in oral performance" (p. 296). However, it is not clear that the origins of constituent traditions within a text necessarily determine the compositional features of the text itself. Such questions might better be answered through a more inductive study of the compositional features of the speeches, but beyond their "oral patterning" transcriptions (or perhaps *because* of it) Horsley and Draper do relatively little of this kind of analysis.

Horsley nevertheless presses this line of argument. He makes a convincing case that the Q discourses give voice to a covenant-renewal movement among the "little people" of the Galilean villages in conflict with the urban ruler class. However, he asserts that for this very reason the Q people would not have access to the kind of scribal technology requisite to produce Q as a literary artifact, for scribes are typically associated with the urban elites who dominated the subsistence-level peasantry. In effect Horsley attempts to secure the oral production of Q discourses by equating the socio-political divide between elites and peasants with a putative boundary between literary production, characteristic of scribes, and oral composition-in-performance, supposedly characteristic of peasant village culture.

However, Horsley has difficulty sustaining this scenario in his own discussion, where he recognizes that literacy and orality would in fact have interacted with one another in ancient Palestine, and that even scribal-rabbinic culture was highly oralized, with its literary productions keyed to the predominant oral communication environment. This renders more difficult the drawing of definite boundaries between the activities of scribes and the kind of pure oral processes out of which Q is imagined to have emerged. In addition Horsley acknowledges the minimal need for a scribe to make the "transcript" of Q's "oral performance," but with this door opened, offers no reasons why scribal involvement in the processing of the text should be restricted to transcription. On occasion he appeals to Ronald Piper's analysis of Q sayings-clusters to support the notion that Q is composed of coherent speeches, while ignoring Piper's conclusion that scribes were likely involved in the composition of those speeches. Horsley also acknowl-

edges that scribes did not in fact form a monolithic social bloc in solidarity with the Jerusalem-based elites. "Dissident scribes" were central to the Qumran community, producing covenant-renewal literature showing multiple points of contact with Q, while other dissident scribal circles produced texts such as *1 Enoch* 94–105, which, according to Horsley, is the section of *1 Enoch* "closest to Q in form and content" (p. 78).

Horsley perceptively assesses Q's genre-profile as being an admixture of "covenant instructions" and "prophetic sanctions." However, his proposal of "*logoi prophētōn*" as Q's framing genre is unconvincing because it is so singular as to be anomalous; genres are cultural conventions, and Horsley adduces no parallel. Other of the author's genre designations also have an ad hoc appearance, for example, Q 7:18–35 is characterized as a "prophetic dialogue" (p. 258). One senses in both cases an attempt to expand the "prophetic" component in Q beyond the rather restricted number of genuinely prophetic oracles. Horsley is reluctant to describe Q as "sapiential," despite his recognition of its significant instructional component, because in his view cultivation of wisdom was the province of elite scribal groups. However, it may be preferable to envision the situation of social conflict, so well sketched by Horsley, as also entailing competing claims to wisdom, and to explore the possibility that Q is subverting elite hegemony over "conventional wisdom" by projecting alternative values, a possibility which Horsley at one point seems to grant (p. 103).

My analysis in this review, though offering a critique in a number of details, springs from appreciative recognition of Horsley's and Draper's achievement. Their location of Q in the oral communication environment of antiquity, and Q traditions in the social context of an ancient agrarian society, as well as their identification of Q with a covenant-renewal program, in my view provide the nuclei around which a fresh working consensus in Q research might emerge.

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Zwischen Jerusalem und Antiochia: Die "Hellenisten," Paulus und die Aufnahme der Heiden in das endzeitliche Gottesvolk, by Wolfgang Kraus. SBS 179. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1999. Pp. 192. €23.40 (paper).

This book is a thoughtful and engaging study of the theological, ecclesial, and cultic developments of earliest Christianity, both tracing in broad strokes the evolution of the community from its original Jewish-centered focus toward full Gentile inclusion and engaging one of the perennial NT questions: How does one get from Jesus to Paul? The answer for most Christian scholars has been that the Hellenists, those elusive figures of Acts 6:1–8:1, formed the historical and theological bridge between the two.

Kraus's study, like many of the monographs in the impressive and often helpful Stuttgarter Bibelstudien series, provides both a summary of past scholarship on the relevant issues and a synthesis that significantly moves the discussion forward. Kraus's contribution to the conversation is ambitious, not only offering a reconstruction of the sources of the Hellenists' own theological program, but explaining also the origins of Pauline theology, the development of the rite of baptism, and the mediating role of two central events of early Christian history—the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) and the

conflict in Antioch (Gal 2:11–14). Given the scope of the argument, it is evident that Kraus intends to present an overarching thesis for the development of Christianity.

Chapter 1 traces the theoretical problem: the preaching of Jesus, while it did not necessarily exclude outreach to Gentiles, was generally focused on Israel. Paul's theological framework, by contrast, shifts to an emphasis on Gentile inclusion in the people of God. Kraus therefore asks two critical questions: What is the content-connection between Jesus and Paul on this matter, and how did the shift come about? In the next chapter Kraus refers to the oft-mentioned early Christian progenitors of the mission to the Gentiles: the Hellenists. This Greek-speaking group of early Christians in Jerusalem had developed an understanding of themselves as the "*Ekklesia* of God," designating thereby the eschatological in-gathering occurring in their ministry. Much of Kraus's assessment with respect to the theological positions of the Hellenists takes its cue from prior Protestant scholarship. The Hellenists, as a result of the emphasis on the eschatological activity of God, relativized Jewish cultic and legal regulations, especially given the role of the latter in the death of Jesus. Moving through the Hellenist-related stories in Acts, Kraus is convinced that these provide evidence of a genuine openness to non-Jews (Samaritans, God-fearers, Gentiles in Antioch). As to the source of this inclusion of Gentiles in the "*Ekklesia* of God," Kraus argues against significant influence from Diaspora Judaism (against the standard *religionsgeschichtlich* formulation), proffering instead the Hellenist reading of OT passages referring to Gentile inclusion in the end time. As a result of this openness based on the model of "sojourners" in the OT, this early movement transformed the particularistic entrance rite of circumcision into a baptismal initiation more amenable to Gentile participation. In ch. 4 this transformation is explored by bringing in another proto-Christian element—John the Baptist, who had already relativized circumcision with his baptism of repentance. The Hellenists thus inherited his soteriological framework and combined it with their own emphasis on Gentile integration, supplying the distinctive features of the Christian rite.

In ch. 3 Kraus outlines Paul's connection to the Hellenists, focusing on the intersection of his persecution of the group and the "Damascus Road experience." Kraus holds the two components in tension: Paul received some structural features from the general Christian ethos (here the Hellenists), but his revelatory experience contributed something in its own right. Paul persecuted the Hellenists because of their relativizing of the law and temple. Paul, in turn, had an experience of the crucified and resurrected Lord, which for him also relativized the Torah's exclusivism and confirmed his knowledge of Hellenist theology, providing the basis for his further radicality in this area. There is thus a "theological" and "historical" framework in existence for Paul, but also an experiential dimension that pushes him beyond the preexisting structure.

In ch. 5 Kraus considers what he believes to be the defining events of earliest Christianity: the apostolic council and its directives. Here he provides a genetic alignment of some of the early Christian problems with and responses to the inclusion of Gentiles. Kraus argues that table fellowship was not the main issue at stake. Rather, the crux was the degree to which Gentiles were to be viewed as full members of and participants in the "*Ekklesia* of God." The apostolic directives are closely tied in with the Jewish-Christian view of the land (itself based on Jewish precedent): Gentiles who predominantly live outside the land of Israel need not maintain Mosaic legislation as rigorously as those (mostly Jews) living in Israel, as Torah regulations are primarily associated

with the purity of the land. Intriguing is Kraus's attempt to distance Paul from the apostolic decision, suggesting that Luke has falsely portrayed Paul as accepting the council's ruling. Kraus believes this to be "unthinkable" in light of Paul's own statement that he was given no instructions by the Jerusalem community (Gal 2:6). In fact, Kraus argues that the apostolic conference reflected in Acts 15 originally did not issue any directives at all but simply legitimated the inclusion of the Gentiles. The directives then represent a later development after the conflict in Antioch.

In the last chapter Kraus situates the Antioch incident in light of his previous discussion. In Antioch there were two different ecclesiological models at work: the Hellenist view of the Gentiles as "foreigners/aliens" and the Pauline view of full Gentile inclusion in the promises to Abraham and the consequent absolute subordination and temporalization of Torah. The debate over table fellowship in Antioch thus results from two different, albeit historically and theologically related, ecclesiological understandings. The apostolic directives were promulgated as a compromise between the two conflicting groups. Although Kraus is reticent to suggest that Paul accepted these directives as authoritative for his own churches, he notes the echoes of similar compromising positions in Paul's letters. Kraus maintains that Paul, while initially resisting the measures, was a pragmatist and therefore probably conceded on these matters later in his ministry. Yet Paul's motivation for compromise is the "love of brother" principle rather than the Torah justification given in the apostolic decree. It is fitting that Kraus should conclude with this argument since it provides a microcosm of his larger theme: there is continuity between Paul and what comes before him but also significant distinction (advancement?) in Paul's own theology and practice.

By way of conclusion, I offer two considerations to promote dialogue on the issues raised in this monograph. First, Kraus's use of Acts as a reflection of historical realities in the early church is debatable. For instance, the Hellenists can also be explained as a Lukan invention: it is Luke who uses these "seven sages" to connect the ministry of the Jerusalem church to Paul. Moreover, Lukan redactional interests and the historical fundament are too easily separated in Kraus's treatment, revealing a lack of literary sophistication in his reading of the NT evidence. Further, the problems of intercalating Acts and Galatians are well known and not adequately addressed in this study. Second, Kraus's approach is more than a mere historical analysis that traces the lines of theological, historical, and cultic development from Jesus to Paul. It is, as his conclusion reveals, a theological delineation of the main content of the Christian faith as reflected in Paul, demonstrating not only the structural connection of the Pauline gospel to Jesus and the early church, but also the way in which the special revelatory quality of Paul's experience helped to shape that content in a particular direction. Just as the Hellenists received their interest in Gentile inclusion from Jesus but took it one step further, so Paul acquires his concern for Gentile incorporation from the Hellenists but also moves beyond them, allowing for an apparent distillation of a pure substance of Christian theology and practice in the process. The result seems to be a Pauline message devoid of anything significantly Jewish. Everything is filtered through, but then elaborated in clearly better ways than, Jesus and the Hellenists. Paul essentially makes Christianity what it is (or ought to be?): the heart of biblical revelation (including here the OT) without Judaism. Although Kraus obviously does not consciously intend to promote this view, the tradition of scholarship upon which he principally relies could be perceived as

establishing a “blond-haired, blue-eyed” version of Christianity that evolves beyond a supposed Jewish legalistic particularism. The multifaceted dynamics of early Christianity and Judaism would seem to belie such a construal. But even if this should be an accurate portrayal, it is not a feature that should then be lightly embraced by Christian scholars living in a post-Holocaust world.

Aside from these reflections, Kraus’s monograph is clearly an engaging and challenging piece, and, regardless of whether one accepts his particular reconstructions or method, all those interested in the many questions surrounding the historical and theological development of the early church will want to read this book.

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Die liminale Theologie des Paulus: Zugänge zur paulinischen Theologie aus kultur-anthropologischer Perspektive, by Christian Strecker. FRLANT 185. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999. Pp. 504. €88.00.

This book is based on a dissertation written under Wolfgang Stegemann and accepted by the Augustana-Hochschule Neuendettelsau in 1996. As the subtitle indicates, Strecker approaches Pauline theology from the perspective of cultural anthropology. He seeks to enrich our understanding of Paul’s letters by highlighting social dimensions implied in them. The investigation is divided into three parts: anthropology and biblical exegesis; Victor Turner’s processual anthropology and ritual research; and the liminal theology of Paul.

The first part consists of two chapters. In ch. 1 Strecker points out that anthropology as part of a social scientific exegesis may serve as a method to bridge the gap between ancient and modern culture. He indicates that this approach has not yet been developed very far in biblical exegesis, especially in the area of NT research. This may be especially true with regard to European, and perhaps especially German, exegesis, with the possible exception of Stegemann, who, in developing Gerd Theissen’s sociological impetus, became aware of the importance of anthropology. As far as American scholarship is concerned, Strecker refers to some approaches that have related anthropological insights to NT exegesis (especially John G. Gager, Wayne A. Meeks, Howard C. Kee, Bruce Malina, John D. Crossan, Stephen C. Barton, and Dale B. Martin), but in general, Strecker concludes that OT scholars are more inclined to take anthropological insights into consideration than their NT colleagues.

Chapter 2 deals with the use of anthropological models and methodology. Strecker rightly emphasizes that every interpretation of reality inevitably refers to models, which structure our perception. Therefore, it is more plausible to use such models consciously than to reject them for being too abstract or positivistic, while overlooking the necessity of heuristic models for the knowledge of reality. On the other hand, there should be a balance between a particularizing versus universalizing application of such models in order to bring into focus the specific, or even unique, as well as the more general aspects of a given phenomenon. Strecker relies here on Clifford Geertz, who has treated the relationship of specific details and overarching structures in anthropological investigations. At the end of this chapter Strecker relates the anthropological approach to the

interpretation of texts, describing (again by referring to Geertz) similarities between ethnography and exegesis. Both ethnographers and exegetes have to interpret given data, which are interpretations of reality themselves and consist of human acts or rituals on the one hand and of texts on the other. Neither anthropologists nor exegetes, therefore, deal with reality in a pure, unambiguous form. According to Strecker, an anthropologically oriented exegesis of biblical texts can thereby illuminate specific aspects, such as cultural bounded values and attitudes of their authors. Hence, an interdisciplinary cooperation of linguists and anthropologists in the form of a "literary anthropology" could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of texts and should therefore also be fruitful for biblical exegesis.

In the second part Strecker deals with the theory of the Scottish anthropologist Victor Turner. His approach was chosen because it is one of the basic models of anthropology developed in the twentieth century. In particular, Strecker describes his theory of rituals, symbols, as well as of society. The term "liminality," which is of central importance for Strecker's own model, however, was borrowed not from Turner but from Arnold van Gennep, who exerted some influence on Turner. In van Gennep's theory the term describes the medium stage in the transformational processes that characterize society. It is preceded by a stage of separation and followed by one called "aggregation." These three stages jointly shape the dynamic process by which societies are distinguished because individuals during their lifetime necessarily pass through several social spheres.

In adopting van Gennep's approach, Turner pays special attention to the middle stage—liminality—as the most important. It is marked by a floating between two worlds to which the concerned subject belongs at one and the same time when passing through a process of change of his or her social status. In this period traditional customs and social norms of a community are no longer valid for those who are undergoing the transformation. Accordingly, this stage is accompanied by certain rituals, which eliminate rules of everyday behavior. Rituals, Turner concludes, have an intrinsic power to transform structures of societies. They consist of certain symbols as the smallest parts of ritual acts. This approach then results in a theory of society or community. A society is characterized by a contrast of structure/status system on the one hand and antistructure/threshold stage on the other. Both stages exist at the same time. The social world according to Turner is therefore "a world in becoming, not a world in being." In the third part, the bulk of the book, Strecker applies this theory to Paul's theology, which could accordingly be understood as a phenomenon of liminality. The whole part consists of five chapters in which this perspective is developed. Strecker distinguishes four levels of transformation within Paul's thinking, namely, his own transformation from a persecutor of Jesus' disciples to an apostle of Christ, the transformation of Jesus Christ himself, the transformation of the aeons, and the transformation of relationships within a community of believers. According to this distinction, the whole part is structured as follows: ch. 6: the transformation of the apostle: conversion, call or process of initiation; ch. 7: the transformation of Christ and the participation in it; ch. 8: the transformation of the aeons; ch. 9: the symbol of the cross; and ch. 10: community and antistructure in Paul's thought.

After a short introduction into the history of research, ch. 6 deals with the texts usually regarded as most important for Paul's view of his conversion (or call or initia-

tion): Gal 1:11–17; Phil 3:2–21; 2 Cor 4:6–12; 1 Cor 9:1 and 15:8–10, followed by a summary. That Strecker begins with this topic is not accidental. Rather, the radical change in Paul's life is regarded as an appropriate starting point because his theology as a whole shows characteristics that are best explained in reference to this event.

In all of the texts mentioned Strecker detects certain features of liminality. In Gal 1 the separation (indicated by the verb *aphorizō* in 1:15) leads to the liminality, marked by Paul's passivity as well as by the revelation of hidden knowledge (cf. the verb *apokalypō* in 1:16, which Strecker understands as referring to an ecstatic vision of Christ). Likewise, Phil 3, 2 Cor 4, and 1 Cor 9:1 and 15 are regarded as descriptions of an initiation and therefore point to Paul's self-understanding as having a liminal existence. Strecker links this concept with the transformation of the believers in general, and refers to baptism as the ritual starting point of liminality.

Here I would ask whether two lines of thought are intermingled that should rather be kept apart. If the concept of liminality is attributed to Paul's apostolic existence it describes the stage between his former life according to the standards of Pharisaic Judaism and his being with Christ following his apostolic career. This christologically marked existence between death and life that obtains until the eschatological completion is exactly what he describes in 2 Cor 4:7–5:10 and Phil 3:7–14; he can also regard it as characteristic for Christian existence in general. As far as his concept of communities in Christ is concerned, however, he seems to distinguish between a former existence, on the one hand, in which one was obliged to observe certain rules and a new existence as the body of Christ, on the other, which Paul tries to consolidate. The liminal stage is followed here by the existence as community in Christ, as Strecker himself argues in ch. 10, but not by the eschatological completion. The concept of liminality should therefore not be applied to both aspects in one and the same way.

In view of Strecker's methodological advance in the first two parts, the conclusion of that chapter comes as no surprise: Paul regards his Damascus experience as a process of initiation. Therefore it is apt to use the term "initiation" in its anthropological meaning to describe this event. For Strecker, this category embraces both the interpretations as conversion and as call, which consequently appear not to be irreconcilable alternatives.

Chapter 7 develops this model further by pointing to Paul's Christology as a concept of transformation. Strecker here formulates keen insights into the structure of Paul's interpretation of the Christ-event and develops aspects, which are often overlooked. He points out that transformation is an integral part of Paul's Christology, which in turn leads to participation in Christ as an inevitable component of his soteriology. Hence, Strecker emphasizes anew aspects of older research on Paul from a fresh perspective.

The following two chapters deepen these results by analyzing Paul's concept of the present as a period of liminality and the cross as a liminal symbol that characterizes the present situation of those who believe in Christ. In the last and most comprehensive chapter Strecker comes back to community as an integral part of the concept of liminality. In discussion with other approaches, Strecker tries to come to terms with Paul's concept of communities in Christ. Baptism and the Eucharist serve as its ritual basis, supplemented by missionary preaching, service, and the holy kiss. Of central importance, furthermore, is the idea of the community as the body of Christ. Eventually, by minimizing the ethnic, social, and gender differences, Paul installs criteria for a liminal

community. But also his “conservative” attitudes (e.g. in his argumentations on the role of women in the community in 1 Cor 11 and 14) can be explained within this model. As the last chapter suggests, they have to be understood as an attempt to transform the newly inaugurated structures into a more stable social situation.

Strecker's interpretations of the Pauline texts in most instances reveal rich knowledge of recent exegetical discussions, as well as an ability to implement skilled exegesis. Sometimes, however, they seem to be somewhat forced in the direction of his dominant category of liminality. This seems especially the case in ch. 7, where he argues on the basis of Phil 2:6–11 that Paul's Christology should be understood as part of his theology of transformation. Although that is without doubt an important and often neglected feature, a more balanced view would certainly have contributed to a more convincing presentation. In principle, however, I would agree that the category of transformation marks Paul's concept of apostleship, his Christology, as well as his concept of time. I would also agree that this is the reason for his specific understanding of the believer as a new creation and the communities as bound to specific standards. Most of these insights are not totally new ones, although Strecker sometimes presents strong arguments, which strengthen this interpretation. Moreover, the concept of liminality sheds light on the relationship between new standards and Paul's sometimes puzzling conservative attitudes. I would ask, however, how those statements that clearly point out that being in Christ is already an existence as new creation, that the judgment on sin is already carried out for those who are in Christ, and that the possession of the Spirit means a life without the constraints of the old aeon can be reconciled with the far-reaching thesis that Paul's thought should be generally regarded as a liminal phenomenon. I am rather inclined to think that the concept of liminality covers certain, without doubt important, dimensions, but not all of his thinking.

The most fruitful aspect of Strecker's investigation lies perhaps in his insistence that Paul's thinking cannot appropriately be understood by neglecting both the importance of the Christ-event for his apostolic self-understanding and the soteriologically necessary participation in Christ. Especially in that sense his results concerning the social dimension of Paul's theology are to be approved. Not least, the book is a remarkable example of an interdisciplinary approach within NT exegesis in introducing a model from cultural anthropology into the field of biblical research in a very reflected way. It balances a one-sided perspective on law, atonement, and redemption, and will certainly contribute to the growing “new perspective” on Paul.

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A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BAGD), edited by Frederick William Danker. Third Edition. Based on Walter Bauer's *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, Sixth Edition. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Pp. lxxix + 1108. \$84.00.

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This is a book with a history, as the copious information on its title page indicates.

It all started, you may say, in 1920 when the Göttingen professor Walter Bauer was entrusted with the task of preparing a new edition of Erwin Preuschen's *Vollständiges griechisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur*, which had appeared in 1910. When this second edition was completed in 1928, the pretentious epithet "*vollständiges*" had disappeared from the title, but "*Wörterbuch*" had supplanted the more modest "*Handwörterbuch*," and it is as "*Bauer's Wörterbuch*" that this lexicon, in its successive editions, has become known to generations of classicists and NT scholars; starting with the third edition (1937), it had only Bauer's name on the title page.

Already the second edition could claim completeness with more right than Preuschen's original lexicon. Although, unlike his predecessors, Preuschen had included the vocabulary of the apostolic fathers for comparisons with NT Greek, he did not exploit the papyrus texts and other linguistic material that had become available in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Bauer introduced such material in the second edition, and still more in the third, but it is with the fourth edition (1952) that a more decisive step forward is taken. For that edition, Bauer had undertaken a systematic search of much of Greek literature, from Homer down to the Byzantine period, for parallels that could explain NT usage and help to define the semantics of the NT vocabulary. This was an immense task, undertaken by one man in an age when no electronic retrieval devices were available and printed word indices to individual texts were scarce. But more was to come. The fifth edition (1958) represents the crowning point of Bauer's work, and, in spite of the many accretions in the previous editions, it could be justly described as "*verbessert und stark vermehrt*."

After Bauer's death in 1960, a sixth edition, "*völlig neu bearbeitet*," appeared in 1988. This is more teamwork, for the responsible editors, Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, were assisted by scholars of the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung at Münster, especially by Viktor Reichmann.

The fourth German edition formed the basis for William F. Arndt's and F. Wilbur Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (1957). This cannot be called simply a translation of the German original, for the American scholars made several additions of their own, both lemmata (in particular from Papias) and bibliographic references, especially to works by Americans. A second edition of this lexicon, based on the fifth German edition, appeared in 1979. An improved typography made this edition a considerably more handy tool than the previous one, but the most important improvements were less visible: references to previously unavailable text witnesses, material from Qumran, parallels from extrabiblical texts, etc. The edition was prepared by Gingrich and Frederick William Danker; Arndt had died in 1957.

Danker became solely responsible for the new, third edition of the Greek-English lexicon (henceforth BAGD, for Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker) after Gingrich's death in 1993. Its foundation is not only the previous English editions but also the sixth German edition that appeared in the meantime. The preparation of this new edition has been made possible by support from the Committee for Scholarly Research of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

As its title indicates, the lexicon covers the vocabulary of the "New Testament and other early Christian literature." By "other early Christian literature" is meant the apostolic fathers and "selected apocrypha." The apocrypha in question, listed on pp. xxxi–

xxxiii, mainly include apocryphal acts and Gospels, plus some Gnostic texts, many of them preserved on papyri. The vocabulary of these texts provides the basic material of the lexicon. The editor (p. x) claims completeness only in the sense that the lexicon quotes all occurrences of all words, except the most common ones, that appear in the main text of the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece* of 1993. Danker, like his predecessors, strives to include all words in "other early Christian literature" as well, including textual variants offered by important text witnesses, but he has not reached that goal. It is nowhere stated how far from completeness the lexicon is in these respects, but a scholar working with these texts and not interested in their smallest minutiae may use the lexicon with confidence. It apparently records all words occurring somewhere in the early Christian literature, as defined by the editor, even if not all their occurrences outside the NT are listed.

Comparative material is brought in from a great variety of sources: literary texts, papyri, inscriptions, from Homer down to Anna Comnena and Eustathius of Thessalonica; the list of abbreviations for such texts fills eighteen pages. In each lemma it is indicated where the word—or one particular meaning of it—is attested for the first time in alphabetical Greek (in contrast to the *Revised Supplement* of Liddell-Scott-Jones, BAGD does not record attestations in Mycenaean Greek). If a word occurs in the Septuagint or intertestamental literature it is always indicated. The meanings of the words are, if possible, illustrated or explained with parallels from other Greek texts, in the first place from texts contemporary with the NT and the "early Christian" writers and from later Christian texts, but with no prejudices against pagans or, if appropriate, much later authors.

With this scope, BAGD becomes an indispensable tool for the NT scholar. For a classicist with a more general interest in the interpretation of Greek texts or in the history of the language, it is an important complement to LSJM and the *Diccionario griego-español*, on the one hand, with their focusing on earlier periods, and, on the other, P. Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, which concerns later Christian texts.

BAGD includes all new material that appeared in the sixth German edition. However, BAGD differs in at least two important respects from its German model. First, there is the matter of the bibliographical information. The fifth German edition contained a generous amount of references to scholarly treatments of the meanings of NT words. Those references were strongly reduced in the sixth edition, which many scholars deplored. BAGD keeps all the references that were in the fifth edition and adds more of its own. For that reason, BAGD is a more helpful instrument than its model for serious scholarly work in the field of Greek lexicography.

The other peculiarity of BAGD is a novelty introduced by Danker. It concerns the structuring of the lemmata and the way in which the meanings of the Greek words are indicated. In existing Greek-English lexica the meaning of a Greek word is usually rendered with one or more English words that are regarded as synonymous or nearly so with the Greek word. This is an imprecise way of indicating meaning. Two languages that are structurally, chronologically, and culturally as far apart as English and ancient Greek are not likely to possess many words that are exactly or even approximately synonymous with words in the other language. Few texts can be rendered word by word between the two languages and, if you follow a lexicon slavishly when translating a text, the result will be unsatisfactory if not outright disastrous. Instead of word-by-word ren-

dering, Danker introduces what he calls extended definitions. Whenever it is felt appropriate, the meaning of a word is first given in the shape of a definition (printed with bold type), followed by one or more approximate English equivalents (with bold italics). E.g., the word *plasma* is first defined as “that which is formed or molded,” then follow the equivalents “image, figure” and after that the relevant passages with suggested translations. The gain in clarity may be illustrated by the lemma *adelphos*. The second English edition, closely following its German model, gave “brother” as the general meaning of the word and then listed five more specialized meanings or usages, viz., (1) literal, (2) figurative (with the explanation: “Jesus calls everyone who is devoted to him *brother*”), (3) “fellow countryman,” (4) “without ref[erence] to a common nationality or faith *neighbor*,” and (5) “form of address used by a king to persons in very high position.” BAGD gives two basic meanings, defining them as “a male from the same womb as the reference pers[on]” (with the English equivalent “brother”) and “a pers[on] viewed as a brother in terms of close affinity” (with the equivalents “brother, fellow member, member, associate” and the remark “fig[urative] ext[ension] of 1”); meanings 3–5 of the second edition are subsumed under meaning 2 in BAGD. This makes things more clear: the word has either literal or figurative meaning, and definition 2 defines the conditions under which the word can be used figuratively. That definition, by using the word “person,” also indicates that *adelphos*, at least in the plural, can be used with reference to female fellow members of, for example, a religious community.

The introduction of these extended definitions must have caused the editor a lot of extra work. It has involved a total restructuring of numerous lemmata and the trouble of finding appropriate definitions, whenever such were needed. Methodologically, it is an important improvement and, on the whole, a novelty in Greek lexicography. It is to be hoped that other authors of Greek lexica will follow Danker’s example. Some of his definitions possibly need improvement, but many would serve also in a lexicon of non-biblical Greek.

Accuracy and precision are virtues to be expected in lexica. BAGD is satisfactory in those respects but not faultless. If my probes are to be trusted, there is on the average one misprint per page, mostly incorrect or misplaced accents, and some inconsistencies (e.g., *enklēma*, *tos* [p. 273], but *edesma*, *atos* [p. 275]; *thrēskeia* [p. 459], but *ethelothrēskia* [p. 276], without mention of orthographic variants). A check of about one hundred pages of BAGD against the corresponding portions of LSJM’s *Revised Supplement* suggests that the following lemmata in BAGD should be supplemented or corrected:

—*andrizomai*: the *Rev. Suppl.* offers relevant extrabiblical parallels.

—*achri* as temporal preposition: *achri hēmerōn pente* (Acts 20:6) means “by the end of five days” rather than “within five days” (cf. the *varia lectio pemptaioi*, which means “on the fifth day,” not “in five days”; it denotes a point in time, not duration).

—*oikeios*: in Gal 6:10 “familiar with faith” is probably a better understanding of *oikeious tēs pisteōs* than BAGD’s circumstantial “who belong to the household of faith.”

—*houtos*: in Matt 8:9 and some other passages the meaning “such-and-such” seems certain; cf. *hode* in Jas 4:13.

—*perichōros*: IG 5(2).3.10 (Tegea, iv B.C.E.) offers the earliest instance of *to perichōron*.

—*polys*: extrabiblical parallels indicate that a possible meaning of *tōn pleionōn* in 2 Cor 2:6 is “the full initiates.”

—*proskairos*: when applied to persons, as in Matt 13:21 and Mark 4:17, the meaning could be “concerned only with the moment, lacking staying power.”

One purpose of Bauer's lexicon was originally to demonstrate the close affinity between NT Greek and the extrabiblical language. With the accretion of relevant papyrologic and epigraphic material, the number of known parallels had increased, especially in regard to vocabulary. In the 1920s, the papyri were thought to represent the everyday language of simple, uneducated people, and biblical scholars tended to think of the early followers of Christ as such simple people. In view of the ever-increasing number of parallels between the writings of the NT and subliterary texts, it was a natural conclusion that they all represented the same variety of the language and that future discoveries of new documents would eventually demonstrate the complete linguistic congruity between them. BAGD reproduces the English translation of an article by Bauer, “An Introduction to the Lexicon of the Greek New Testament,” the German original of which he published in 1955, after completing the fourth German edition. In that article Bauer expresses his view “that our literature on the whole represents the late Greek colloquial language.” This is the assumption under which Bauer started—and continued—his work, and Danker seems to embrace the same views as he on the development of the Greek language. However, labeling NT Greek as “colloquial” seems problematic nowadays. The diglossic or polyglossic situation that prevailed in the Greek-speaking world involved more linguistic varieties than “colloquial” and “literary,” and no variety of written Greek would be identical with spoken Greek. Even the concept of “NT Greek” becomes problematic, since the differences between the individual writings of the NT are so conspicuous, and, in spite of all parallels that have been detected, there are certain linguistic features that are attested only in Jewish and Christian texts. Before the next edition of BAGD some rethinking along these lines is advisable; the views that the lexicographer holds on the position of early Christian Greek in the Greek language community will influence, e.g., his selection of parallels to be quoted and his readiness to accept that ordinary Greek words may have developed specialized meanings in the linguistic milieu to which the NT belonged. But that remark should not obscure the excellence of BAGD in its present shape. It is without doubt the best tool of its kind that exists in any language, and the present edition is decidedly superior to the earlier ones.

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The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature, edited by Shaye J. D. Cohen. BJS 326. Providence: Brown University Press, 2000. Pp. xiii + 167. \$60.00.

Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture, by Jeffrey Rubenstein. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. Pp. xvi + 436. \$55.00.

Shaye Cohen's edited volume *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature* and Jeffrey Rubenstein's *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture* are major contributions to the field of rabbinics, the former for its explicit attempt to deal

with methodological issues pertaining to the study of this literature, the latter for the ways in which it analyzes several notable rabbinic stories in a fresh and detailed manner. While *prima facie* these works are different in terms of style and scholarly agenda, each nonetheless deals with the question of the extent to which rabbinic literature can be used to enhance our understanding of the rabbis, and of Palestinian and Babylonian Jews of late antiquity.

The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature comprises six papers given at a small conference held at Brown University in 1998. Topics included the relationship of the Mishnah to the Tosefta, the relationship of these texts to Tannaitic midrashim and *beraitot*, the relationship of the Bavli (Babylonian Talmud) to the Yerushalmi (Palestinian Talmud), the relationship of the Talmuds to both the Tosefta and the Tannaitic midrashim, and the relationship of the Yerushalmi to *Genesis Rabbah*, *Leviticus Rabbah*, and *Lamentations Rabbah*. Given the caliber of the participants, undoubtedly this was an intellectual feast for those interested in current trends in rabbinic scholarship. While the collection covers a variety of topics and raises many methodological issues, its cohesion lies in its attempt to debunk the documentary hypothesis. As Robert Goldenberg refers to it, the Documentary Premise, espoused by Jacob Neusner, is an approach to rabbinic documents that treats rabbinic texts only on the redactional level with no serious regard for either earlier sources found within a work, or for similar sources found in other compilations. Each document must be understood on its own terms and as such tells us a great deal about the redactor of the compilation. That is to say, documents such as the Mishnah, *Genesis Rabbah*, the Tosefta, or the Yerushalmi are discrete works that attest to the coherent *Weltanschauung* of their respective redactors who intentionally shape their sources accordingly.

Indeed, as Shaye Cohen avers, "Much of ancient rabbinic literature is as synoptic as Matthew, Mark, and Luke; because of their extensive parallels in structure, content, and wording, rabbinic texts should be 'seen together'" (p. vii). It should be noted, however, that the synoptic problem in rabbinic literature is in many respects more complex and unwieldy than in the Gospels. While the Synoptic Gospels are more or less contemporaneous, rabbinic literature spans several centuries. In this instance, the synoptic problem does not deal with three Gospels, a commonly recognized Q source and two other putative sources, but rather it involves numerous iterations of similar stories, sayings and dicta in more than one corpus (for that matter in more than one type of corpus), which, depending on the corpus itself, could very well have undergone several layers of redaction. Cohen's collection of essays, despite lacking a synthesizing conclusion, offers the reader access into the complicated nature of the synoptic problem in rabbinic literature.

Each of the six chapters merits a more detailed treatment than space allows. With this in mind, I will discuss briefly the main thrust of each paper and occasionally will make some general observations.

In the first paper of the series, Robert Goldenberg sets the stage for the ensuing engagement with and criticism of Neusner's documentarian approach, which he considers a "deeply problematic stance." To begin with, Goldenberg notes that the integrity ascribed to the Mishnah, Tosefta, Yerushalmi, and Bavli (henceforth, MTYB) is "more stipulated than demonstrated."

Moreover, he observes that there are "pre-existing materials that have been incorporated into the canonical documents M, T, Y, and B: by stripping away extraneous

materials, one can sometimes identify proto-documents that do possess the integrity the Documentary Premise requires" (p. 8). Acknowledging that it would be difficult to reconstruct these texts decisively, he nevertheless contends, "The really creative minds in the early history of rabbinic Judaism were the authors of these ingredients, not the compilers who mechanically assembled them. To ignore these early authors is no virtue; scholars should be doing everything they can to bring these earlier minds to life" (p. 8). In short, Goldenberg endorses the source-critical method, that is, the attempt to discern material that might come from discrete (but now lost) documents, but at the end of his essay he refers to this as "a true documentary approach." "A true documentary approach," he argues, "is one that attempts to identify as many different rabbinic texts as possible, including documents that do not exist independently of others. . . ."

The next section of the compilation, "Mishnah and Tosefta, Tosefta and Bavli," reiterates Goldenberg's challenge to the Documentary Premise. In a different vein, though no less critical of the documentarian approach, Judith Hauptman, in her paper titled "Mishnah as a Response to Tosefta," tries to refute the regnant view among rabbinic scholars that the Tosefta is a response to, or "paragraph-by-paragraph commentary" on the Mishnah.

In her thoughtful source-critical work, she makes a strong, though not fully convincing, case for her assertion, to wit, that the Mishnah is not the earliest Tannaitic work, but instead a response to an even earlier collection, parts of which we find in the extant Tosefta. In other words, the redactor of the Mishnah had an ordered Tannaitic collection at his disposal, thus producing a new collection, in the sense, as Hauptman points out, that it represented "his take on Jewish law but it was not a creation *ex nihilo*" (p. 33).

Hauptman elaborately illustrates two of the many examples she claims to have found supporting her position. Mindful of the fact that there are many paragraphs of the Mishnah lacking parallel sources either in the Tosefta or anywhere else, she maintains that this does not disprove her argument. She states: "The redactor clearly added other statements of law that he found elsewhere or else produced new statements of his own. Similarly, there are many paragraphs in the Tosefta that have no parallel text in the Mishnah, although they do appear in one or both Talmudim, sometimes in association with a closely related mishnah and sometimes with some other mishnah. It is even true that some toseftan halakhot never appear anywhere else. This too does not disprove my assertion that the Mishnah is a reworking of an early Tosefta, since the Tosefta evolved over time and many paragraphs were added" (p. 34).

Paragraphs not found in the Tosefta, yet found in the Mishnah, are not necessarily the creation of the redactor of the Mishnah. It is possible, albeit hard to corroborate, that they are also part of this Tannaitic collection, unless of course the core of the Tosefta contains the earlier collection in its entirety. Hauptman does not say as much, although she suggests that much of this earlier collection "is embedded in the Tosefta of today" (p. 17).

Discerning the relationship between the Mishnah, Tosefta, and a hypothetical ancient Tannaitic collection is exceedingly difficult. Such issues do not invalidate Hauptman's contention, but they make us aware not only of the complexity of the issue at hand but also of the limits of our conclusions regarding what, if anything, is gained from the source-critical approach when examining the interrelationship between corpora of Tannaitic provenance. Hauptman's analysis of the relationship between two

mishnayot and their parallels in the Tosefta and Bavli indeed forces us to rethink the relationship between the Tosefta and Mishnah. At the same time, however, we must wonder to what extent the evidence allows us to make sweeping claims about the overarching relationship between the Mishnah and Tosefta, and we therefore look forward to many more examples that bear out her thesis.

Hauptman's attempt to comprehend with greater nuance and precision the relationship between the Tosefta and the Mishnah is a natural segue into the next chapter, "Uncovering Literary Dependencies in the Talmudic Corpus," by Shamma Friedman. He begins his discussion by unequivocally rejecting the model of "independent parallels" for understanding multiple textual witnesses to one passage. This paradigm posits, in short, that "parallel texts which diverged from one another had been transmitted independently from early times, with each representing an equally 'original text'" (p. 37). This theory of independent parallels is inadequate and wrongheaded, according to Friedman, for it is unable to provide a rational explanation for the "overall *similarity*" (emphasis his), which contributes to the parallel nature of two or more texts. He maintains, rather, that the "edited parallel" model is more reliable in providing "a more realistic concept for talmudic literature." Whereas the independent parallels paradigm assumes two distinct units, of which neither is proven to be the source of the other, the edited parallel model demonstrates how in many cases one can identify one of the parallels as having been more reworked than the other. This, in turn, might aid us to discover which is arguably closer to the original text. In other words, Friedman advocates for understanding parallel texts in terms of a redactional, developmental process. One must ask, however, whether Friedman's mono-causal explanation is more efficacious than one that allows for other models of explanation? Given the complex nature of the synoptic problem in rabbinic literature, does this model explain all cases? Be that as it may, in the remainder of the chapter, Friedman masterfully applies the editorial model in what he considers the most fruitful application, namely, in regard to the relationship between *beraitot* in the Bavli that parallel the Tosefta.

Painstakingly attentive to philological, syntactical, and editorial concerns, Hauptman and Friedman analyze parallel sources in rabbinic corpora in order to gain a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, the cultural context of the texts themselves. Even though their work does not explicitly deal with socio-cultural contexts, as Friedman notes, "Spelling out the general relationship between component works of the talmudic corpus, and modes of literary evolution discernible in synoptic parallels . . . will lead to the identification of institutional and conceptual evolution and development" (p. 57).

The next section of essays in the compilation, "Bavli and Yerushalmi, Thematic Studies," which includes contributions by Christine Hayes and Richard Kalmin, bears out the fruits of source-critical studies remarkably well. In her study of the term *halakhah le-Moshe mi-Sinai*, Hayes judiciously attempts to apply both the documentarian and source-critical approaches, approaches which are not mutually exclusive, and suggests quite compellingly that there are, generally speaking, differences between the communities that produced the Talmuds. In her study she makes a convincing case for the importance of recognizing that "a work can be said to be the sum of its sources." Hayes also acknowledges that as redacted texts, both the Bavli and Yerushalmi are works that "*efface and preserve the heterogeneity of their source materials* (emphasis hers)" (p. 65). A study of the ways in which the redactors of these texts reshape earlier sources *de*

facto tells us something about the redactors. Hayes, therefore, argues for a combination of both synchronic and source-critical approaches to talmudic studies. Her own work demonstrates the ways in which these approaches together contribute to a richer understanding not only of talmudic discourse but also of the communities that produced the Bavli and Yerushalmi.

In like manner, Kalmin's paper, "Rabbinic Portrayals of Biblical and Post-biblical Heroes," attests to the Bavli's "compositional complexity," to borrow a phrase from Hayes. His study of statements about biblical and postbiblical heroes by Tannaim, Babylonian Amoraim, and Palestinian Amoraim demarcates a chronological shift in the treatment of biblical heroes and sages, thus providing important evidence for the significance of source-critical studies. A thorough examination of numerous Palestinian and Babylonian traditions leads Kalmin to make several conclusions regarding rabbinic assertions vis-à-vis biblical heroes. Babylonian Amoraim, for example, depict biblical figures as rabbis to a greater extent than their Palestinian counterparts. They, furthermore, place the highest premium on excellence in Torah study, whereas Tannaim use other criteria such as piety and humility when equating biblical and postbiblical heroes.

Kalmin's analysis detects attitudinal differences both chronological and geographical, to which the various rabbinic works attest. "The chronological distinctions," Kalmin argues, "are not confined to one rabbinic document. Rather, all of the documents surveyed exhibited the same chronological distinction, although to be sure some contained more evidence than others. This finding argues against a documentary approach to rabbinic sources, an approach which views the various rabbinic works as composed by different authorships, each with its own distinct worldview. According to the documentary approach, we would not expect diverse documents to yield a consistent picture of changing rabbinic attitudes" (p. 139). Indeed, Kalmin's punctilious attention to rabbinic attributions enables him to make significant distinctions between rabbinic sayings that cut across chronological and geographical lines, thus enabling him to make observations about Palestinian and Babylonian sages and their treatment of and attitude toward biblical and postbiblical heroes.

Hans Jürgen Becker's paper, "Texts and History: The Dynamic Relationship between Yerushalmi and *Genesis Rabbah*," ends the series of essays. Becker's essay, a caveat of sorts, is meant to be provocative, drawing our attention to notions of text, document, transmission, and redaction. In addition to criticizing Neusner's form-critical approach, Becker muses theoretically on the meaning of textual transmission and applies his reflections to the test case of the "intertextual relationship of *Genesis Rabbah* and Talmud Yerushalmi." Before discussing briefly this synoptic analysis of texts from the Talmud Yerushalmi and *Genesis Rabbah*, he exhorts us to keep in mind the fluid character of these "macroforms." In other words, the boundaries of these texts should not be understood as fixed, but rather open and less rigid. This is because, "as commentaries on another text, they can be arbitrarily extended; their orientation is external. These macroforms are also in principle open because most of the texts that are ordered in such a way can be integrated into a different literary context, regardless of their 'original' formal framework. . . . Furthermore, it is impossible to overlook the many points of contact between the two collective works; they attest to the openness of their textures" (p. 150). The notion that these works are fluid because they are commentaries needs further elaboration. In what ways are non-commentaries by nature more fixed? How are

their boundaries different? Is their orientation, unlike commentaries, internal? Nonetheless, essential issues are raised.

Becker's analysis of *Genesis Rabbah* and the Yerushalmi leads to several conclusions. To begin with, the redaction of these works must be understood as a series of redactional processes, not as a single event. And we should not assume that the redactional process was "linear and internally consistent." Regarding the issues of dependency, he concludes that it is difficult to argue for the primacy of one corpus over another. While it is clear to him that the processes of redaction took place independently, the redactors assimilated similar texts into their work. Becker's thesis appears more propositional than probative simply because he does not marshal evidence in this essay, although we are assured ample proof in his book *Die grossen rabbinischen Sammelwerke Palästinas: Zur literarischen Genese von Talmud Yerushalmi und Midrash Bereshit Rabba* (TSAJ 70; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1999), of which this essay is a precis. Furthermore, there is a tension between Becker's emphasis on the fluidity and openness of these texts and his attempt to treat them in a rather "fixed" manner. To be sure, he states that there are moments when a text is fixed, for example, "the determination of the commentary structure as the ordering principle for diverse traditions" (p. 158). Yet even this fixed point, he contends, "must also be relativized: the ordering principle need not have been a conscious decision, made at a specific point in time, and the first editions could in no way establish the text-form of the collective works once and for all. Thus, even these stages in the development of *Genesis Rabbah* and Yerushalmi do not mark a definite 'beginning' or 'end' of the tradition histories of these works, and are therefore incapable of displacing the popular (but nevertheless inappropriate) concepts of 'original text' and 'final redaction'" (p. 158). This is all well and good, but are all points on the continuum of redaction equally significant, or rather insignificant? At some point, even if there is no consensus as to when communities, whether religious, secular, or scholarly, have accepted these texts *qua* fixed texts in the sense that nothing substantial will be added or deleted. They are also fixed in the sense that allows Becker to examine the textual relationship between the Yerushalmi and *Genesis Rabbah*.

Individually each work contributes, *inter alia*, a valuable voice to the ongoing debate among rabbinic scholars regarding methodological approaches to the study of rabbinic texts and their utility as literary artifact. The volume as a whole provides the reader with a strong sense of the complexities and issues involved. The constraints of the volume's central thesis and the editor's rather heavy-handed attempt to dethrone the synchronic approach championed by Neusner, however, somewhat flattens the breadth and scope of the collection and its potential to add richness to the very issues raised. The editor concludes his introduction by stating: "The clear message emerging from this volume is that the methodological exclusivity claimed for the documentary method by Prof. Neusner is completely unjustified, and that the method itself is based on assumptions and foundations that are not universally accepted. The synoptic problem in rabbinic literature still endures" (p. xiii). Indeed, the documentarian approach is no longer a scholarly stronghold in the field of rabbinics, and its many detractors have demonstrated as much. We are grateful to the editor for bringing this to the attention of the wider scholarly, non-Hebrew-reading audience. At the same time, however, we must not forget the manner in which Hayes's work illustrates the ways in which the approach might indeed add to our understanding of talmudic texts.

It is noteworthy that in making distinctions between Babylonian and Palestinian, earlier or later rabbis, the discussion perforce takes into account, to degrees of variance, the redacted text. While scholars justifiably highlight the limits of the documentary hypothesis, they nonetheless maintain several of its undergirding suppositions in their own work. Indeed the vast differences between the source-critical and documentarian approaches are obviously greater than their underlying assumptions. Be that as it may, fundamental to the source-critics' approach to the Bavli, for example, is the notion that in discerning the different sources and textual layers, we get a better understanding of the redactors' worldview. In other words, while some scholars, adhering to the notion that the Bavli does not reflect a coherent, homogenized worldview, but rather preserves earlier sources that contradict the worldview of the final redactors, take issue with the documentary hypothesis, they, too, concede that on some level the final editors of the Bavli intentionally reshaped earlier sources. While the documentarian approach operates on a macro-textual level and the source-critical on the micro, they nonetheless maintain ostensibly a postivist position regarding the use of rabbinic texts for dealing with matters of rabbinic social, cultural, and historical import. Each assumes that these texts tell us something about a particular *Sitz im Leben*. When one claims that the Stammam of the Bavli used an earlier source in a way reflective of Stammaitic proclivities, or worldview, one is claiming that the redacted text tells us something about the redactors of the text. As Hayes comments, "Synchronic characterizations of rabbinic texts enable us to compare entire texts with one another so as to reveal distinctions among the communities of scholars who produced these texts" (p. 92). These very distinctions are what scholars who apply a source-critical analysis seek to discover when they detect variants of a Yerushalmi and Bavli rendering of a rabbinic ordinance or story.

Furthermore, given the fact that the rabbinic corpus does not provide evidence for the Stammam (for many scholars their existence is dubious) outside the Bavli itself, one is therefore willy-nilly affirming aspects of the documentarian approach. That is to say, what we know of the Stammam is within the framework of one document, the Bavli. Even if one is not focused on reconstructing Stammaitic ideology, one is left with dealing with a redacted document. A survey of Jeffrey Rubenstein's most recent book, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, will substantiate this point.

In *Talmudic Stories*, the author provides a sharp, sophisticated literary analysis of the following six talmudic tales: The Oven of Akhnai (*B. Meš'ra* 59a–59b), Elisha ben Abuya, or "Aher" (*Hag.* 15a–15b), the education of Simon bar Yohai (*Šabb.* 33–34a), the encounter between Yohanan b. Zakkai and Vespasian during the siege of Jerusalem (*Git.* 55b–56b), the story of R. Meir and R. Natan's scheme to depose Rabban Simon b. Gamliel, the Patriarch (*Hor.* 13b–14a), and God's offer of the Torah to the Gentiles (*ʿAbod. Zar.* 2a–3b). Rubenstein's first-rate literary treatment of these texts takes into account philological, syntactical, and thematic matters, keeping an eye on broader form-critical concerns. Always attuned to the chiasmic structure of many of these stories, and the ways in which the Stammam, whom he regards as the redactors of the Talmud, creatively embellished material from other sources, his elaborate reading (at times to a fault) is engaging and insightful.

Rubenstein, moreover, attempts to go beyond the purview of literary analysis. In the introduction of his work, he claims that in each chapter he examines both the compositional character of the story in relation to antecedent sources and its position in the

larger literary unit, the *sugya*. He also locates each story “within the general cultural context of the talmudic redactors by coordinating the major tensions and themes with those found in other talmudic sources.” In other words, Rubenstein’s work reflects an attempt to interrelate modes of analysis in order to appreciate the richness of the Talmud as a literary artifact. According to Rubenstein, “the Stammaim, the talmudic redactors, played a substantial role in constructing the lengthy, highly developed stories of the BT” (p. 244). “This process of composition,” he continues, “resembles the redactors’ methods of composing legal *sugyot* as described by Halivni and Friedman. . . . Talmudic stories should be seen as a parallel area of redactional creativity achieved through a similar compositional process. The redactors’ contribution to the final text of the Talmud lies both in the composition of narrative and legal *sugyot*. This point, in turn, argues strongly for understanding the context of BT stories as expressions of the culture of stammaitic times” (p. 244).

This endeavor, to investigate “the cultural world of the redactors,” raises many questions. That the six stories reflect certain rabbinic values and teachings is evident. Indeed, Rubenstein illustrates rather lucidly underlying themes and rabbinic attitudes of the Stammaim toward Torah study, for example. What is not so apparent, however, is how these stories disclose the cultural milieu in which they were refashioned. Rubenstein no doubt provides the reader with a detailed study of the literary context of each story, yet the move into the cultural context is relatively sketchy. This is not to question the value of this endeavor. To be sure, as illustrated by the work of other rabbinic scholars, source-critical, redactional, and, more broadly, literary analysis can create a window into the social and cultural world of the rabbis. Here, however, it is not enough to extrapolate an entire cultural context from six stories that teach rabbinic *musar* (ethics), since at the end of every chapter he distills the possible meaning of the story and labels it “cultural context.” Rubenstein, much to his credit, notes that the conclusions of his work are based merely on six stories of an extensive repertoire, and therefore his conclusions are tentative. At the same time, if the conclusions based on six stories are tentative, to the point that “[a]ll observations should be modified by ‘it seems’ or ‘it is likely’ even when not stated explicitly so as not to weary the reader” (p. 245), then to what extent can we discuss “Stammaitic culture” or “the values of the Babylonian rabbinic academy”?

The issue is not the (in)conclusive nature of his work, but rather broadly speaking its conceptualization. When, for example, Rubenstein refers to the “wider cultural context of the rabbis,” is he referring to the broader context in which they lived, namely, Sasanian Babylonia? Or to the context of the Jewish population in the region? The only “cultural context” that he uncovers is the very context created by the work itself. In other words, the six stories, in addition to various other rabbinic texts, provide the basis for this cultural context. One could argue that this circular matrix is all that we have, given the paucity of other remains of rabbinic Babylonian Jewry. Fair enough, but what he presents for cultural context is a series of rabbinic attitudes toward non-Jews, a description of collegial behavior, and an emphasis placed on Torah study. His observations regarding the rabbinic academy are the closest Rubenstein comes to disclosing an aspect of rabbinic culture, yet he does not consider this “cultural,” but rather “historical.” Rubenstein asserts in a footnote, “Certainly few would claim the redactors were completely arbitrary when they inserted stories into the Talmud. My claim is that many stories perform more significant ‘cultural work’ than has been noted” (p. 395). Here one has to ask

yet again what is meant by “cultural work.” But even more so, what does Rubenstein mean when he uses the term “BT culture”? Is it the sum total of the rabbinic ethical behavior espoused in the six stories by the alleged redactors, about whom we know very little? Again, it would help if we had better knowledge of the Stammaim.

These reflections on the author’s attempt to locate the cultural context of the Stammaim should not diminish the quality of Rubenstein’s literary analysis of Talmudic stories. Furthermore, Rubenstein’s work, like that of the aforementioned authors who contributed to the making of *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature*, attests to the fruits of the source-critical method. Moreover, one could argue that despite the clear differences between Neusner’s documentarian approach and Rubenstein’s more “inter-related approach,” they share fundamental affinities. Both assume a relatively high degree of intent on the part of the redactor, and both extrapolate a worldview or cultural context, or at least attempt to do so, from the redacted text. Both, for various reasons, believe that the Talmud as a redacted work provides insight into the redactor’s *Weltanschauung*. While Rubenstein is more sensitive to rabbinic sources outside the Talmud itself, and is so because this provides us with a point of comparison, he nonetheless engages in a similar positivist endeavor, namely, to learn more about the Stammaim, the redactors of the Talmud. The significance of this endeavor lies not in understanding the interrelationship between rabbinic texts per se, but rather in striving to understand the social, cultural, and historical moment conveyed in and through these texts—a vexing task to say the least. One could also possibly broaden the hermeneutical circle by studying contemporaneous nonrabbinic Babylonian sources and learning about the “wider cultural context.”

While Shaye Cohen has declared the death knell of the documentarian approach, we must nonetheless be mindful of the shared assumptions of the documentarian and source-critical and redactional approaches. Even if we want to argue that the documentarian approach is misguided, in the hopes of refining our own critical lenses, we should take into consideration the ways in which similar scholarly pursuits diverge regarding methodological assumptions, and, conversely, the ways in which radically different scholarly agenda intersect on underlying issues of methodology.

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