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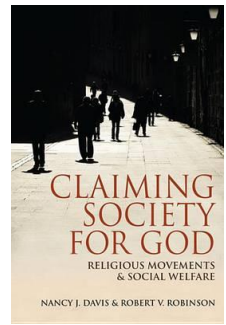
Book Reviews

Claiming Society for God: Religious Movements and Social Welfare, by Nancy J. Davis and Robert V. Robinson



Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012 | xvi + 214 pages | ISBN: 978-0-253-00338-9 (softcover) $25.00

Studying four doctrinally conservative religious movements, the Salvation Army in the United States, Shas in Israel, Comunione e Liberazione in Italy and, most topically, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, this is an important book that will likely become a heavily cited contribution to the study of religious social movements and the relationship between religion, politics and the modern state. The book builds on Davis and Robertson's earlier quantitative studies of cultural and economic attitudes amongst the religiously orthodox in the United States and elsewhere. Drawing on large scale survey data, the authors found that not only did orthodox religiosity correlate with conservative anti-individualist attitudes in fields such as sexuality, but there was also a certain correlation with egalitarian economic attitudes; the religiously orthodox tend to be a little more supportive of economic redistribution and intervention. What those quantitative studies could not do, however, was thoroughly elucidate the relationship between the constitutive aspects of orthodox communitarianism; what the authors refer to here as religious orthodoxy's "caring" side (the Salvation Army's homeless shelters, the Muslim Brotherhood's dental clinics, Comunione e Liberazione's prison house patisseries and so on) with its culturally conservative authoritarian side (rejection of homosexuality, commitment to censorship, and gender segregation within Jewish and Islamic orthodoxy). Drawing primarily on existing social scientific studies, and a good amount of journalistic analysis, the present book elucidates the specific communitarian worldviews and outreach of the four groups, showing how conventionally egalitarian and non-egalitarian attitudes co-exist.

The central thesis is that orthodox religious movements "bypass the state" in attempts to moralize and transform society from below, or at the very least through civil society and commercial networks, rather than seeking to directly seize political and state power. The thesis is convincing insofar as it fits the data for each of the four groups, and for various others one might think of such as the Turkish-based Gulenist Islamic movement, Catholic Worker,

and so on. Yet the authors admit on the final two pages (149–150) that the strategy of bypassing the state and operating with radically transformative intentions within civil society is hardly unique to orthodox religious groups; it is also common to secular radicals and idealists whose programs have limited appeal or efficacy. Moreover the thesis of bypassing the state to moralize and transform society fits each of the four case studies differently, the process "taking a variety of forms" (144), which might call its very utility into question since it can feasibly also apply to liberal religious groups, most of which are also civil society actors and service providers who dabble in public policy and aspire to inspire a society more in keeping with their ethical vision.

To illustrate potential difficulties with the flexibility of the thesis, compare the Muslim Brotherhood (chapter 2) and Comunione e Liberazione (chapter 4). Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood bypassed a state that, but for a comparatively short period, brutally supressed it. Allowed to operate freely in the political sphere in the two years between the fall of Mubarak and the re-establishment of the military's control over the country, the group's attempted "takeover of Egyptian civil society" (60) became an attempted takeover of Egyptian society tout court. While Comunione e Liberazione shares with the Muslim Brotherhood a network of supportive businesses and commitment to building an extensive welfare infrastructure, it has sought to "diminish the role of the state" (97) and prove "there is no need for as extensive a state as currently exists" (145) rather than capture the state to sacralise and redeploy its various apparatuses. Its foray into parliamentary politics was ended with voter apathy and corruption scandals (97–99) in rather typical Italian fashion, rather than the massacres and rounding up of the usual suspects that the Muslim Brotherhood suffered in rather typical Arab fashion. One can also contrast Shas (chapter 3), which hardly bypasses the state at all; it has used its kingmaker position in the Israeli Parliament to demand a large amount of state funding for schools and charities it runs autonomously but this autonomy is effectively a commodity extracted from the state through Shas's central role in successive governments (70, 85). It is not unreasonable to surmise that these situations, bypassing or finessing a relationship with the state to further the religious goals held by a minority of citizens, are merely the lot of religions in modern states (Italy, Israel and the United States) or modernising states (Egypt under the boot of the military) where a sufficient amount of religious and cultural diversity prevails and civil societies exist.

These concerns about the flexibility of the central thesis undermining its novelty or utility notwithstanding, this is an important book that will

prove required reading in the study of religion and social movements; I am sure the chapter on the Muslim Brotherhood has already found its way onto undergraduate and graduate reading lists for courses on Islam and politics and the contemporary Middle East. The book is clearly written, explains or avoids jargon, and introduces complementary studies and theories and so would be well suited to undergraduate courses. I suspect the authors may have had this audience in mind which would explain the occasionally patronising tone. We are informed that the founder of Shas was born "in the Iraqi city of Baghdad" (65), as distinct from where, exactly? And we are burdened with journalistic introductions for the various scholars whose work is being cited, such as "Ann Lesch, a political scientist and associate provost for international programs at the American University of Cairo who was at Tahrir Square for the protests" (56). The book relies on previous sociological and political studies, and a significant amount of journalistic material and statements from the various groups, but the study is deceptively thorough given its scope and brevity. The book and its central thesis will likely provide the theoretical backbone for empirical studies in the future which may well clarify some of the ambiguities in the notion of "bypassing the state."

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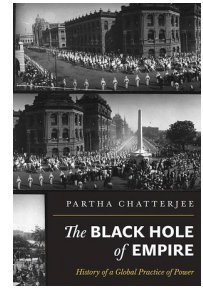
The Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power, by Partha Chatterjee



Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012 | xiv + 425 pages | ISBN: 978-0-691-15200-4 (hardcover) $80.00 | ISBN: 978-0-691-15201-1 (softcover) $29.95 | ISBN: 978-1-400-84260-5 (ebook)

Despite its claimed identity as history, as per the subtitle, Chatterjee's *Black Hole* is, more appropriately, a sophisticated *ākhyāikā* or *ākhyān* [story or saga], or a desert romance, recounting the lurid lore of the "City of Dreadful Nights" and the depredations of the white Alibaba Sabut Jang (Clive) and his near-forty thieves (the conspirators of Murshidabad), and the tragic saga of the plight of the Mysore Abhimanyu encircled by the greedy white *kāfirs* and their native lackeys assembled by the land-grabber imperialist Richard

Wellesley. The narrative is interspersed with some very competent theoretical *excursus* on modernity, imperialism, colonialism, and postcolonialism, tagged with copious endnotes, and topped by a massive bibliography—yet altogether neither a straight regular history nor a variety of history in alternative historical style, but an instance of what may be considered a classic piece of liminal (postmodernist?) history. The *mêlange* of contents of the narrative (with the sole exception of its *leitmotif* the "black hole" scandal) comprises a heady mix: Siraj-ud-daula, Tipu Sultan, Wajid Ali, Girish Ghosh, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's *bhairab* devotee, Nabin Sen, Akshay Maitreya, John Little, Rammohan, Bentham, the two Mills, Fazlul Huq, Mohammedan Sporting and Mohun Bagan Clubs, Bengali terrorists, bombs and (its oversized but non-lethal look-alike) football, sovereignty, and "empire." This potpourri of people, plot, providence, play (both theatrical and athletic), and patriotism and historiography is intended to substantiate and support the author's stated theme (or thesis) of "local history" centered on Fort William and that of a "grand narrative" dealing with the birth of the British Empire in Black Hole, thus heralding British imperialism in India, its demise in space but its conceptual (spiritual?) continuance through the postcolonial and postmodern period.

As Chatterjee is not writing a historical account but relating a saga, as well as its historiography, he abjures the "role of the all-knowing author-as-historian" (reminiscent of the boring [*ekghṅeye*] pedant as Girish Ghosh's guru, the semi-literate temple priest Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineshwar used to quip), and assumes that of "poets and chroniclers of old" (xii) or a storyteller, *à la* Hayden White, Alun Munslow, or Beverly Southgate. Perhaps he internalizes unwittingly Nabin Sen's plea "that the poet's path [is] smooth and unencumbered by historical facts" (246). Needless to mention, Chatterjee excels in his preferred role famously. One of the redeeming features of his oppressively long narrative is undoubtedly its impressive, elegant, and enticing prose much like the *Bānglā* of Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay. There are also excellent and entertaining discussions on Rammohan, Bentham, Ihtishamuddin, Abu Taleb, Girish Ghosh, Nabin Sen, and Akshay Maitreya, as well as the theory, history, and historiography of imperialism and nationalism.

As an historical monograph, however, Chatterjee's book falls short of being either persuasive or reliable, especially in respect of his treatment of the character and conduct of Nawab Siraj-ud-daula and of the self-styled Padshah Tipu Sultan. These two topics suffer most from pitifully skewed references.

Relying uncritically on the manifestly prejudiced researches of a bunch of patriotic, postcolonial, postmodernist, and condescending Indian and Western authors, Chatterjee unwittingly abandons his former critical (often provocative) original and creative scholarship and lets himself be swept away by the frivolous *dicta* of the former. He is nonchalantly oblivious of scores of studies on every aspect of the history and culture of colonial India, especially Bengal in particular, mostly in Bengali, and some in English, belonging neither to the camp of anti-imperialist crusading scholars nor to the party of cultural indigenists (my euphemism for the British bashers). The distinguished author has devoted pages on the patently patriotic representation of Alivardi's grandson, a veritable *alaler gharer dulal* or a spoilt brat from an indulgent Pathan household, depicted by Girish Ghosh, Akshay Maitreya (Chatterjee makes him a "positivist" historian with arguments that would make poor Leopold turn in his grave), and Nabin Sen but shied away from mining the works of contemporary and later chroniclers, *testes oculis*, and historians such as Mir Hussein Kirmani, Jean Law, Luke Scrafton, Alfred Lyall, Abdul M. Khan, Kalikinkar Datta, Iris Macfarlane, Rajat Ray (works other than *Palashir Sadayantra*, especially his *The Felt Community*, 2001), and lastly, this reviewer (Narasingha Sil, "An Anatomy of Colonial Penetration and Resistance in the Eighteenth Century: the Odyssey of Siraj-ud-daula and Tipu Sultan," 2005).

Similarly, the chapter on Tipu suffers from the author's excessive reliance on and extensive use of a number of favorable and fanciful assessments of the Sultan by such adoring scholars as, *inter alia*, Kate Teltscher, Maya Jasanoff, Linda Colley, Janaki Nair, Sheikh Ali, and Abdus Subhan. Unbeknownst to the author there exist a few unorthodox accounts that effectively interrogate Tipu's crypto-hagiographical historiography which might have been overlooked by the professor's team of research assistants (see Hayavadana Rao, *History of Mysore*, 3 vols, 1948, Hari Dayal Sharma, 1991, and Narasingha Sil, "Tipu Sultan: A Re-Vision," 2008; admittedly the last mentioned renegade study reappeared in a vastly improved form as "Tipu Sultan in History: Revisionism Revised," 2012, too late to be noted).

Chatterjee's enterprise of historicizing Siraj's Black Hole and Tipu's mechanical toy as the signifiers of imperial mythology of oriental inhumanity and colonial "national" power of symbolic terror to the metropolitan cowards is hype at best and hysteria at worst. The Black Hole episode was a scandal, though not of the ideological racial magnitude associated with L'affaire Dreyfus (1894–1906) of Republican France. The mystery and controversy surrounding the mishap of the Fort William prison cell has long been put to

rest and, as even Chatterjee notes, it does not feature in the index of *The New Cambridge History of India* (1987) authored by the "preeminent" P. J. Marshall (336). One would have expected the author to dwell a little more on Lal Behary Day's objection to the fracas in the mango grove being treated as a subject for a national epic since "it reflects no lustre on the Bengali nation" (375 n. 47) *pace* Nazul Islam's patriotic phantasmagoria in his wildly popular poem "*Kāṇḍārī Huṅśiār*" (May 22, 1926): "*Kāṇḍārī! Taba sammukhe ai Palāśīr prāntar, Bāṅālīr khune lāl hala yethā Clāiber khaṅjar*" ["Helmsman! Yonder lies the field of Plassey where Clive's dagger was stained in the Bengali blood"].

Tipu Sultan has successfully leapt into legend from history after the bicentenary anniversary in 1999 of his alleged "martyrdom" in 1799 and thus there appeared a spate of studies since, some purporting to offer a balanced judgment on his policies and actions and a plethora of encomia both in print and in the internet. The irrepressible Girish, purveyor of a powerful Siraj myth, has found his counterpart as Tipu's modern mythicizer in Bhagwan Gidwani of Canada. Chatterjee's Europeanized absolutist monarch of Mysore appears to be a carefully crafted scholarly re-presentation of Gidwani's Tipu as a Promethean hero or, to refer to Chatterjee's terms, a tragic Indian "tiger," killed by "the British lion rampant" (99; the heraldic term "rampant," a clever *double entendre*).

Chatterjee rather arbitrarily imposes the Late Renaissance tripartite periodization of European history on the Indian (its indigenous periodization is the ahistorical *jugas* and *kalpas* etc.) and thus makes Tipu Sultan an early modern absolutist monarch. But Chatterjee's idea of the Enlightenment timocracy is also somewhat arbitrary. In his book, *Despotism of China* (1767), the French Physiocrat François Quesnay distinguished between absolute power (that is, despotic power used under law) and arbitrary power (despotic power above or without legal constraint). According to the Physiocrats, despots must govern with the support of public opinion and thus legal despotism, rather than arbitrary despotism relying solely on coercion, had well defined limits, and was based on popular support. In fact Quesnay found the Chinese Emperor (Zhu Yuanzchang, 1328–98) a legitimate despot (see Ma Li, "Legitimacy as a Limit of Absolute Power: The Case of Zhu Yuanzhang," *Journal of Asian History*, 2005). The author also bypasses a number of studies in Enlightened Despotism including, sadly, Mark Goldie and Robert Wokler, *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2006).

On the Enlightenment criteria Tipu Sultan has but a slim claim to the status assigned him by Chatterjee. The French historian and publicist Joseph François Michaud, who admired the Sultan's courage and noble intentions, wrote that "Tippoo was surrounded only by his courtiers who praised all his plans and applauded all his fantasies." Major James Rennell observed in 1792 perspicaciously that Tipu "is unquestionably the most powerful of all the native princes of Hindoostan; but the utter detestation in which he is held by his own subjects, renders it improbable that his reign will be long." Major Alexander Allan observed that "it is impossible that Tippoo could have been loved by his people. The Musselmen [sic] certainly looked up to him as the head of their faith; by them, perhaps, his death is regretted but they could not have been attached to him, by affection."

By all counts the Sultan was a regional despot of Mughal India, though neither absolute nor Enlightened. It would be hard to imagine Chatterjee's "early modern absolutist monarch" Tipu to be as self-reflexive as the paradigmatic absolute monarch, the grand *roi soleil* of early modern France, who counseled his five-year old great grandson, the future Louis XV, in his deathbed on August 26, 1715: "Do not follow my example in the matter of wars; endeavor, at all times, to remain at peace with your neighbors, to alleviate … the burdens of your people, a thing which, alas, I was not able to do" (cited in Pierre Gaxotte, *Louis the Fifteenth and His Times*, tr. J. Lewis May, 1934, 13).

Another shortcoming of this deftly crafted study is its crypto-theoretical foundation that, for lack of a better expression, may be considered (in my coinage) metatheoretical. In my reckoning, Chatterjee's multivalent thesis amounts to something like this: "imperial practices since the eighteenth century involved … an assumption of formal equality between sovereign entities that could acquire or surrender territories and other privileges" (337). However, Chatterjee's endeavor to imbricate the British Indian Empire into the Western imperial system has the effect of missing out on the tree while viewing the jungle. The career of British imperialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took an entirely separate course. Ever since the Norman Conquest of Anglo-Saxon England in the late eleventh century, the relationship between Anglo-Norman England and France had been on a diplomatic see-saw, waxing now and waning next, until Louis XIV's conquest of the Netherlands led ultimately in 1756 to a Diplomatic Revolution bringing England and Prussia closer.

This Anglo-Prussian alliance would degenerate into a muted rivalry between the two races following the founding of the German nation under Prussian leadership. The British upper class, that is mainly the upper bourgeoisie, used a racial theory based on the rising sciences of phrenology, physiognomy, and craniometry to buttress their superior social position vis-à-vis the decadent but the traditionally respected social superior, the aristocracy, now regarded as effeminate. Claiming their Teutonic racial origin, the Anglo-Saxon gentleman was depicted as a muscular and athletic outdoor man whose sturdy physique became a marker of his strong moral character. Thus emerged the figure of the sahib in British India, a civilian combining brain and brawn, who despised the English-educated Bengali *babu* as effeminate and effete, while by the same token, the English along with the French came to be derided by the Germans as unmasculine (Elizabeth M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj c. 1800–1947* [2001]; Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The "Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century* [1995]). Chatterjee writes: "By the nineteenth century … the quality of sovereignty that demanded the recognition of formally equal status … became restricted to certain states of Europe and the Americas … The formal equality of proper sovereign states ruled out the use of imperial practices of power in their mutual relations; they could only be employed in relations with inferior political entities. This was the normative European states system in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries so lauded by conservative theorists such as [Carl] Schmitt" (337). This generalization ("theory") cannot explain the Austro-Prussian or the Franco-Prussian wars (which are examples of "imperial" practices).

In the final analysis, Chatterjee's *magnum opus* exudes a version of academic power, power of exclusion (from his very selective list of references), ironically quite analogous to what he refers to as imperial prerogative of exception (343). No wonder, he has arbitrarily excluded a number of recent studies on the print culture of Renaissance Bengal (for references to some leading works on this topic see Narasingha P. Sil, *The Babu of Colonial Calcutta* (2009), especially 12–17) and more egregiously, the valuable works on old Calcutta by Benoy Ghosh, Shripantha (Nikhil Sarkar), Jaladhar Mallik, Pramathanath Mallik, Harihar Seth or Baidyanath Mukhopadhyay, just to name a few. He has made an elaborate use of some popular plays on Sirajud-daula but excluded the one on Tipu Sultan by an Englishman, Colonel Philip Meadows Taylor. On the topic of the British Empire, the book's best section, several studies are excluded, including Carol Breckenridge and Pe-

ter van der Veer, eds. *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament* (1993), Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire* (1997), Prabhat Patnaik, *Whatever Happened to Imperialism and Other Essays* (2001), Kathleen Wilson, ed., *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain* (2004), Duncan Bell, "Historiographical Reviews: Empire and International Relations in Victorian Political Thought," (2006), David Cannadine, ed., *Empire: The Sea and the Global History: Britain's Maritime World 1763–1833* (2007), and Stuart J. Brown, *Providence and Empire 1815–1914* (2008). Also missing is Daniel Philpott's *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (2001).

The book bears the imprint of a prestigious academic powerhouse, Princeton University, and its author belongs to a cabal of what Kwame Anthony Appiah calls "comprador intelligentsia … who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery" ("Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial," 1991, 348). Indeed Professor Chatterjee, a completely home-grown scholar, holds simultaneous positions at the Department of Anthropology (he has a PhD in Political Science from Calcutta) of Columbia University and the Centre for Studies in the Social Sciences of Kolkata. His work under review here has already received some powerful nods of approval, one of them being from another South Asian scholar of his stature, Gyan Prakash, who has hailed *The Black Hole of Empire* as the author's "most ambitious book yet" in which "we encounter a historian at the top of his game" of "challenging existing understandings, reinterpreting the meaning of well-known events, and displaying an authoritative knowledge of an astonishing range of scholarly literature" ("A Return to the Black Hole: Partha Chatterjee's treatise on the Flawed Legacy of Empire," 2012. http://www.caravanmagazine.in/books/return-black-hole).

It may not be quite fair to focus on the "flawed legacy" (whatever that means) of the British Empire in India thus ignoring its lasting and, in the long run, beneficial legacy of India's Western contact and impact. One of the principal markers of civilized life is, as Rabindranath Tagore believed, "self-reflexivity" or in other words "cultural literacy," the faculty of looking into one's own culture with a view to discarding the barren baggage of prejudices and fetishes demanding unquestioning obedience in the name of authenticity and identity and assimilate from outside what is wholesome and praiseworthy. Thus he made an unabashed admission in 1937, during the high noon of Western imperialism: "As people the English, more than the Muslims, are vastly different and distant from us, but as Europe's intellectual

ambassadors the English have come to us as no other foreigners did" (cited in Sil, *Babu*, 24). Earlier, Tagore's predecessor Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, "the most powerful intellect" of nineteenth-century India, had admitted that "the English are the greatest benefactor of India" because they were introducing many new ideas, the greatest of which was "love for liberty … [and] … nationalism—something Indians had never been aware of" (ibid., 22).

A little over two decades ago, a distinguished historian of our time wondered in an essay what would have befallen the lot of Calcutta had the English been defeated by the Nawab of Bengal. "One might ask, indeed," Rajat Kanta Ray wrote with alacrity and perspicacity, "if the settlement would have grown into the city of dreadful nights. But then the town might not have seen a Rammohun Roy or bred a Rabindranath Tagore" (cited in Sil, "Odyssey of Siraj-ud-daula and Tipu Sultan," 85n151). It is common knowledge that "the nationalist fighters and writers of the late Bengal Renaissance or of the early twentieth century were … the beneficiaries of the legacy of Young Bengal and Brāhmo Samāj movements and as such they studied Western history and philosophy and admired Western rationalism and nationalism (though not its alliance with imperialism). Their demand for national independence was grounded squarely in the fundamental notion of freedom and justice that had informed the civilization of their colonial masters. Thus they made their voices heard and their demands understood by the metropolitan power because they had learnt the vocabulary of nationalism. Products of a traditional Persian culture, Nawab Siraj-ud-daula and Tipu Sultan were pitted against the culture and power of Enlightenment Europe. They thus remained a total stranger to their adversaries who must have appeared as much alien to the Indians. As such the two Nawabs' demands betrayed no anti-colonial nationalist ideology but smacked only of their personal feudal concern for power and honor (ibid., 85).

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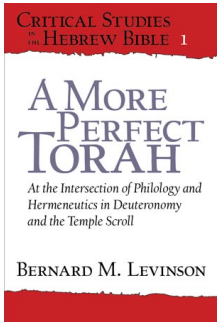
A More Perfect Torah: At the Intersection of Philology and Hermeneutics in Deuteronomy and the Temple Scroll, by Bernard M. Levinson



Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible 1 | Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013 | xx + 142 pages | ISBN: 978-1-575506-259-4 (softback) $24.95

A More Perfect Torah contains two short yet richly rewarding studies which seek to combine what are frequently considered separate disciplinary pursuits within biblical studies, skilfully demonstrating the benefits of a broader and more integrative approach to the field. The first study consists of a lightly reworked version of Bernard M. Levinson and Molly M. Zahn's "Revelation Regained: The Hermeneutics of כי and אם in the Temple Scroll," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 9 (2002): 295–346. It offers a compelling solution to the Temple Scroll's seemingly inconsistent replacements of כי by אם where כי had occurred in a protasis within the Temple Scroll's pentateuchal source. More generally, the study convincingly demonstrates the importance of paying attention not only to philology and historical linguistics but also to the hermeneutical strategies of the Temple Scroll and other Rewritten Scriptures. In the second, previously unpublished, study, Levinson provides a forceful case for viewing Deut 23:23 as an interpolation into the law of vows in Deut 23:22–24. He does so by integrating traditional redaction-critical methods for detecting textual disunity with an analysis of the text's reception history. The two studies are supported by word studies contained in three appendices. An Afterword provides a short review of studies published since 2002 on the topic of the relationship between the Temple Scroll and its pentateuchal precursors, before engaging in an extended criticism of Simone Paganini's *Habilitation* thesis, *"Nicht darfst du zu diesen Wörten etwas hinzufügen": Die Rezeption des Deuteronomiums in der Tempelrolle—Sprache, Autoren und Hermeneutik* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2009).

A More Perfect Torah is the inaugural volume in Eisenbrauns' Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible series, which, according to the publishers' website, seeks to provide concise and succinct works on the Hebrew Bible at an affordable price while maintaining "academic rigor" and demonstrating "meticulous scholarship." It certainly delivers on those fronts, making stim-

ulating contributions to—in particular—scholarship on the Temple Scroll and Deuteronomy, Rewritten Scripture, philology, historical linguistics, the composition history of the Pentateuch, and reception history, while also highlighting the cross-fertilisation able to be achieved between these disciplinary approaches and concerns.

In the first study, Levinson and Zahn note that the replacement of כי (with אם) occurs almost only in the Temple Scroll (also once in 4Q158 frgs 10–12) and only "when כי functions as a conditional to mark the protasis of a casuistic law" (6). The puzzle, then, is how to account for the Temple Scroll's anomalous renditions. To solve the puzzle, Levinson and Zahn go beyond strictly philological and historical-linguistic studies of כי and consider the hermeneutical techniques which the author of the Temple Scroll utilized when employing his biblical source texts. In particular, Levinson and Zahn note the author's tendency to harmonize contradictory laws, to bring together "thematically related laws," and to present the text as the unmediated first-person voice of God, all for the ultimate aim of presenting "a more perfect Torah—one more worthy of God" (14–15). A further inference is that the author would have had two distinct rationales for substituting כי with אם. The first rationale was his "desire for redactional smoothing," that is, his desire to eliminate any inconsistency in the use of כי and אם resulting from differences between his pentateuchal sources (19). The second rationale was his desire for greater systematization of the laws and resulted in his "hierarchical ordering of conditionals" (22). In rewriting the pentateuchal laws, the author of the Temple Scroll consistently marked a main law by conditional כי and its subconditions by אם. Levinson and Zahn argue that the first rationale prompted six out of the ten replacements of כי with אם in the Temple Scroll and that the second rationale prompted the remaining four. The study thereby shows that the rewriting of Scripture in the Temple Scroll goes beyond the revision of law or the changing of Mosaic to divine voicing, extending even to such minor details as language and syntax.

Levinson and Zahn draw the broader inference that these conclusions "complicate the relationship between 'Scripture' and 'Rewritten Scripture'" (xi). They summarise that "in his re-redaction, re-systematization, and expansion of pentateuchal law, the redactor of the Temple Scroll continued the kind of editorial work that first gave rise to the Covenant Code, the legal corpus of Deuteronomy, and the Holiness Code" and which are manifest also in the Pentateuch redaction (41). Yet as Levinson and Zahn also observe, the author of the Temple Scroll had certain goals which were distinct from

those of the Pentateuch redactor. "The redactor of the Pentateuch sought to preserve differences" between his sources, whereas the author of the Temple Scroll sought "to lessen the redundancies and contradictions that resulted from the conservative editing of the Pentateuch" (41).

Whereas the first study combines philological analysis with a consideration of ancient hermeneutics, the second study combines redaction criticism with an analysis of reception history. Levinson first notes the traditional redaction-critical grounds for treating the casuistic statement found in Deut 23:23 (וכי תחדל לנדר לא יהיה בך חטא; "But if you refrain from vowing, it will not count against you as a sin") as an interpolation into the law of vows in Deut 23:22, 24. The disunity is indicated internally by the resulting unique and awkward presence of two consecutive casuistic כי clauses (Deut 23:22–23) and the resulting non sequitur of the admonition in Deut 23:24, which would otherwise follow on seamlessly from the main law requiring the fulfillment of vows to Yahweh in Deut 23:22 (32, 47–48, 65–74).

The disunity is indicated *externally* by comparison with the law of vows in Num 30. Levinson follows Baruch Levine and Reinhard Achenbach in dating Num 30 later than Deut 23:22, 24, probably to the fourth century BCE The dating is based on such factors as a general tendency towards a diminished role for women in respect of vows, Num 30's employment of fourth-century Aramaic legal terminology (esp. אשר: "binding agreement"), Num 30's novel pairing of written documents with the predominantly oral vow, and the expansive nature of Num 30 vis-à-vis Deut 23:22–24. By comparing Deut 23:22–24 with Num 30, Levinson uncovers that, on the one hand, Num 30:3 contains verbatim sections of Deut 23:22, 24 and, on the other hand, Num 30:3 complete omits Deut 23:23. Given the unlikelihood of omitting the very part of the Deuteronomic law of vows which concerns refraining from vows (in the context of Num 30's invention of the right of men to annul women's vows), Levinson judiciously concludes that it is "at least … a possibility that Deut 23:23 was not known to the author of Numbers 30" (77–78). The conclusion is convincing and, if anything, need not have been stated so cautiously. Furthermore, the evidence suggests a *terminus a quo* for the interpolation of approximately 350 BCE, which is the date for the composition of Num 30 (not "450 BCE," which appears to be a typo on page 78).

What makes the second study especially innovative is Levinson's use of the reception history of Deut 23:23 to adduce further evidence for interpolation. In addition to his analysis of Num 30, Levinson analyses the problems

which Deut 23:23 has caused for modern translators, such as the NJPS translation, which inverts the protasis and apodosis in Deut 23:23 and translates the term וכי as "whereas … if," a meaning "unattested in the legal corpus of Deuteronomy" (49). Levinson then reviews ancient interpretations and translations which rearrange the verse's order or syntax so as to reduce the dissonance in Deut 23:22–24. His argument is that the reception history of the verse implies that the interpreters or translators "recognized the textual disorder in Deuteronomy's law of vows and sought to correct it" (60, in respect of Qoh 5:3–4). Levinson examines the Temple Scroll, the Septuagint, Qoh 5:3–4, and the opposing views of R. Meir and R. Judah in *Sipre Deuteronomy*. The analysis of the text's reception history thus provides strong corroboration of the redaction-critical means for detecting an interpolation in Deut 23:23. As Levinson concludes, "the history of interpretation offers a window into the composition history of Deuteronomy's law of vows" (79).

An interesting issue, which the second study does not directly address, is how we can discern whether the troubled reception of Deut 23:22–24 is primarily a result of inherent difficulties within the biblical text or of the changing ideologies of interpreters (including the evidently increased opposition to vow-making). While I am persuaded by Levinson's overall conclusion, it would nonetheless have been valuable to have had some discussion of this methodological issue. Indeed, the matter has been widely discussed in reception-oriented studies. The decision to privilege either the text's *Wirkung* or its *Rezeption* was a central point of contention, for example, in the famous debate between Wolfgang Iser and Stanley Fish in the early 1980s.

The two studies in *A More Perfect Torah* demonstrate that historical critics must *at least consider* Rewritten Scripture and reception history as avenues of *historical-critical* inquiry. Moreover, the studies show that the evidence of Rewritten Scripture or reception history will, in certain cases, be determinative or strongly corroborative of historical-critical conclusions. The studies in this volume thus not only issue a challenge to the boundaries between disciplinary specializations within biblical studies, but significantly problematize any distinction between Scripture and Rewritten Scripture or between Bible and reception.

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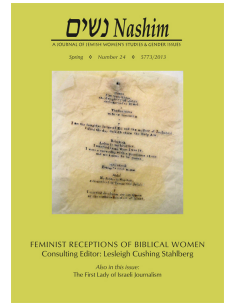
Feminist Receptions of Biblical Women, consulting editor, Lesleigh Cushin Stahlberg



Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues 24 (Spring 5773/2013) | 179 pages

This issue of *Nashim*, under the consulting editorship of Lesleigh Cushin Stahlberg, addresses the branch of feminist biblical studies that concerns reception history. The issue includes an Introduction from Stahlberg; five principal essays; an essay on Hannah Semer, the "first lady of Israeli journalism"; an additional short essay by Judith Margolis about the very beautiful, biblically inspired work of American feminist visual artist Carol Hamoy; and eight book reviews. In this review, given the usual constraints of space and time, I am only going to focus on the Introduction and five main essays.

In her Introduction, Stahlberg states that feminist theory has long been put to use in subfields such as "literary, anthropological, socio-historical and contextual analysis of the Hebrew Bible." (5) And yet, so far "few venues have been dedicated to feminist work in reception history" (5). This point is, at first, a little misleading, as a substantial amount of feminist material concerning biblical texts and their afterlives has been published in books and journals over the last three decades, though without the designation of "reception history."[1] I think most of us are accustomed to the classification "Cultural Studies and the Bible" to describe this approach of re-presenting biblical texts in various media throughout history. However, as Stahlberg

[1] For example, most of *Semeia: Biblical Glamour and Hollywood Glitz* (Issue 72; 1996) contained feminist analyses of recent cultural representations, largely filmic, of certain biblical stories. With respect to books, there have been numerous feminist lenses cast over the biblical texts and their influence on differing cultures and cultural productions, for example: J. Cheryl Exum, *Plotted, Shot, and Painted: Cultural Representations of Biblical Women*, Gender, Culture, Theory 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); Alice Bach, *Women, Seduction, and Betrayal in Biblical Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Mieke Bal, *Loving Yusef: Conceptual Travels from Present to Past* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2008). A quick glance at the two issues of the new journal from Sheffield Phoenix Press, *Biblical Reception*, shows that feminist work in reception history of the Bible is well-represented, no doubt due to the fact that its editors are J. Cheryl Exum and David J.A. Clines.

explains, it seems that the difference is that "Reception History" is now the term being used to describe the ways in which the Bible has been read, interpreted, and reconceived in both religious communities and so-called secular culture:

> Reception history examines the use of the Bible in faith communities and in secular culture; its role in the evolution of religious beliefs and practices; its impact on later social and political developments; and its recastings in post-biblical literature, art, music and film. (5)

My initial concern, though, is with the title "Feminist Receptions of Biblical Women," which, after reading the issue, confused me. The title suggests that the essays are specifically focused on how feminists (artists, writers, scholars, etc.) have interpreted certain biblical women. In the Introduction, Stahlberg insists that the essays make "a solid contribution to the reception history of the Bible and a very welcome and much-needed contribution to its feminist receptions." So, while the title informs us that the issue covers feminist receptions of biblical women, Stahlberg's Introduction suggests that the issue is broader. Only two of the pieces (one of the main essays, along with the additional essay on the work of Carol Hamoy) come close to being describable as critical works on the feminist reception of biblical women, as the title suggests. Kristine Henriksen Garroway's "Was Bathsheba the Original Bridget Jones? A New Look at Bathsheba on Screen and in Biblical Scholarship" investigates "how the rise of feminism and feminist biblical scholarship has changed the reception of Bathsheba's story" (53), as told in film. The other four principal essays have nothing at all to do with *feminist* receptions of biblical *women* (although, there is an uncomfortably slight suggestion that the Jewish Sages can be read as proto-feminist; see below). They are feminist analyses of rabbinic (Raveh and Kaniel) and masculine literary texts (Siegel) that engage with and interpret the biblical women anew. And while Zierler does include feminist poetry, they are poems that engage with the figure of Joseph, even if his gendered identity is unstable. In other words, there is a degree of confusion as to what is the focus of this issue.

In "'They Let the Children Live': The Midwives at a Political Crossroads," Inbah Raveh examines the collections of rabbinic readings of the Hebrew midwives of Exodus 1 in *Exodus Rabbah* 1. She argues that the "Sages' homiletical reading describes a profound difference between men and

women, wherein the women represent valued qualities, elevated above those of men" (22). The midrashim greatly praise the actions of the midwives, expanding on the ancient biblical version. For example, in *Exodus Rabbah* 1.15, 3.22, the Sages suggest that not only did the midwives save the lives of the Hebrew children by not following Pharaoh's command to kill, but that they also aided the poorer women by collecting food and water for them from the homes of wealthy women. An alternative interpretation is that the midwives prayed for the unborn, so that they not be born maimed, and for the mothers, that they not die in childbirth. Thus, the Sages "amplify the rhetorical, moral and political power of these women," notably the moral value of life affirmation associated with the maternal-feminine and denigrate what they perceive to be the masculinist "tendency towards control and killing" (22). Raveh argues that the reason for this unusual (in the context of the Hebrew Bible and the midrashim) recognition of the value of the feminine-maternal pertains to the nascent nationalism present in Exodus, a feature that calls for the metaphor of birth: "The admiration for child-bearing femininity, fighting for life and its continuation—as described in the midrash—follows from the need to imagine the birth of a nation, a metaphorical birth" (23).

Raveh acknowledges the likely criticism that this acknowledgement of feminine power is merely "an element in a procreation project that is fundamentally masculine" (24). However, she suggests that the Sages' amplification of the value of feminine-maternal power offers an alternative to the biblical supplanting of this power by the masculinist modes of sacrifice that act as birthing-substitutes, the trope of mono-sexual reproduction that enables the patriarchal myth of a man-made society, as Nancy Jay has argued. Instead, what we are given in *Exodus Rabbah* 1 are moments that "express a unique and powerful flash of recognition of feminine power and the moral position that gives rise to it" (24). But is it really quite as clear-cut as that? This is akin to saying that male-authored texts that acknowledge and celebrate the natural power of the woman's body to birth (a simple fact, albeit an awesome one, and certainly a fact consistently disavowed and repressed in the biblical corpus) are somehow less offensively patriarchal. If this is the case, what does it actually achieve for us? Women have long been put on a (sham) pedestal as birth-givers, and this is entirely consistent with a patriarchal world-view that insists that that is precisely where they belong. Despite Raveh's solid discussions of feminist thinkers such as Carole Gilligan, Sara Ruddick and Nancy Jay, I find her willingness to celebrate the Sages here somewhat optimistic, maybe even a little naïve (she seems to be suggesting

that they might be proto-feminists). The contradictions of the maternal-feminine within differing forms of patriarchy need to be dealt with far more substantially than Raveh provides. In other words, I accept her desire, for whatever reason (religious?), to celebrate the Sages' recognition of maternal power and even a morality associated with it. However, without a robust, critical discussion of those contradictions I think she makes the Rabbis look too good, and I am left wondering why she felt the need to do so.

Ruth Kara-Ivanov Kaniel is also interested in the rabbinic reception and interpretive recasting of female biblical characters. In "'Gedolah Aveirah Lishmah': Mothers of the Davidic Dynasty, Feminine Seduction and the Development of Messianic Thought, from Rabbinic Literature to R. Moshe Haim Luzzatto," she argues for a new interpretation of the axiomatic "Gedolah aveirah lishmah mimitzvah shelo lishma," a statement by R. Naḥman b. Yitzḥak, which belongs to a *sugiyah*, or pericope, that appears twice in the Babylonian Talmud (Tractate *Horayot* [10b–11a] and Tractate *Nazir* [23a–b]). This statement has traditionally been interpreted as "permission to perform a transgression out of a positive motive"; "rejection of one norm in favor of a loftier one"; "violation of the law in order to preserve it"; and (along the lines of Rashi and the Tosafists) "transgression committed for the sake of a commandment" or "for the sake of God" (27). Kaniel points out that most scholarly attention to the statement "has been devoted mainly to discussions of it in kabbalistic, Sabbatean and hasidic literature" (28), without attention being paid to its treatment in rabbinic literature. When we do take into account the rabbinic literature, along with the thought of R. Moshe Haim Luzzatto, Kaniel argues that a more precise interpretation of the statement emerges, one that "serves to justify a specific type of transgression, namely, feminine sexual transgression committed with good intentions before both God and law" (28). This is due to the fact that in this literature, *aveirah lishmah* pertains solely to "a seductive act bordering on sexual transgression performed for the sake of the people of Israel—a role in the drama of national salvation which is assigned to women only" (27). Essentially, she argues that rabbinic pronouncements of the righteousness of five "Gentile" women crucial to the formation of the David line, Lot's daughters (Gen 19:30–38), Tamar (Gen 38), Yael (Judg 5) and Ruth, and their consistent condemnation of male characters for sexual transgressions, leads them to posit a separate moral system for women … an "Ethics of Redemption" (44), and that this has "revolutionary implications" for both ethics and messianic theology (44): "The Sages justify active, seductive women based on

their intentions, whereas they criticize men for actions that have no deeper meaning or link between action and intention" (36).

Kaniel keenly points out, however, that the Sages' discourse about righteous female sexual transgression is fraught with contradictions. For example, women are both seductresses/sinners and redemptive figures; they are both seductive and dangerous, but their sexual transgressions are ultimately applauded and encouraged. Moreover, the reasoning of the Sages is based on some particularly sexist assumptions about women, their bodies and their threatening "otherness" and sexuality. She claims that

> the justification and encouragement of female sexuality offers a glimpse into the Sages' anxiety about their own sexuality and their stubborn battle against desire. This preoccupation exposes a masculine interest in women's "otherness," which does not require a struggle against desire but permits paradoxes and complexities. In projecting "transgression with good intention" onto women, the Sages create a new language to describe women's complex relationship with their own bodies, as well as the powers of seduction and of human fertility. (43)

Ultimately, what the Sages demonstrate through their discussions of this *sugiyah* is "appreciation, wonderment, fear and even jealousy; they understand that there is a different, feminine, wayward path, one that is foreign to them and yet meaningful" (43). They are thereby able to resolve the contradiction between intention and action, transgression and redemption: "The *sugiyah* expands the definition of the 'good and worthy' and can also contain paradoxical concepts: Good is not necessarily tied to evil, but it is part of an elaborate scheme that transcends the nomic and binary fields.… In my reading, only through rabbinic identification with women and curiosity about the Other could such a rich new language have evolved" (44).

I kept waiting for the feminist response: that all of this (and it is a very dense article, probably because it is based upon her doctoral dissertation) is yet another example of how sexist, masculinist thinking expropriates and colonises the feminine for its own benefit. But in the end, Kaniel seems too impressed by the mental gymnastics of the rabbis, even if born out of their anxieties about women and their sexuality. I am really not sure what is so revolutionary about all this.

Garroway ("Was Bathsheba the Original Bridget Jones?") explores the development of Bathsheba as depicted in American film and in feminist bib-

lical studies. Focusing on the question of whether Bathsheba was an innocent victim or a cunning agent in the drama that unfolds with King David, Garroway notes that, because the ancient literary version of the story is "mysterious and fraught with background," both feminists and filmmakers seek to fill in the gaps found in 2 Sam 11. Furthermore, she claims that feminism has itself been instrumental in changing the way the story is told. The post-war "Woman's Film" *David and Bathsheba* (1951) appears before the progressive years of second-wave feminism. Largely in keeping with the image of the post-war American woman, with the new ideas of freedom and autonomy afforded her during the Second World War (the "Rosie-the-Riveter" phenomenon), Bathsheba is depicted as somewhat strong and independent, admitting to knowing that David would see her bathing and that she'd set the whole scene up. However, the film maintains all gender stereotypes of the day, for ultimately (both despite and due to the romance of the film) Bathsheba is a woman who wants a powerful man as a husband, and she gets him. By 1985, when *King David* appears, the feminist movement and feminist biblical studies is in full swing. Garroway claims that Bathsheba is here presented as an "independent and cunning woman," "a sexually liberated woman, comfortable in her own skin," and one aware of her reproductive rights (59). The mini-series *Kings* (2009) does away with the bathing scene altogether, while also taking major liberties with the ancient narrative. Bathsheba, here called Helen, is a mistress of Saul, mother to their sickly son. To be perfectly honest, I do not know whether I can agree with Garroway that Helen is even meant to be Bathsheba, and she spends most of this section discussing feminist work from the beginning of this century, probably due to the rather weak link between the series and 2 Sam 11. Finally, noting that no post-feminist Bathsheba exists in film, Garroway posits a semi-new narrative and a new-ish Bathsheba based upon the success of Western popular cultural figures such as Carrie Bradshaw and Bridget Jones (hence the annoyingly cool title—such titles in biblical studies always make me think of "Christian rock," trying desperately to make the Bible and Christianity relevant for the youth; this making relevant is ultimately part of Garroway's agenda here). In Garroway's creative reimagining, Bathsheba is a "modern self-monitoring woman," and this makes Bathsheba relevant for the successful modern woman who also longs for "the perfect man" (65).

Apart from the weak linkage between the third filmic version and the biblical text, I found Garroway's uncritical assumptions about post-feminism completely disconcerting. Garroway demonstrates some understanding of

post-feminism as the position young women adopt as a result of feminism being taken for granted: "young women of the twenty-first century belong to a post-feminism generation that actively distances itself from feminism. They no longer need to strive for equality and freedom —it is a given. Young women are 'so over' feminism that they are open once again to subjecting the female body to the male gaze.… In the heyday of feminism, this would have been sharply criticized. But today, in the liberated world, young women see such images not as an affront to the female body but as a choice" (64). The "liberated world"—seriously? While all of this seems demonstrably true about contemporary western societies, surely it is our job as thinkers not just to unpack the reasons for this situation, but also to criticize it as, oh I don't know, patriarchy working at peak torque? Garroway embraces the idea of "the modern self-monitoring woman," which apparently is a woman who is "obsessed with self-improvement and constantly weighing her options. What should she eat? Whom should she date? What events should she attend? She must juggle the pressures of her job, family, physique, friends and biological clock, all while trying to find the perfect man" (65). Ugh. Such a woman is surely akin to the self-disciplining woman that, according to Sandra Bartky's critical assessment of Foucault,[2] emerges as part of the process of the modernization of patriarchal domination. Just because young women now don't give a damn (apparently) because they're so liberated doesn't mean we all have to accept it uncritically and move on.

While Garroway's essay is the only one of the five principal essays that actually reflects the title of the issue, her own contribution to reception history is not even feminist. Relatedly, what I found most curious was Garroway's assumption that the Bible needs to remain relevant in our time: "reading the Bathsheba narrative through the lens of a self-monitoring Bridget-Jones-meets-Carrie-Bradshaw woman brings the narrative into the twenty-first century and makes it appealing to the post-feminist generation of women" (65). So what? Why does it need to be appealing to them? Of course I agree with the idea that people should be familiar with the biblical stories, but this is because I teach Western literature and philosophy, and knowledge of the Bible seems to me to be often quite essential to the comprehension of those discourses. The question of it remaining *relevant* is entirely differ-

[2] Sandra L. Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power," in *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, ed. Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 61–86.

ent and requires a strong defense, in my opinion. It is difficult to imagine Shakespearean scholars getting away with saying that Shakespeare's plays and sonnets need to be interpreted anew so that they remain relevant to contemporary audiences, without giving any informed literary-critical, or even philosophical reasons as to why they think this is so necessary. I can only suspect that it is probably the case that Garroway wants the biblical stories to remain current for religious reasons, which I can understand, even though I completely disagree (but that is too long a discussion). If this is the case, then we have yet another example of a woman's religious concerns overriding feminist-political ones, as Gerda Lerner warned.[3] If that isn't the reason, well, I'm at a loss really.

As her title suggests, Erica A. Siegel examines the apocryphal character of Susanna in three short prose works by Chekhov ("Chekhov's Susannas"). The biblical story concerns many things (male lust, treacherous abuse of authority, the vindication of the good, etc.), but it is also, as Ellen Spolsky points out, "about witnessing: about the power of telling and retelling. As a story of a woman told for her by people whose interests are not her own, it is a story about the relationship between narrative and control and about narrative as control over death."[4] Siegel explores the means by which Chekhov utilizes the biblical figure of Susanna, who is beautiful, righteous and knowledgeable of Mosaic Law, to elaborate his views on who the artist is, what *he* does, especially when it comes to the question of the ethics of appropriation. As Siegel puts it: "Each of these stories deals in its own way with the exploitability of women. Taken together, they reveal Chekhov's portrait of the male artist as less a creator than a borrower. He does not so much write as rewrite, reinterpret and appropriate" (74). "Artist's Wives" (1880) is the story of how a co-habiting group of artists and writers abuse and exploit their wives for their artistic ends. One of the artists' wives refuses to sit nude for her painter husband, who wishes to create an image of the "Old Testament Susanna." "Anuita" (1886) is a story about how two men exploit and dehumanize the body of a woman through their gaze. The medical student (Anuita's boyfriend) uses her body to learn about the skeletal system by tracing her ribs with a piece of coal. Her boyfriend then lends her out to his artist friend who is painting a picture of Psyche and needs a model. In "The Mire"

[3] Gerder Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[4] Ellen Spolsky, Introduction, in *The Judgment of Susanna: Authority and Witness*, ed. Ellen Spolsky (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 1; cited in Siegel, 74.

(1888), unlike the earlier two stories which Siegel argues removes any sense of eros, Susanna appears as a lusty Jewish woman called Susanna Moiseevna, who is the seductress of two men rather than their victim. Why? Siegel makes the fine point that in "The Mire" Chekhov essentially removes all the features of the apocryphal Susanna (her virtue, innocence, meekness, and her faith) that made the story and Susanna herself appropriable by Christians, as a figure of Christian martyrdom and as a symbol of the resurrection. She argues that with "The Mire" Chekhov is parodying the very process of typological exegesis by Christian readers of the Jewish texts: "'The Mire' challenges not only Christian appropriation of Old Testament narrative, but also, perhaps, any attempt to assign a text ultimate meaning. Susanna Moiseevna, in this light, is like the biblical text itself—she is eminently available to the men, but she is stolidly impenetrable" (91).

This is a fine essay. But my question is this: what exactly is feminist about this article? Siegel shows us how Chekhov utilizes a female biblical character to elaborate, through fiction, his theory about how the artist/writer essentially exploits what he can (ur-text, object, woman, etc) to be an artist. Yet, there is no critical point made by Siegel concerning the gendered nature of this particular theory of creative production (akin to Kristeva's blind acceptance of Barthes's theory of the writer as *he* who bravely approaches the erotic body of the mother). And it is not simply that Siegel is merely presenting Chekhov's ideas to us. Indeed, she tells us that what we might learn from Chekhov's Susanna stories is that "while the process of human interpretation of the holy text may be an exercise in frustration, it is never fruitless, and it is unlikely to be finite" (93). In an issue concerning feminist work in reception history of the Bible I at least expect some feminist questioning and challenging of the theories/presuppositions of the masculine literature under scrutiny. It is not adequate (and has not been for decades) to derive a universal conclusion based on the gender-biased musings of men, even if those musings freely admit something like a gendered ethical poverty.

Finally, in "Joseph(ine), the Singer: The Queer Joseph and Modern Jewish Writers," Wendy Zierler offers an alternative, queer literary lineage from Joseph through to Kafka and more recent women's Hebrew poetry. By looking at queer readings of the story of Joseph in Genesis, along with rabbinic interpretations, Zierler draws our attention to a Joseph who is "an exaggerated, campy performer, an over-the-top storyteller or actor, who enacts and 'stages' conflict" (100). Moreover, Joseph's queer legacy is necessary, argues Zierler, as a model of being that is essential to the redemptive narra-

tive that ensues in Exodus. She then reads Franz Kafka's strange story about a singing mouse called Josephine ("Josephine the Singer, or: The Mouse Folk," 1924), Nurit Zarchi's "And She is Joseph" (1983), and Esther Ettinger's "A Wire Ladder, Bereft of Wing" (1980) and "Song/Poem before Sleep" (1999) alongside the biblical story. Her argument is that these texts enable an alternative to the very masculinist lineage that Leslie Fiedler has argued emerges from Joseph, the "archetypal ancestor of all Jewish dreamers" (from Joseph to Sigmund Freud and Kafka, to Nathanael West, Henry Roth, Delmore Schwartz, J.D. Salinger, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth).[5] Instead, with the assistance of queer theory, she believes it is possible to offer a "perhaps more faithful reading of the biblical Joseph, one that calls attention to the epicene/queer/flamboyant and performative aspects of Joseph's character as portrayed in the Bible" (98), and one that enables Joseph to be understood as the forefather not just of male writers, but female as well. Joseph might also be a model for "cross-gender (dis)identifications" (98). By reading these texts together, Zierler claims that "Joseph emerges from this reading as a character whose identity transcends gender and other social definitions, and who furnishes a model for a way of being that becomes necessary for the unfolding of the redemptive trajectory of the Exodus story" (98).

This too is a fine essay, the best in the issue. Zierler gives deft treatment to the excesses of the biblical story (including Joseph's name, which in Hebrew means "addition" or "supplement") and makes strong links between it and the later literature. My only criticism is that Zierler seems to accept the subversive potentials of queer theory for women without critical questioning or defense. The relationship between queer theory and feminism is not uncontroversial, and I think the essay would have benefited from an informed discussion of this.

Overall, each essay offers interesting material for those concerned with the ways certain biblical texts have been thought about and recast by later (mainly male) readers, writers and filmmakers. I was, however, disappointed by the quality of feminist thinking that took place in some of the essays. And, as a thematic issue, it lacks a proper focus.

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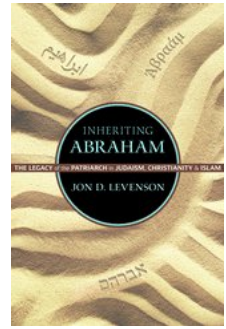
[5] Leslie Fiedler, *The Collected Essays of Leslie Fiedler* (New York: Stein and Day, 1971), 178.

Inheriting Abraham: The Legacy of the Patriarch in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, by Jon D. Levenson



Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012 | xvi + 244 pages | ISBN: 978-0-691-15569-2 (hardcover) $29.95 | ISBN: 978-0-691-16355-0 (softcover) $19.95 | ISBN: 978-1-400-84461-6 (ebook)

This book, whose author is Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard University, provides an excellent introduction to Jewish interpretations of the biblical figure of Abraham and useful comparisons with Christian and Islamic interpretations. Along with this it raises serious and (in my view) appropriate questions about the contemporary effort to ground interfaith relations between Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the figure of Abraham/Ibrahim since he is common to all three traditions, something I will here call "Abrahamic ecumenism."

It is appropriate to begin with a survey of the book's content, highlighting what I find to be of particular interest, though this will not do justice to the variety of material covered or to the impressive argumentation with which it is handled. The introductory chapter discusses the nature of the Jewish traditions about Abraham, the complexity of their relation to the Christian and Islamic traditions and the impossibility, in the light of modern critical scholarship, of finding a "real" Abraham behind the diverse traditions. We must recognize the historical nature of the texts but we must also be open to the "transcendent and enduring religious messages" (17) they convey.

Chapter 1 explores Jewish and Christian texts to disprove the common stereotype that makes Judaism exclusivist and Christianity universalist. Chapter 2 explores events in the biblical account of Abraham, including his dealings with Lot, the births of Ishmael and Isaac, and the nature of the covenant. It notes particularly that many nations gain blessings from Abraham though the covenant is limited to his physical descendants through Isaac.

The Akeda (the "binding"of Isaac; Christians and Muslims speak of the "sacrifice" of Isaac or Ishmael) is dealt with in chapter 3. Among other things the author notes that while Jews, Christians and Muslims speak of the faith of Abraham the Bible speaks only of obedience, as a result of which the covenant is no longer purely a matter of grace since Abraham has now merited it. The place of the Akeda in the later Jewish traditions is discussed at length though,

oddly, there is no mention of the claim in some of those traditions that Isaac was actually sacrificed, as publicized particularly by Shalom Spiegel in *The Last Trial*. This claim is, however, mentioned briefly as a possible but unlikely result of biblical criticism. Various Christian interpretations of the Akeda and the Qur'anic interpretation are then discussed. Finally the modern criticism of the Akeda as immoral, especially that of Kant, is discussed and the point is made that none of the three traditions as they have developed would permit the sacrifice of a son.

Chapter 4 deals with the stories of Abraham as aggressive monotheist and iconoclast, destroying his father's idols, in the later Jewish and the Islamic traditions, though not in Genesis and not in the Christian tradition. It also discusses the idea of Abraham as a kind of philosopher. Christians do not share the iconoclastic theme because of, the author suggests briefly, their more favourable attitude to icons. I would like to have seen a further exploration of this. Chapter 5 begins by exploring the later Jewish view that Abraham kept the commandments of the Torah before the time of Moses. It also explores the contrasting view of Paul that makes Abraham an exemplar of faith and mentions alternative Christian interpretations. Evidence is presented to show the inadequacy of the simplistic idea that Judaism is a religion of law and Christianity a religion of faith and creed.

The author's critique of Abrahamic universalism, which underlies the varied and complex discussions in the earlier chapters, is presented explicitly in chapter 6. Efforts to make the figure of Abraham serve as a basis for the reconciliation of Jews, Christians and Muslims misconceives the biblical Abraham or privileges some of the three traditions over other(s). For example, Abraham may be considered as "father" of the three communities but Jews and Christians interpret this fatherhood in radically different ways and Muslims do not consider him "father" of their community. The contradictory interpretations of Abraham are such that to treat the three communities as equal violates essential claims of each of them. There is no neutral Abraham, and we must learn to appreciate the differences as well the commonalities among the traditions. Considerable space in this chapter is devoted to criticizing two books, Bruce Feiler's *Abraham: a Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths* and Karl-Josef Kuschel's *Abraham: Sign of Hope for Jews, Christians and Muslims*.

We should note that the subtitle of the book is something of a misnomer, for by far the largest part of the material is from the Jewish tradition, as the author explicitly states within the book. There is, however, considerable Christian, particularly Pauline, material and it is well handled. There is much less

Islamic material and most of it is limited to the Qur'an, though the points made are valid. The book almost calls for two complementary volumes, dealing in comparable depth and detail with the other two traditions.

There is a certain amount of apologetics in this book, or perhaps it is more accurate to say that the author provides a scholarly treatment of recognized apologetic themes. One example is the issue of universalism. At several points the author presents material that supports the argument that while the Jewish covenant is exclusive to Jews salvation is by no means limited to them, while, on the other hand, Christians and Muslims seek to draw in all people but have traditionally excluded from salvation those who do not come in.

Although himself a critical scholar, the author strongly privileges tradition. Scripture is always to be read in the light of the continuing tradition, as Jews have regularly done, and at several points he criticizes the Protestant *sola scriptura* approach (he avoids, appropriately, the term "fundamentalist"). In a sense, though, he violates this position by dealing with Islam almost entirely in terms of the Qur'an and, somewhat less so, by focussing mainly on Paul and early Christianity. Likewise, he shows little sympathy for radical modernist revisions of the traditions, of which Abrahamic ecumenism is a fairly extreme example. In his view it involves the creation of a new Abraham, who never existed, either in the Bible or in any tradition. It is not the path to take. The author certainly does not reject ecumenism but neither does he indicate what path he thinks it *should* take. Perhaps there is a clue toward the end of chapter 6 in his relatively favourable treatment of Louis Massignon, whom he sees as one of the authors of Abrahamic ecumenism. Massignon remained a firm Catholic but also found in Islam a revelation of God complementary to the Catholic revelation. The author doubts Massignon resolved the conflicting truth claims of the two religions, but he appreciates Massignon's effort to respect the integrity of both traditions. Any ecumenism that the author would support would have to have this characteristic.

In my view the manner in which Levenson makes tradition his benchmark leads him to underestimate the capacity of religions to change legitimately in the future, as they have in the past. One may ask whether the creation of a new Abraham is necessarily a bad thing, especially since he has been recreated so often in the past, as the author demonstrates so well. As it is, he does not go beyond a negative criticism of Abrahamic ecumenicism.

Still, that criticism is necessary and I see this book as "must" reading for anyone involved significantly in Abrahamic ecumenism since it provides a wake-up call to often unrecognised challenges facing this movement. Be-

yond that, it will be of value to anyone interested in figure of Abraham or in scriptural religion as such, since it provides an excellent introduction to traditional Jewish approaches both to Abraham and to scripture generally.

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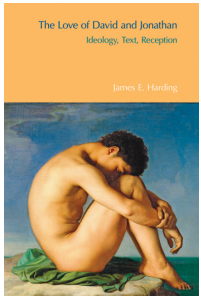
The Love of David and Jonathan: Ideology, Text, Reception, by James E. Harding



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Much has been written on the bond of David and Jonathan in the past decade, including substantial chunks of three comparative monographs, two of them penned by this reviewer. It was thus to be expected that book-length explorations of this possibly homoerotic pairing would appear sooner rather than later. Amazingly, specialists have barely digested the first of these (Anthony Heacock, *Jonathan Loved David: Manly Love in the Hebrew Bible and the Hermeneutics of Sex* [Sheffield, 2011]), than a second one, longer and far more technical, comes out. The originality of the work of Harding is that it does not attempt to offer yet another interpretive grid. Instead of smoothing out the edges of a highly recalcitrant text either to maintain the conservative stance or to champion an homoerotic reading, *The Love of David and Jonathan*, while embracing and firmly inclining towards a progressive line ("I am convinced that taking the homophobic sting out of scripture and its interpretation is something to which energy should be devoted.… I am offering instead what I think is a necessary, corrective footnote to a troubled debate," x), sets out to explore what is so fascinating and problematic in this relationship. Why are equally competent scholars deadlocked to such an extent on the nature of the bond between David and Jonathan? How did the passages of the book of Samuel where they interact become an ideological battlefield for laymen and academics alike, whereas what we can call the issue of the concealed homosexuality of the heroes does not seem to exist for ancient readers, Jewish and Christians, of the Hebrew Bible? As the work

looks overwhelming, forbidding even, and we will find reasons to suspect that the author wanted it that way, this must be a searching review, one in which I shall attempt not to dwell too much on the points where I see myself more or less directly challenged.

The first chapter of the book ("Battling for David and Jonathan: Scripture, Historical Criticism, and the Gay Agenda," 51–121) offers, in Harding's own words, "a kind of metacommentary" that "seeks to determine how and why scholars disagree on the nature of the relationship between David and Jonathan, what agendas determine their approaches and conclusions, and what assumptions they bring to the texts" (31). The picture drawn is convincing, occasionally lurid, and succeeds in conveying a sense of the ideological battle royale the scholarly discourse over this bond has degenerated into. It equally unravels in adequate terms the tight linkage between the reception the passages of interest for David and Jonathan have enjoyed since the nineteenth century, mostly in English-speaking countries, and the questions anglophone exegetes ask of them: now more than ever, 1 Samuel operates as a magnifying glass for faith-based, societal concerns in the United States. (Parochial concerns could hardly be avoided here.) However, since Harding has decided that another objective *Forschungsbericht* was less necessary than a narrative of the ideological grounds on which the latest interpreters have dealt with the texts, he fails to bring any objective criteria to his account of these landmark studies; which weakens his exposition of the impasse reached by studies on David and Jonathan. The most impassioned research receives the lion's share of attention: Markus Zehnder's 2007 paper gets twenty pages, seven each are devoted to the landmark article by Silvia Schroer and Thomas Staubli and the relevant chapter in Robert Gagnon's *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, and eleven lump together the various queer readings. On the other hand, neither the few pages devoted to David and Jonathan in the epoch-making *Homoeroticism in the Biblical World: A Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis, 1998) by Martti Nissinen nor the elaborate 1999 study by the same scholar appear out of the notes, whereas both Susan Ackerman and myself receive less than half a page each at the outset of the chapter, under the artificial heading "Exegetical fractional strife," as if our contributions somehow stood outside the mainstream Harding will subsequently map out. Obviously, the clearly progressive stance she and I advocated was of more concern to him than the actual finer points of our approach to the texts. This is disappointing, to say the least, but hardly surprising since this chapter does not jump straight on the bandwagon. Indeed it comes after a lengthy

introduction (1–50) in which Harding guides us through a roster of recent, English-speaking movies and TV programs which engage one way or the other with the affection between David and Jonathan (1–15) before he unravels the way preoccupations with the resonance for LBGTQ folks of this bond have increasingly come to dominate the scholarly exegesis of the second half of 1 Samuel down to our times (15–31). It was only to be expected, from a man of faith zeroing in on the theory of reception, that the Assyriologist Nissinen, the historian of the Hebrew religion Ackerman, and the Classical and Near Eastern philologist Nardelli would be negatively singled out, for in the entire scale of the David-Jonathan literature, our scholarly methods are the most sharply discrepant from those of the Evangelical mainstream, whether "liberal" or conservative, to which Harding belongs. The three of us were not congenial to Harding's theoretical survey; whether this evinces an amount of prejudice I leave to others to decide. On the other hand what stands beyond doubt is that any assessment of the *status quaestionis* of David and Jonathan from the viewpoint of the ideology adhered to which fails to recognize the importance of no less than three substantial contributions can hardly claim the higher ground; particularly if, as will be seen presently, this assessment passes over yet more vital items.

Apart from such issues of omission and commission, there is nothing in the introduction and chapter one that one has to take issue with; nothing one imperiously needs to know before one embarks on a study of the texts, too, and here lies the trouble. These longish preliminaries testify to the author's awkward stance (Harding is both academic and ordained clergyman but loath to be viewed as an ivory-tower type in the pursuit of purely antiquarian ventures) more than they cast light on the modern relevance of the tales about David and Jonathan or the raison d'être of his project. This is not to say that nothing can be learned from chapter one, quite the contrary; for instance, the methodological flaws of Zehnder's and Gagnon's constructs are nicely worked out (63–83, 83–89). Yet Harding gives more than once the impression of either beating a dead horse or reinventing the wheel, sometimes at the cost of the representativeness and scholarly credibility of his sample. Precious few interpreters of the relationship between David and Jonathan not aligned with the Religious Right take Gagnon seriously nowadays, so it was unnecessary to devote a fair deal of attention to his, purely negative, preaching; there was little need to rehearse at length the vastly overstated thesis of Schroer and Staubli (57–63); the overview of the queer readings (David Jobling, Roland Boer, Theodore Jennings, Yaron Peleg, Anthony Heacock) is tightly packed

but has the misfortune of missing one critical contribution, by Tod Linafelt (infra); I also lament the absence of a few lines on the conservative yet not stridently homophobic approach of Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, 2007), 165–67, since this weighty tome has already proven influential and is unapologetic on the principles of his handling of the Bible (he entitles his chapter 3, 133–76, "Human Heterosexuality versus Homosexuality, Transvestism, and Bestiality"); last but not least, so few were the ripples made in print by Zehnder's transparently malignant piece of theology that a rebuttal of his strategy did not count among the discipline's most pressing needs, unless it also laid bare the half-truths, distortions, and instances of utter ignorance with which the "Observations on the Relationship Between David and Jonathan and the Debate on Homosexuality" bristles. Unfortunately, Harding got cold feet and stops short of providing this demonstration (my *Aristarchus antibarbarus: Pseudologies mésopotamiennes, bibliques, classiques* [Amsterdam, 2012], xxxiv–xxxvi, 136–53, attempts to satisfy this need). As one may legitimately quibble at some of Harding's decisions with respect to what belongs in the main text and what was better relegated to the notes—apart from Nissinen, Jonathan Rowe, "Is Jonathan Really David's 'Wife'? A Response to Yaron Peleg," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34 (2009): 183–93, too does not get the honours of the text, probably because Harding is contemptuous of its arguments, cf. 121n216 top: "a rather wooden approach to reading both the biblical text and Peleg's rather subtle argument," the conclusion that Harding's materials got the better of him because of an unorthodox angle of attack and some personal quirks seems hard to resist.

The second part of the work, a (semiotic) commentary on the sections of the books of Samuel which have been supposed to evidence a same-sex affair between our protagonists (chapter two, "How Open is the David and Jonathan Narrative?" 122–273) to which are prefixed outstanding methodological prolegomena, will be widely read and quoted by virtue of its qualities as a competent doxography. I cannot praise enough the section which shows, against Zehnder and Gagnon, the irrelevance and sheer danger of bringing to bear on David and Jonathan the Leviticus verses on homosexuality (145–56). "What is necessary … is to examine the David and Jonathan narratives with a view to the degree to which it is more or less open, or more or less closed," Harding tells us (134). And indeed his overview achieves much and possesses solid virtues. The author strongly points out that too many incertitudes at the narratological, linguistic, and formulaic-referential levels lurk

behind either maddeningly obscure phrases and sentences or deceptively simple lexemes for the consistent application of a committed type of reading to be more than wishful thinking; so much so that Harding ends up marshalling twelve particular instances in which the meaning of the Hebrew is unlikely ever to be retrieved (225–27). To his greatest credit, it will be much harder now to maintain that the narrative is so consistent and lucid in its theological preoccupation with the political rise of David that either homosociability or homoeroticism would be out of place there (Gagnon, Zehnder, and most recently Jonathan Rowe, *Sons or Lovers: An Interpretation of David and Jonathan's Friendship* [New York, 2012], 129n8); to seriously consider that the first encounter between David and Jonathan, with their initial covenant (1 Sam 18:1-4), does not represent an extraordinary situation in the entire Hebrew Bible for which no parallel is forthcoming and no ready-made solution exists; or to refuse to entertain the possibility that the whole gamut of the interactions of the two characters is riddled with linguistic ambiguities that may perfectly have been intended as such by the narrators, qua a code. Harding's "How Open is the David and Jonathan Narrative?" will also put renewed pressure on the shoulders of scholars striving for definitive, anthropological guidance in the texts. Rowe only reaches firm conclusions in his new monograph because he shuts his eyes to the openness mapped out by Harding:

> the moral good that guides the narrative's plot is the one of life itself: *will* David live? What will happen to Jonathan's sons? The goods of filial obedience and family loyalty are important because they are both assumed and used by all three men. Also prominent are the goods of friendship and covenant loyalty. Yet further goods in the David-Jonathan narratives, each with a moral dimension, include personal and family honour, hereditary succession, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Among this multiplicity of moral goods and the inevitable conflicts between them, moves God, a fact of which readers are frequently reminded by the characters' appeal to him.… We turn, then, to the second question raised in the Introduction, viz. how the conflict of moral values is resolved by each character. Importantly, all the characters in the David-Jonathan narratives *do* something: faced with a moral conundrum they decide upon a particular course of action. These choices comprise the "resolu-

> tion" of the value clashes in the selected biblical texts and vary according to how each of the protagonists perceives the moral goods in play. (130; original emphases)
>
> The story asserts that when the validity of societal norms conflicts with loyalty to David's house they should be rejected. Just as Jonathan in preferring David stood against not only Saul but also the dominant moral schema of family loyalty and filial obedience, so readers should recall that loyalty to YHWH's anointed—and his successors—is paramount. (132)

Let us hope that such generalizations will become scarce now that we have at the ready Harding's robust parsing of the passages of interest for David and Jonathan. I ought finally not to count among the achievements of his chapter its demonstration that scarcely anyone engaging with these texts escapes apologetic concerns and interests, even though there will be readers to deem this one of Harding's major results; for impassive, ideology-free scholarship is but a dream, particularly in the human sciences. However, the ideological blinkers through which Rowe thought himself justified to tailor the book of Samuel to make it fit his preconceived notions about the family, warrior-type society, and divine election in Early Israel shows how much this was an essential point to make — the texts are never more pellucid than for those whose interests lie in keeping things simple. Those readers will suffer now that they have to contend with Harding's central chapter to *The Love of David and Jonathan*.

These virtues unfortunately come with serious drawbacks. I cannot tell whether Harding wanted to produce a basic compendium for Bible scholars, theologians, and historians of sexuality seeking to understand the limits within which any interpretation of the enigmatic relationship between the two biblical heroes must fight its way; for chapter two does not attempt a compilation of all there is to know about David and Jonathan. Instead, Harding frames the debate in postmodern terms whose fuzziness drowns out whatever sophistication they can claim, and goes his merry way with a magisterial disregard for the original views of his predecessors whenever these ideas could not be construed within, or accomodated into, the semiotic framework he sticks to. This adherence to formal criticism is best seen in Harding's extreme concern with narratological issues, à la Jan P. Fokkelman: he carries this, no doubt respectable, trend in biblical studies to the point that he fails to engage with the textual stratigraphy of the heavily redacted book

of Samuel once he has paid lip-service to it (134–37, cf. 226). Thus we are to understand that there seems to exist little difference, in his eyes, between the commentary of Robert P. Gordon and the French one of André Caquot and Phillippe de Robert. Furthermore, I find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that Harding exhibits the mindset of a clergyman when he refuses to consider an erection in the abrupt ending of 1 Sam 20:41 (215) and writes a note in which he snaps at classicists inclined to multiply homosexual/pederastic obscenities in the wake of Dover on what might be overstated or unstable grounds (267–68n464; too bad for Harding, the one historian of Greek sexuality he endorses here is James Davidson, viz. an author whose malevolence towards Kenneth Dover shortcuts through the evidence, and all-round bad scholarship dramatically diminishes his authority: see Thomas K. Hubbard's review in *Humanities and Social Sciences Online* (2009), and *Aristarchus antibarbarus*, 56–80). Although very knowledgable in Hebrew, Harding equally tends to favor solutions which shy away from textual criticism. Let one case-in-point suffice: faced with the end of 1 Sam 20:41, he equivocates, does not discuss my suggestion, rooted in the Septuagint, that we have here a sexual climax—he tersely mentioned it in another context (114n132)—and falls back on the wholly ad hoc supposition of an ellipsis adumbrated by David T. Tsumura, all because this device leaves the Hebrew exegetically open-ended.

The somewhat narrow range of his reading further weakens his commentary. He has not consulted, say, Athalya Brenner, *The Intercourse of Knowledge: On Gendering Desire and "Sexuality" in the Hebrew Bible* (Leiden and New York, 1997); Jacques Vermeylen, *La loi du plus fort: Histoire de la rédaction des récits davidiques de 1 Samuel 8 à 1 Rois 2* (Leuven, 2000), which actually is a commentary; or Barbara Green's short but acute *King Saul's Asking* (Collegeville, 2003). On the dirge preserving David's last and most poignant expression of his affection for Jonathan, Harding has remained unaware of the all-important Tod Linafelt, "Private Poetry and Public Eloquence in 2 Sam 1 :17–27: Hearing and Overhearing David's Lament for Jonathan and Saul," *The Journal of Religion* 88 (2008): 497–526, who insists on the erotic overtones of 1:26b (522–25); he has missed too Nissim Amzallag and Michal Avriel, "Complex Antiphony in David's Lament and Its Literary Significance," *Vetus Testamentum* 60 (2010): 1–14, which is valuable both for the thematic composition of the piece and for the significance of the verse dedicated to Jonathan (cf. 9: "in the couple 20/26 of verses, the love of Jonathan becomes antithetic to the happiness of the Philistine women. Moreover, a

composite meaning emerges, and it totally differs from the linear meaning [related to the so-called homosexuality of David and Jonathan]. Now, it becomes the joy of the philistine women that surpasses the 'jubilation' they may feel from love, as soon as they will hear about the death of Jonathan," not without note 16: "the sexual connotation is even strengthened by the use, in verse 20, of the terms *ta ʿaloznah* [they jubilate] and *ʿarelim* [uncircumcised] in relation to these women"). It would serve no purpose to marshal further instances where Harding did not keep abreast of the scholarly literature, resulting in a somewhat stunted exposition. Even his bibliographical engagement with biblical and Rabbinic homosexuality is not quite all that it should be: one looks in vain at least for two seminal titles by Michael S. Satlow ("'They Abused Him Like a Woman': Homoeroticism, Gender Blurring, and the Rabbis in Late Antiquity," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 5 [1994]: 1–25; *Tasting the Dish. Rabbinic Rhetorics of Sexuality* [Atlanta, 1995], 198–222) and for Dale Launderville, *Celibacy in the Ancient World: Its Ideal and Practice in Pre-Hellenistic Israel, Mesopotamia, and Greece* (Collegeville, 2010), 174–76, who accepts "that there was a sexual dimension to the friendship" of David and Jonathan (174), whereas the importance of an article by Saul M. Olyan ("Surpassing the Love of Women' : Another Look at 2 Samuel 1: 26 and the Relationship of David and Jonathan', in Mark D. Jordan (ed.), *Authorizing Marriage? Canon, Tradition, and Critique in the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions* [Princeton-Oxford, 2006], 7–16) has not been perceived outside of the petty polemics of Zehnder against it. No-one shall be surprised, then, that ancient Near Eastern comparanda were kept out of the scene unless they appeared in Harding's favored sources, even after I had identified precise links between Levantine institutions and the three successive covenants Jonathan engages David into. Since Harding failed to provide an account on what, in my mind, is the major intriguing feature of the second half of 1 Samuel, viz. the two sets of relationships between David, Saul, and Jonathan, and David, Jonathan, and Michal; and as his commentary of the seminal verse of David's elegy (2 Sam 1:26), at pages 216–20, operates in isolation by not considering the composition of this sophisticated poem and by narrowing the interpretive range of the verse far beyond what seems advisable, I feel bound to conclude that his overview of the primary texts (160–227, 243–73) is both too full on numerous well-known facts and seriously deficient or inadequate in cases of real difficulty. It will not do to plead, as per pages 160–61, that the author purposely refrained from dealing with, and quoting, the secondary literature in anything like a comprehensive

manner. As one who has published four books, let me be blunt and patronizing: a scholar, especially a junior one working at his first monograph, who is unafraid of filling forty pages in small print of endnotes to some of his chapters, ought not to exhibit such reluctance at all; it is bound to look coy, if not outright insincere. All the more so when said scholar repeatedly indulges himself in writing annotations that amount to three quarters of a page (70 on 44–45; 5 on 101–2; 19 on 231–32; 240 on 252; 250 on 253; 498 on 270–71; 69 on 372–73; 121 on 378–79; 130 on 380–81; 210 on 386–87; 262 on 391–92) and stretches notes beyond what is tolerable even at a remove from the main text. Just consider 37–38 s.v. 40, on the "old and rather tired" essentialist versus social constructionist divide: either such a bibliographical dissertation could be tailored to the body of the relevant chapter or it had to be drastically curtailed. Encyclopedic learning is good and dandy when you really have left out nothing important; otherwise, unkind readers may suspect you of throwing smoke screens. We just sampled how much Harding can be faulted on this count.

More successful seems to me his third, and last, chapter, on the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* of the two friends through the ages ("David and Jonathan between Athens and Jerusalem," 274–402, substantially revising the article published in *Relegere* 1 (2011): 37–92). It demonstrates how their bond was redefined in the nineteenth century in the context of the self-affirmation of homosexual(-leaning) artists, to whom the Greek ideas about pederasty and the Greek traditions of same-sex pairings provided a ready-made analogy. The two Hebrews integrated the mainstream of gay literature as an iconic ideal, on the same footing as Achilles and Patroclus but with much more clout than them: "it becomes harder to separate David and Jonathan from the genealogy of homosexuality as such, because their friendship was an integral part of the tradition of male love that contributed to the emergence of the very notion of homosexuality whose applicability to the David and Jonathan narrative has become the subject of dispute" (365). Harding's wide-ranging and, so far as I can tell, accurate survey shall be praised to the high heavens; not that it contributes much to the bond between the Biblical heroes though, for I strongly disagree with the conclusion he draws on page 365: "… the subject of dispute. To ask whether the relationship between David and Jonathan was 'homosexual,' then, is to mistake the effect for the cause. A much more meaningful question concerns the role David and Jonathan played in the emergence of the modern idea of homosexuality itself." One must look askance at the analogy drawn with the Homeric pairing. Whatever

the fame of the bond of David and Jonathan, what I take to be its latent homoeroticism did not help much, contrary to Harding's own words (33), "to shape a very modern sense of an ancient heritage of love between men," inasmuch as David and Jonathan never buoyed the Judeo-Christian expressions of male-male affect the way the bond between Achilles and Patrocles did for the ancient Greeks themselves. First of all, *The Love of David and Jonathan* remains mum on the earliest witness to the narrative of these heroes, in chapter 62 of the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*; for this enigmatic pseudepigraph tones down things so much that their relationship looks trite and conventional there, if still warmly personal (in the lack of other studies, read my *Le motif de la paire d'amis héroïque à prolongements homophiles: Perspectives odysséennes et proche-orientales* [Amsterdam, 2004], 65–66, 69–70, 78). So is it standard scholarly protocol, in terms of intellectual history, to equate a male twosome whose sexual dimension was openly considered from Antiquity onwards, with another one that never evinced such a questioning until the Romantic period? Second, Harding's section on Achilles and Patrocles, 291–98, is reduced to grasping at straws to obtain the close parallel with David and Jonathan he needs instead of the topical discrepancy I champion. On a theme broached in many excellent, or at least well-informed, accounts (from the little known Peter Mauritsch, *Sexualität im frühen Griechenland: Untersuchungen zu Norm und Abweichen in den homerischen Epen* [Vienna etc, 1992], 115–20, to Marco Fantuzzi, *Achilles in Love: Intertextual Studies* [Oxford, 2012], 187–235), Harding could do no better than work out a crudely superficial sketch which unfavorably compares even with the most eccentric account by a Classicist (André Sauge's denial that Achilles feels very deeply for Patroclus: *Iliade: Langue, récit, écriture* [Bern etc, 2007], 131–39). These pages smack of an ill-advised interloper in Greek studies, to the extent that the relevant secondary sources, no matter how readily available, have been ignored. How can one claim to deploy with minimal competence, e.g., Aeschines' speech *Against Timarchus*, its attack on shameful, Attic homosexuality, and its use of the exemplum of Achilles and Patroclus, detached from Nick Fisher's richly commentated translation (Oxford, 2001), notably at pages 286–93, and from any of the studies of the argumentative tactics of this barrister (they are listed in *Aristarchus Antibarbarus*, 60n10)? Who but a partisan amateur can get it into his mind to explain how Aeschines appeals both to the Homeric heroes and the pederastic pair Harmodios and Aristogiton (292–93), link the latter to the episodes of Thucydides and the Athenaiôn politeia attributed to Aristotle in which they star (371–72n62),

then use none of the standard treatments of these twin sources? To mention but one resource, Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, III* (Oxford-New York, 2008), has much to say on Harmodios and Aristogiton, at 434–40. Finally, unlike the Graeco-Roman chapter in John Boswell's much-maligned *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*, this section of Harding focusses far too little on linguistic issues, not even when the specifics of the affection of Achilles and Patroclus directly depend on them, such as the phraseology used in *Against Timarchus*, §§142 sqq., or in the Aeschylean fragment on Patroclus's thighs. So Aeschines, §142, toys with his audience and the readers of his written oration by claiming that Homer τὸν μὲν ἔρωτα καὶ τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν αὐτῶν τῆς φιλίας ἀποκρύπτεται, "hides away the desire and the fact of naming their friendship," quite an unnatural expression (hendiadys?) to convey his sense of Homer's dissimulation of what was really at stake, by avoiding those words who would cast on a true light what Achilles and Patroclus were for each other. Neither Fisher, who translates "keeps their erotic love hidden and the proper name of their friendship" (104), nor Harding, who leaves out much of the force of ἐπωνυμία ("derived or significant name" *LSJ*) when he renders "keeps hidden their love and the name of their friendship," do pause to comment on the studied affectation of style and syntax here nor to consider the dynamic of ἔρως versus φιλία. Last but not least, to make matters worse, the view of Greek male-male love and sex conspicuous in the notes to these pages of Harding, nay elsewhere in his monograph, rests on a fairly superficial grasp of the facts: Harding deems ancient homosexuality something to be ascertained from a comparison between the works of Dover or Halperin and Davidson's *The Greeks and Greek Love*, with assistance from Cantarella and Crompton on the side — quite a long fall from the heights of Ackerman's understanding. In this respect, the one interpreter Harding most resembles is Zehnder, even though he steps short of reverting, like the latter, to the essentialist viewpoint. To sum up: the reception of the stories about David and Jonathan is superbly narrated in the last chapter of the work under review; its main thesis on the cardinal part played by this tradition on the emergence of modern gay identities looks cogent; but the linkage between the Hebrew pairing and the bond of Achilles and Patrocles established by nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries advocates of homosexuality according to Harding amounts to an exaggeration reached on the basis of a misstated analogy.

This checkered view of the character of the book takes further ammunition from the poor workmanship of the indices and scholarly apparatus,

si parva licet componere magnis. Endnotes appear after each chapter (34–50; 100–121; 228–73; 366–402; 405–6), but neither an index verborum nor an index rerum have been provided to help the user navigate these, unusually difficult to locate, clusters of bibliographical lore, marginal comment, and secondary pleading. This makes for a much harder read than it should have been. Though the responsibility for the scattered endnotes might well lay, ultimately, with the publisher rather than with the author, it complicates a great deal the task of the reader. Academics will persist, lay persons are likely to get frustrated and either skip the annotation or discard the monograph (all the more so since they are only offered an index of modern names and another of quotes). A further issue can confidently be put at the author's door: the most technical parts of the chapter devoted to the mapping of the primary evidence pro and cons an homoerotic affair behind the dealings of David and Jonathan have been printed in a smaller type "so that readers can, if necessary, skip dense sections that might lead to missing the forest for the trees" (173). It is easy to see that this serves a severely limited purpose. Indeed Harding only translates whole Hebrew verses and snippets making connected sense, not, or not enough, single words. What is stranger still, he never ever transliterates anything Semitic, not even his occasional Syriac snippets: are the Masoretic text or the Peshitta supposed to count for easy, not "dense," matters? On the other hand, non-Biblical Greek always comes equipped with a translation extending to one-word quotes, as if such an evidence somehow were more out-of-the-way than the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. This spectacular double standard not only deepens the dryness of the most technical parts of chapter two, to which the small print was supposed to draw attention; the lack of help with the Hebrew compared with the assistance with the Greek signposts a desire to cater to readers who can parse the Semitic languages but are at sea when faced with Classical Greek. Obviously, broadening the audience of the book was little more than idle talk, and the coyness of the author already showcased by the size of the endnotes compared to his emphatic refusal to be comprehensive in matters bibliographical, peers here too. Why I spoke of a deliberately forbidding book at the outset of this disquisition is now crystal-clear: monumentality has been meant to triumph over modesty. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*? Not quite.

In conclusion, Harding wrote an evaluation of the impasse in which the philologically elusive relationship of David and Jonathan has pushed scholars that succeeds in recognizing what is "open" in the primary texts from what is not, or rather, from what provides food for conservative apologetics

and Bible-based politics. He also builds a strong case for considering this bond as vital in the literary debates out of which the definition of modern homosexuality was born. The net result is a box of tools that will stimulate "liberal" interpreters, who seldom oversimplify the Hebrew nowadays, into sharpening their reading grids, while complicating the labor of staunch traditionalists and homophobic theologians. Historians of the reception of the Bible, as well as laypersons interested in the past of queer and gender studies, should benefit too. Neither Harding's admirable culture though, nor his industry, obvious commitment, and sound biblical training make the 450-page *Love of David and Jonathan. Ideology, Text, Reception* an innovative inquiry casting shadows on the most thoroughly competent treatment to date of the nature of this pairing, viz. Susan Ackerman, *When Heroes Love: The Ambiguities of Eros in the Stories of Gilgamesh and David* (New York, 2005), 165–231, cf. 285–99 for the endnotes. That Harding did not intend to replace her discussion of David and Jonathan in no way signifies that he had to remain systematically indecisive as to the nature of their bond peering through in specific Hebrew phrases, or favor semiotic interpretations apt to sound disingenuous in that they fail to address what she had to say. Harding easily snatches from Heacock the honor of being the best evangelical attempt at a compromise between "liberal" or queer interpretations and conservative skepticism, he provides a trustworthy first aid to the major passages under debate in the book of Samuel keyed in to the most mainstream exegetical options, but other than that, his work falls flat and delivers relatively little on both the texts and the ideology of their interpreters, while having significant weaknesses of its own. To have taken more exegetic risks, notably on the ancient Near Eastern and Classical Greek sides, and applied stronger judgement on what to include and what to leave out, would probably have made it more profitable.

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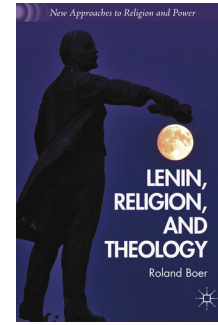
Lenin, Religion, and Theology, by Roland Boer



New Approaches to Religion and Power | New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013 | 347 pages | ISBN: 978-1-137-32389-7 (hardcover) $100.00 | ISBN: 978-1-137-32390-3 (softcover) $40.00

Any association between the Marxist revolutionary figure of Vladimir Lenin and Christian theology might seem tenuous at best. For the most part this book deals with the implicit—the theological dimensions hidden within Lenin's extensive works—and in this sense the author's background as a biblical scholar or textual excavator comes to the fore. Referring to a "passing comment" of Alain Badiou in which he analogizes the Apostle Paul to Lenin and Jesus Christ to Marx, Boer instead suggests that—if we must hold to the analogy—Lenin "comes closer to Christ than to Paul." The enigmatic sayings and parables of Jesus inspired Lenin to the point that he composed his own. Lenin was also immersed in Russian folklore which itself was infused with biblical imagery. Boer goes on to argue that this creativity was, in part, utilized during the veneration of Lenin after his death.

Having identified some tentative links between Lenin and theology in his introduction, Boer launches into a scrupulous exploration of Lenin's thought in search of further theological nuggets. In "Spiritual booze and the freedom of religion," for example, Boer contends that, in contrast to the widespread belief that Marxism is necessarily atheistic and that Lenin in particular held a contemptuous and superficially dismissive view of religion, Lenin's approach was, in fact, surprisingly complex and at times dialectical. For Boer, the simplistic view of Lenin as one who simply dismisses religion is regularly overstated. This point is well-illustrated by a number of examples and provides a platform for engagements in subsequent chapters. Nonetheless, it does feel as though Boer—perhaps the most prodigious writer in the field of biblical reception history—is occasionally reading against the grain (e.g., 21–24).

On the negative front, Lenin extends Marx's view of religion as an indicator of socioeconomic exploitation; a coping mechanism to deal psychologically with the toils of oppression. As a hangover of feudalism, including the established church's interdependence with the state, Lenin goes one step further to assert that religion is also a cause of suffering. Opposition to organized

religion, accordingly, takes on a political nuance. On the other hand, some of Lenin's writings actually reveal a "subtler approach to religion, a subtleness sometimes lost in the earthy, blunt, and polemical style of his writings" (13). In Boer's sights is a quote alluding to Marx's famous observation that religious suffering is the opium of the people. In Lenin's version, religion is described as "spiritual booze, in which the slaves of capital drown their human image, their demand for a life more or less worthy of man" (Lenin, "Socialism and Religion," 1905, 83–84; cited in Boer, 14). Through some creative exegesis, Boer rounds out the multivalence of this saying: "alcohol is as complex a metaphor as opium, if not more so. It is both spiritual booze and divine vodka: Relief for the weary, succor to the oppressed, inescapable social mediator, it is also a source of addiction, dulling of the senses, and dissipater of strength and resolve." According to Boer, "Religion-as-grog opens up a far greater complexity concerning religion in Lenin's thought that one may at first have thought" (17).

In the next chapter, Boer turns his attention to explicit biblical references in Lenin's works. The chapter is effective at presenting how and why a political figure like Lenin would utilize biblical texts in the construction and support of political arguments. Boer begins with the parable of the wheat and tares (Mt 13:24–30) which Lenin draws on in his rethinking of the organization of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Lenin uses the metaphor of separating wheat from the tares, or the good from the bad, to the crucial issue of whether the communist movement should work within strictly legal frameworks. For instance, should his disciples favour trade unions and worker movements over underground movements and agitators that seek to induce bigger gains for the working class? Boer observes that Lenin favoured both and did not see either as mutually exclusive. In fact, in Lenin's reinterpretation, the tares are those who argue for legal organizations alone. Boer then briefly considers other biblical metaphors, including various parables to do with soil, agriculture, and lost sheep, which are utilized by Lenin to flesh out arguments and prescriptions concerning the early communist movement. Lenin also created a number of his own parables, sometimes drawing on Russian folklore and literature in their composition. Why does it matter that Lenin used the Bible in such a way? While at some level it is easy to identify Lenin's use of the Bible as stemming from his general cultural awareness of which the Bible was an important cultural artefact, Boer pushes further to suggest that Lenin's concentration on agricultural texts in the Gospels is due precisely to their use of earthy, peasant and working-class

language and Lenin's ambition to articulate the political struggle in concrete, everyday terms.

In chapter three, Boer chronicles Lenin's engagements with his Christian adversaries: first, the Christian socialism of Father Georgi Gapon, a provocateur who incited unrest immediately preceding the 1905 revolution; second, Leo Tolstoy, a favourite author of Lenin whom he also knew personally; and finally, the "God-builders," who sought to promote the affinities between Marxism and religion. According to Boer, the appeal of Tolstoy's work to the political left comes from his advocacy of peasant values: "feeding into a romanticizing of peasant life and village-commune … [and] as offering a peculiarly Russian and thereby alternative path to socialism" (63). Tolstoy's response is at once a critique of his situation as well as an essentially religious solution found in the simple forms of earliest Christianity. Boer notes that Lenin found Tolstoy's work appealing for its contradictions: the critique of economic exploitation is incisive, but the proposed solution of a simplified Christianity largely disengaged from politics is regarded as problematic. According to Boer, Lenin failed, however, to recognize that the depth of Tolstoy's critique of economic exploitation is part of the tradition of Christian communism and its revolutionary rather than regressive outlook.

While Lenin was tentatively open to the Christian socialists, he opposed the God-builders. Boer focuses in particular on the work of Lunacharsky, a member of the Bolsheviks who, in his two-volume *Religion and Socialism* (1908–11), controversially speaks of Marxism as a new religion. Lenin denounced God-building and argued that, while one is free to join the party if one is a believer, one must not proselytise within the party. Lenin's attack against God-building also came indirectly through his engagement with the increasing influence of empirio-criticism. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (1909), a text which attacks some of the God-builders at length. Empirio-criticism maintained that the only knowledge available comes from sensation. Accordingly, knowledge should be restricted to experience. Lenin's opposition was as much political as it was philosophical. The basic problem was that it relied upon a radically materialist empiricism, based on sense-perception, which would inevitably lead to mysticism, fideism, and clericalism. Boer's engagement with the philosophical school of empirio-criticism and its wider context of phenomenology is extended in the following chapter, "Returning to Hegel: Revolution, Idealism, and God." Following the outbreak of the First World War, Lenin read Hegel's *The Science of Logic* in Berne. A couple of aspects

stand out for Boer: first, the recasting of the relation between subjective and objective approaches that entailed a renewed sense of subjective revolutionary intervention; second, Lenin's encounter with Hegelian idealism appears to have influenced his thinking on the revolutionary possibilities of religion and, in some cases, God-building.

In chapter five, "Miracles Can Happen," Boer takes as a point of departure a quote from Lenin that equates revolution with a miracle: "In certain respects, a revolution is a miracle." The chapter then proceeds to explore the theological aspects of revolution. Boer writes that a miracle is "a point of contact between two seemingly incommensurable worlds…. In Lenin's appropriation, the two worlds are no longer heaven and earth but those of spontaneity and organization, between the expected and the unexpected" (135). The moment of revolution occurs without forewarning. The miracle, Boer suggests, is a crucial dimension of Lenin's approach to revolution; the miracle of revolution refers to the bending of transcendence to immanence, in which humans become the agents of change. For some curious reason this was for me the standout chapter in Boer's book. Perhaps it is the appeal of a simple but unexpected junction between theology and socialism that is, at the same time, not overly forced. The remainder of the chapter examines the theological term *kairos* which signifies the point of crisis or end time, and the right moment for revolution. The tension between transcendence and immanence embodied in the miracle is also discussed in terms of the apparent conflict between reform and revolution. A miracle, for Lenin, is far more than a metaphor for religion. In bending transcendence to immanence, thereby emphasizing human agency, the miracle is a site of a dialectic between spontaneity and organization. In other words, one seeks to organize in order for the spontaneous to occur; the unplanned revolution will take place because of prior organization.

Within this book religion more-or-less means Christianity, although this limitation is not always signposted. At times, Boer moves from very specific discussions about Christianity to abstractions about religion more generally. Given that Christianity was the dominant religion in Russia during Lenin's lifetime, it is understandable that any concern with religion would probably involve Christianity. But it would have been equally interesting, by way of comparison, to observe how Lenin's theology might function in terms of the sociology of religion itself. Boer comes close to engaging this in his concluding chapter on Lenin's veneration. The so-called Lenin "cult" is an unfortunate label, according to Boer, because it suggests the functioning of

secular religion in a pejorative manner. While the main focus of this chapter is on what happened after Lenin's death, Boer starts his analysis in the works of Lenin himself. He discusses the Russian Orthodox understandings of saints, prophets, and martyrs, according to Lenin's understanding, in addition to Lenin's construction of bodies, corpses and diseases. The reason for veneration is neither the revival of suppressed religion, as often supposed, nor a demonstration that religion is somehow innate to human society. Rather, Boer contends that Lenin's veneration provided a form of extra-economic compulsion; in other words, an ideological means of encouraging workers to invest in a communist system in which the compulsions and incentives of capitalism no longer apply.

The main insights in *Lenin, Religion, and Theology* are mediated by Boer's detailed discussions of primary texts. Indeed, Boer claims to have read Lenin's entire corpus in preparation for this book. At times, Boer's training as a biblical critic also comes into sharp focus (e.g., 14–15, 32–33) and while the exegesis and commentary may not appeal to everybody interested in Lenin and religion, it certainly uncovers the complexities and contradictions within Lenin's own thought. What the book lacks, in my opinion, are the particulars of Lenin's religious biography. Details of Lenin's early religious encounters or experiences that possibly influenced him in later life, including his family's entanglement with the Lutheran church and his possible Jewish descent, remain unexplored. When Lenin was fifteen years old, for example, his father suddenly died of a heart attack. It is thought that this event had a shattering effect on his Christian faith and enabled him to become immersed in the philosophy of materialism only a few years later. Boer is silent on these details. Elements of biography do seep through in places, but it is difficult to gain from Boer's study a well-rounded picture of the role that religion played (or did not play) in Lenin's upbringing and later life.

I began this review by noting that any connection between Lenin and theology might seem tenuous at best. After reading this book one could probably still hold the same opinion, although with a more enriched understanding of where theology and Lenin's thought (including Marxism more generally) might overlap. For this reason the book is a valuable resource in determining how religion and revolution have historically clashed and/or converged and how they will continue to do so in the future.

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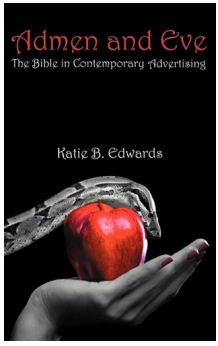
Admen and Eve: The Bible in Contemporary Advertising, by Katie B. Edwards



Bible in the Modern World 48 | Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012 | xiv + 146 pages | ISBN: 978-1-907534-71-3 (hardcover) £50.00

Katie Edwards's *Admen and Eve: The Bible in Contemporary Advertising* examines the complex relationship between the world of advertising and biblical characters. It is an area of study that, until recently, has received little attention from biblical scholars. Published by Sheffield Phoenix Press in 2012 as part of their Bible in the Modern World series, *Admen and Eve* analyzes representations of Eve in advertising from 1990 to the present—a time period Edwards characterizes as "postfeminist." The ads she examines focus on white, heterosexual representations of Adam and Eve because, she argues, the primary targets of such ads are white heterosexual female consumers (2). She concludes that Eve is an "effective sales weapon" for the products she represents (i).

After a preface and introduction, the book is divided into four chapters of varying lengths: chapter 1, "Genesis 2–3: The Creation of an Icon" (23 pp); chapter 2, "The Never-Changing Face of Eve: Representations of Eve in Nineteenth Century Fin-De-Siècle Art and Twentieth Century Fin-De-Siècle Advertising" (29 pp); chapter 3, "Bad Girls Sell Well: The Commodification of Eve in Postfeminist Consumerism" (63 pp); and chapter 4, "Forbidden Fruit Tastes the Sweetest: Eve Imagery in Advertising for the *Desperate Housewives* Franchise" (12 pp). As one can see, chapter 3 is almost as long as the combined length of other three chapters. This is due, in part, to the thirty-seven illustrations of various ads it contains as compared to the eight in chapter 1, the twelve in chapter 2 and the six in chapter 4.

Edwards begins and ends chapter 1 ("Genesis 2–3: The Creation of an Icon") with an analysis of four ads that function as an inclusio to her critique of contemporary egalitarian readings of Genesis 2–3 (e.g., Phyllis Trible, Reuven Kimelman, Helen Schüngel-Straumann). Edwards is not persuaded by these attempts and argues that Eve is the "active character" in Genesis 3 when compared to the "passive" Adam. It is Adam who listens to the woman and therefore lets the woman have power over him (25–26). As a consequence, Edwards argues, Eve/woman's role in the transgression was

greater than Adam's/man's role (19). Ads that focus on the Garden's transgression pick up these "textual clues of woman's central role and guilt" (27). Why do ads prefer this type of reading? According to Edwards:

> For popular cultural postfeminist interpretations of the biblical story, this vulnerability of male authority to loss of power and status through the irresistible allure of women means that the text is an ideal sales ground for products intended to increase women's sexual attractiveness and, therefore, social power—the reason that advertisements tend to portray only the moment of transgression or directly after. (28)

Indeed, Edwards finds little hope that this more traditional reading of Eve as sexual temptress will abate for consumers in the future: "After all, Eve is quite a money-maker, and so long as she can bring in the revenue she will be out there in cinemas and magazines with her trusty apple and snake to lure in consumers to take a bite of whatever product she is selling" (34).

Chapter 2 ("The Never-Changing Face of Eve: Representations of Eve in Nineteenth Century Fin-De-Siècle Art and Twentieth Century Fin-De-Siècle Advertising") compares depictions of Eve in 1890s art with those in ads at the end of the twentieth century. Both, she argues, show an interest in "the culturally notorious image of Eve, the temptress" (35), and use her as a symbol for their idea of womanhood. The reason for this, Edwards argues, is that:

> the threat of feminism is a major, if not the major, social factor underlying the birth and rebirth of the image of woman as *femme fatale*, and … the proliferation of Eve images in each fin-de-siècle is a cultural response aimed at managing this threat by appealing to deep-rooted prejudices about the biblical figure of Eve. (36)

In spite of these similar social circumstances, the purpose of such imaging is quite different in each time period. While artists at the end of the nineteenth century see Eve as "a source of death and degeneration," postfeminist ads of the 1990s, according to Edwards, see her as a source of female "empowerment" (37). Thus, for Edwards, these later ads represent Eve as the "ultimate postfeminist" who "exercises her power through her female sexuality, which is maintained or boosted through her consumer spending power" (38).

But it is chapter 3 ("Bad Girls Sell Well: The Commodification of Eve in Postfeminist Consumerism") that presents the high point of Edwards's argument. While conceding that contemporary advertising "rehashes old images and old stereotypes" of Eve (67), Edwards nevertheless contends that postfeminist ads sanction "women taking control of the representation of their sexuality and using it for their own financial and social gain" (68). Indeed, she insists that such a reading is consistent with Genesis itself and that advertising "makes explicit what is implicit in the text" (66). As the Eve of Gen 3 led Adam into temptation, so the Eve of postfeminist ads tantalizes female viewers with the promise of power and status. In her analysis of ad after ad, Edwards finds this message presented via a variety of tactics. Some ads select celebrities to represent Eve (e.g., Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford) while others present the apple as a metaphor for women's bodies. These strategies aim at persuading female viewers that consumerism is the path to power and success. But "female empowerment through self-commodification and sexualization" (86) comes at a cost. By its very nature, Edwards notes, such activity pits women against one another as each strives to be "the most successful temptress." Inevitably, only those few women who best present themselves as "attractive, young, able-bodied" and wealthy can hope to win the contest for power (84). Accordingly, Edwards shows that some recent ads have reverted to less threatening and more traditional images of Eve as a fairytale princess in search of "romance, fairytale and fantasy" (92).

Chapter 4 ("Forbidden Fruit Tastes the Sweetest: Eve Imagery in Advertising for the Desperate Housewives Franchise") is a rather odd conclusion to the book. Instead of presenting a closing argument, the chapter briefly considers how the appropriation of Eve in *Desperate Housewives* has ramifications for advertising the popular television program and its spin-off products. This focus is particularly confusing since the book's introduction promised that chapter 4 would discuss both *Desperate Housewives* and the film *Twilight* (11). But *Twilight* receives no treatment whatsoever. Apparently there was a variant of this chapter that was not sent to press. Whether or not it will appear in a corrected edition of the book remains to be seen.

As well researched as Edwards's treatment is, readers may be left with a niggling reservation about her characterization of postfeminism. Indeed, scholars are divided as to the definition of the term. While some see it as the logical extension of feminism, others portray it as a backlash against the feminist movement. Repeatedly Edwards represents the aim of postfeminist ads as empowerment—a goal reminiscent of the feminist movement. But

the way in which ads depict the path to that goal is, in fact, through the tired and worn stereotypes of sexual power and self-commodification. In this sense, such ads represent a type of *backlash* against the gains of the feminist movement not an *extension* of it. Nevertheless, readers will be intrigued by Edwards's analysis of the rich variety of ads that form the heart of this study.

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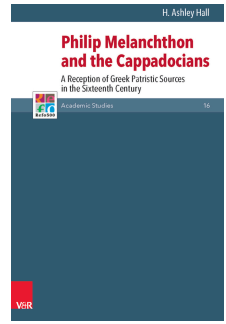
Philip Melanchthon and the Cappadocians: A Reception of Greek Patristic Sources in the Sixteenth Century, by H. Ashley Hall



Refo500 Academic Studies 16 | Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2014 | 272 pages | ISBN: 978-3-525-55067-0 (hardcover) €74.99 | ISBN: 978-3-647-55067-1 (ebook) €59.99

Hall's book begins with an introduction wherein our author identifies the Cappadocian Fathers who will make appearances in the pages which follow. Normally, the first thing that comes to mind when this reviewer sees the words "Church Fathers" is, "Oh no, I am about to be bored into a coma." Hall, however, has managed to work a miracle and make them interesting.

Chapter 1 is a well-designed and well-developed exposition of Melanchthon's understanding of Patristic authority. It also includes a subsection investigating key phrases and concepts utilized by the Cappadocians and made use of by Melanchthon. And it concludes with a discussion of the question which comes to mind as soon as one sees the subtitle of the volume: why the Cappadocians? In chapter 2, Hall describes Melanchthon's *Sitz im Leben* (for all intents and purposes) in relationship to the German university system of his time and its approach to the Fathers as well as his earliest lectures of the Cappadocian's theology.

Chapter 3 gives readers insight into the use to which Melanchthon put the Fathers in his struggles against the Radicals. Chapter 3, section 3.1 is one of the several Himalayan peaks in a volume of mountainous excellence. There

Hall takes in hand Melanchthon's oration on the importance of theological education. It is spectacular, absolutely timeless, and as necessary today as it was then. Chapter 4 addresses the same sort of subject as chapter 3, except this time it is not the Radicals who are the topic but the Romanists. Chapter 5 follows in the same track, this time in connection with the Reformed and the Lutheran opponents to whom Melanchthon was subjected and against whom he had to struggle his entire career. How the Cappadocians came to his rescue (he would have believed) is made evident in every subsection concerning every issue.

Those chapters, that is, 3–5 are really the heart of the study. How Melanchthon was able to call as witnesses in support of his views the Cappadocian Fathers in his many wars against Radicals, Reformed, and Romanists is the aim of Hall's monograph. For example, Hall observes,

> In light of the Zwickau Prophets' rejection of formal theological education, the Wittenberg reformation was also shocked by a similar affirmation by one of its most learned faculty members: Andreas Karlstadt. (110)

In response to Karlstadt, the Zwickauers, and the Anabaptist threat to Christian theology, Hall goes on to report,

> Melanchthon's first work against the Anabaptists was *Adversus anabaptistas iudicium* (1528). … Melancthon's next anti-radical polemic was written in 1536, *Verlegung etlicher unchristlicher Artikel welche die Widerteuffer fürgeben*. (110–11)

In these works, Melanchthon shows the historic position of Christianity, in opposition to the misrepresentations of theology by the radicals (of all stripes). Hall observes,

> For Melanchthon, affirming the ancient creeds go hand in hand with a proper proclamation of the gospel. Thus, the Lutheran confessions are in harmony with the ancient church and—most importantly—they are so because they adhere to the ancient creeds. (112–13)

Throughout the book this is the methodology which Hall practices: the contemporary opponents of Melanchthon are described and their positions enunciated. Melanchthon's response is then offered and his use of the Church

Fathers in that response highlighted, all in an attempt to show that Melanchthon's Lutheranism is in a continuous theological line descended from the primitive and therefore pure faith.

Another instance of Melanchthon's willingness to call the Fathers as witnesses can be found in Hall's discussion of Grace and Melanchthon's reliance on St. Basil:

> The Basilian quotation cited more than any other by Melanchthon concerning grace is: only desire it and God has preceded. (207)

Throughout, then, what Hall shows is that Melanchthon desired not so much to be an innovator as a preserver of ancient tradition. His use of the Fathers in general and the Cappadocians, for whom he seems to have had a special regard, makes this, I think, quite clear.

The book ends with an appendix titled "The Reception of Cappadocian Texts in the Sixteenth Century" and the usual indices.

What I can say about this book is that it fills an important gap in our knowledge about Melanchthon's use of sources. It is, so far as I know, the first real in-depth treatment of this important topic. More of this kind of work is desirable for a number of reasons. First, it helps us understand the Reformer's methodology in actual practice and not merely as theoretical abstractions. Second, it sheds light on the interaction between Reformers and interlocutors beyond their use of the biblical text. That is, normally when we discuss the Reformers we discuss their use of the Bible. This study, on the other hand, allows readers to get important insights into the ways that Reformers understood texts beyond the Bible.

It seems to this reviewer, then, that this volume is an important first step in a new direction of historical research: the use to which Reformers put extra-biblical texts, in monograph-length treatments.

H. Ashley Hall is to be commended for this volume. I recommend that persons interested in Melanchthon's works obtain a copy and work carefully through it. It is both engrossing and gratifying. Furthermore, persons interested in reception history too will benefit from the volume, as its method is quite sensible and intelligent.

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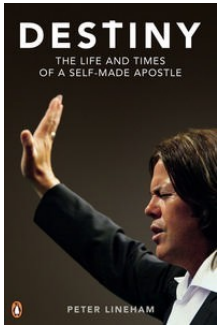
Destiny: The Life and Times of a Self-Made Apostle, by Peter Lineham



Auckland: Penguin Books, 2013 | 304 pages | ISBN: 978-0-14356-891-9 (hardcover) $38.00

The phenomenon of Brian Tamaki's Destiny Church came to my attention, as it did many others' in New Zealand, during Destiny's now infamous "Enough is Enough" march down Lambton Quay in Wellington in 2004. As will be well known to many readers, the march was largely a response to the Labour government's Civil Unions legislation, which, among other things, gave same-sex couples the opportunity to have the same legal rights as married couples bestowed upon them by the State. The public response to the march and the marchers, understandably, was overwhelmingly negative, with comparisons made between the Destiny marchers and a wide range of bogeymen, including Nazis, the Taliban, and "brainwashed automatons" with a "cult mindset" (17). So it was with great pleasure that I was given the opportunity to review Peter Lineham's recent book *Destiny: The Life and Times of a Self-Made Apostle*, in order gain a more nuanced understanding of the movement, and broader social, political, and historical contexts from which Destiny comes, and within which it works.

Lineham, a Professor of History at Massey University in Albany who has been following Destiny since 2003, has produced a very readable account of Destiny's history and development, from its earliest days, up until the development of its "City of God" in the South Auckland suburb of Manukau in 2012. *Destiny* is comprised of eighteen brief chapters, each dealing with an aspect of Destiny including Brian and his wife Hannah's early lives (chapter 2); their early days in ministry as part of the Apostolic Church movement in New Zealand from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s (chapter 3); and later the Tamakis' split from the Apostolic Church, where they preached in Rotorua, before moving to Auckland, and finally developing Destiny as its own entity and movement in Auckland and throughout the country (chapter 4).

Once the story of Destiny reaches Auckland, considerable attention is also paid to the moralizing efforts of Destiny, which will no doubt be of interest to many readers, perhaps most notably Destiny's opposition to the Civil Unions legislation, which thrust the movement and Tamaki into mainstream public life. However, Lineham also works to unpack many other as-

pects of Destiny's moral conservatism, and its views on family morality, gender relations, masculinity (Tamaki once claimed he was "sick of men in our nation being wimps, pimps, gimps" (133)), homosexuality, as well as views on prostitution that were exacerbated by another piece of Labour legislation, the Prostitution Reform Bill (chapter 8), all of which are couched within a moral/theological discourse that Destiny uses to represent itself as the bearer of "traditional" New Zealand values. While each of Destiny's stances on such issues is given consideration and description by Lineham, he also finds ways to critique Destiny intelligently, not on its moral positions on these issues per se, but rather on its lack of a strong position on other, related issues. Lineham rightly points out the selective and at times contradictory positions Destiny takes on certain issues, while often remaining silent on broader social problems such as poverty and the lack of equality that poorer citizens and minorities have in New Zealand—larger social issues that arguably contribute to maintaining the other "moral ills" which Destiny spends much of its time criticizing.

One of the underlying strengths of *Destiny* is the fact that, although Lineham admits that he is no fan of Destiny, he does not have an axe to grind. Rather, Lineham works hard to provide readers with something of an insider's perspective and an understanding of Destiny's origins, its social and cultural influences, and why it remains attractive to its members, while also avoiding reproducing its critics' often superficial assessments of it. Lineham's examination of the liberal critiques of Destiny and Tamaki are also insightful and thought provoking, particularly as he shows the way that media hostility often helped constitute Destiny as a movement with more social and political clout than it in fact projected. Moreover, by pointing out the often superficial criticisms that media personalities directed toward Tamaki, particularly as they relate to his conspicuous consumption (such as Paul Holmes's interrogation of Tamaki over the cost of his designer jacket), in addition to the criticisms of Tamaki's self-appointed status as a Bishop, *Destiny* also inadvertently gives readers a glimpse of the often contradictory place of religion in New Zealand society. For, while New Zealanders often pride themselves on their tolerance and secularity, the attention to Tamaki's wealth, consumption, or self appointed (and thus "inauthentic") status as a Bishop suggests that there still remains a normative idea about what "real" religion is and how religious people ought to conduct themselves in New Zealand.

This is particularly evident in chapter 17 "The Cult." What makes this chapter particularly strong, is Lineham's critique of the category "cult" as

something that has no stable essence, but is rather deployed by groups to critique their opponents as dangerous, "inauthentic" or (often) both. Thus, Lineham shows that the accusations of Destiny being a cult are based more on the fears of those making the accusations, rather than anything specific Destiny itself has done. However, Lineham also seems to inadvertently undercut his own analysis when he notes at one point that Tamaki admitted to followers that he had made many mistakes and been "put in his place for them." Lineham's own concluding remark thus reintroduces the category of the cult as an observable entity when he notes that "Such an admission is hardly characteristic behaviour of a cult leader" (249).

One of the difficulties of writing a broad history of a movement such as the Destiny Church is the shear breadth of contextualization required to produce a picture of such a movement in its contemporary environment. Thus, Lineham was tasked with not only writing about the putative "origins" of Destiny but he also had to consider its relationship to American and Australian expressions of Pentecostalism, where it sought to emulate, and where it diverged and why; Tamaki's relationship with and inspiration from Black churches and their pastors in the United States; the political environment that helped produce some of Destiny's core positions; its relationship with Māori and Pasifika communities that make up the bulk of its members, and thus the negotiation of its identity and whether or not it was a "Māori Church"; the reception of things such as the "Prosperity Gospel" in New Zealand; the formation of the Destiny political party; and, not to mention, the reception of Destiny itself within mainstream New Zealand. Thus, at times, I felt as though the book was trying to do too much, and the inclusion of so many aspects and angles on Destiny came at the cost of stronger analysis of some of the topics covered. In short, I kept wanting more, and not in the sense that I was on edge with anticipation. Rather, on many occasions when I came to the end of a section or a chapter, I kept hearing the words often directed at me by another New Zealand academic, Paul Morris, when I was a student of his: *so what*?

Yet it would be remiss to critique Lineham for not having written this book in the way that I perhaps might have. *Destiny* is very much a book written for a generalist audience, which is understandable considering the market for theoretically dense texts on New Zealand religious movements is undoubtedly quite small. In that respect, *Destiny* succeeds in its goal of providing a more comprehensive account of a movement that although disproportionately present in New Zealand's media, remains little understood.

This book provides a strong foundation for understanding Destiny in all its complexities. More importantly, it also has the potential to act as a foundational text from which others can go on to do more in depth, analytical studies of certain aspects of the Destiny phenomenon, and perhaps answer some of those so what questions in the future.

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The Taming of the Canaanite Woman: Constructions of Christian Identity in the Afterlife of Matthew 15:21–28, by Nancy Klancher

Studies of the Bible and Its Reception 1 | Berlin and Boston: de Gruyter, 2013 | ix + 315 pages | ISBN: 978-3-11-032106-7 (hardcover) €99.95

This is an interesting title. Does it imply that this is a woman who needs taming? Or does it rather imply that the construction of Christian identity requires, or results in, her taming? The book is a revised version of Nancy Klancher's PhD thesis, accepted by the University of Pittsburgh in 2012, and, for the most part, written in careful thesis style. It is an exploration of the Canaanite's afterlife that takes the reader into the world of Christian theologizing in all its liveliness, as again and again she becomes a tool in the debates, many of which blaze with acrimony. While the opening sentence, "Biblical interpretation is an essential tool in the inculcation of Christian identity and conduct" (1), sounds academically dispassionate, there is passion and ideological concern aplenty in the use of the Canaanite of Matt 15:21–28, so that the interest for the reader becomes much wider than this one text and its female character. As Klancher admits, it is "the contentious collision of exegetical arguments and social realities" that is the subject of her study. Her aim is to explore "the how" of the process by which exegetes use the text to construct what they varyingly view as "normative Christian identities," with particular focus on "textual devices that interlock paranesis, the internalization of ideals, and the embodiment or enactment of norms" (1–2). The range of material accessed is impressive in its breadth. Not only are major and familiar figures such as Origen, Jerome, Ambrose, Augus-

tine, John Chrysostom, Luther, and Calvin represented but many that were entirely new to me, such as fourth-century Ephrem of Nisibis, fifth-century Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage, and Ishodad of Merv, and Dhuoda of Septimania, both ninth-century. Altogether there are about fifty readings analysed, extending from the second to the twenty-first century, although the majority are pre-Reformation. The eight art works, showing the "many faces of the Canaanite Woman" make a fitting closure to the book.

The Introduction, appropriately for a thesis, includes a section on the history of interpretation and reception studies, with some trenchant criticism of eariier reception histories. It concludes with Klancher's own view of reception theory, largely influenced by Hans Robert Jauss, emphasizing the "historical effects of the text-reader event" (29). The quote from Anthony Thiselton, describing Jauss's approach, equally describes Klancher's theoretical position: "changing situations make their impact on successive readings and rereadings of texts. … The history of effects is two-sided or bi-directional. … Texts have a formative influence upon readers and society but changing situations also have effects on how texts are read" (29–30). At the same time, she notes the contribution of feminist theory with its "bedrock concept of socially constructed subjectivity" (32).

The chapters are ordered according to uses of the text rather than following a chronology. A significant divide is the anathema/exemplum contrast—readings of the woman as "other" as against those seeing her as a model of faith, the first of which encourages division, and the second "active spiritual development" (39). While chapter 2 is a study of early interpretations from the third to fifth centuries, with the Canaanite teetering, as a player, between "historically-grounded and spiritually-based paranesis" (58), chapter 3 focuses upon "anathema" readings from the ninth-century to the present day. Chapter 4 then turns to early "exemplum" readings, while chapter 5 studies "Protestant Readers from the Reformation to the Early 20th Century." Chapter 6 then features some "Avatars of the Canaanite Woman." Current scholarship is left to five pages of the brief Epilogue, with concluding comments on the implications of the study regarding reception history in its final four pages. At times the chronological leaps were a little disconcerting, as in the direct move from sixth-century Epiphanius Scholasticus to John Hutton's 1919 lecture at Glasgow University (104–5), even if both are part of the chilling tradition of silencing "the Jews." At the same time, the careful historical settings served to strengthen the thesis, as well as providing fresh insights. Realizing the theological politics involved in Cranmer's setting the

well-known prayer of "Humble Access" within the Eucharistic Prayer, for example, makes a difference: I now understand that this is not so much the grovelling of the penitent as a re-enactment of the Canaanite's "confidence and chutzpah" in a "protestant play of direct appeal to Jesus" in contrast to priestly mediation (266).

As the book's subtitle indicates, the concern is with the role of exegesis in forming Christian identity, so the texts explored are, for the most part, those of Christian writers, mostly early Church Fathers and later clergy, whose exegesis tends to slip or advance quite deliberately into paranesis, with the typical "we too" move. So Origen writes, "and we must surely believe that each of us, when he sins, finds himself in the territory of Tyre and Sidon" (56; Klancher's translation). Allegorically, for Origen, the Canaanite also becomes the soul transcending its irrational nature as it progresses towards God. What varies, of course, is the goal of the paranesis: sometimes essentially spiritual, sometimes as overtly political as the Rev Carlisle's use of the text in 1906 in support of a bill for the provision of meals for day-school children. A significant trajectory concerns the "lost sheep of Israel," with its many candidates: Jews, Gnostics, and whichever group within the Church was deemed "sinful" or worse. The chapter "Not the Gift but the Giver: Protestant Readers from the Reformation to the Early 20th Century" introduces Luther and Calvin who typically turn the exegetical lens to focus on the grace of God, which falls upon the Canaanite, seen as sinful, needy yet faithful. The digression on the sharp antagonism between Calvin and Servetus provides a clear example of theology driving interpretation. For Servetus, the Canaanite meets Jesus and comes to faith spontaneously, but for Calvin that cannot be. She must have been schooled in doctrine through divine revelation: the agency must be God's, not the woman's. A view held as bedrock by the following five Protestant clergymen, from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century, illustrating how Protestant doctrine shaped biblical interpretation. The final chapter takes the paranetic aspect one stage further with a selection of texts that adopt the Canaanite's voice and persona. Klancher's thesis, following Jauss, is that these embody what the exegetical paranesis has attempted to instil. It is not so much the underlying theory, but rather the poignancy of the first reading here that stays with me. A ninth-century Carolingian mother, Dhuoda of Septimania, kept in social isolation by her estranged husband, her children removed from her, writes a manual of instruction for her son(s). Is she "Claiming the Canaanite Woman's Wisdom and Authority," as Klancher suggests in the sub-heading? Certainly she writes in the first person. In the

tradition of allegory, she, herself, wishes to be under the table, i.e., within the holy church, and so able, along with the priests who are also there, to gather the crumbs of spiritual intelligence for herself and her son William. The use of Matt 15 is, however, only one in a virtual tapestry of texts that Dhuoda employs. Whether she "internalizes" or simply uses the Canaanite as one rhetorical tool among her many "elegant literary devices" is, I think, a question to be asked. But she is certainly a mother who, powerless herself, is seeking a way of helping her child(ren), and taking the only initiative available.

Klancher has a keen eye for the ways in which gender is used, misused or glossed over in the text's ongoing interpretive tradition, noting how in the early period the "typological, allegorical or corporate representations" of biblical characters, whether male or female, were treated as "examples of a generically male humanity" (113), and how the Canaanite herself frequently became "little more than a trope for aspects of the (male) Christian soul" (136). It then comes as a surprise when, from her prodigious archival foraging, she produces a mystery play by a sixteenth-century Portuguese poet and playwright, Gil Vicente, written for a female convent audience, in which the Canaanite is heard delivering a plea specifically on the grounds that she is a woman, reminding Jesus that he was born of a woman. Gender matters here, as it does in the next section, which discusses several works in the *querelle de femmes* tradition, including the contribution by Suor Arcangela Tarabotti, a hard-hitting seventeenth-century Venetian nun, in whose rebuttal of an earlier *Mulieres homines non esse* pamphlet the Canaanite becomes not only "a symbol of virtue in all women" but "one of an army of strong and virtuous women" (132–33). The Vicente and Tarabotti readings not only indicate the wide range of material accessed but their liveliness adds a certain frisson to this careful academic work. *The Female Other* section then moves on to the Lectures by the 19th-century Nonconformist preacher William Jay who does indeed "tame" the Canaanite, and certainly Tarabotti's Canaanite, by aligning her with the Methodist ideal of "pious domesticity" (141). In another leap, both of time and genre, brief considerations of five contemporary online discussions then follow. Was this because the web is seen as addressing a wider audience, tying in more with the paranetic ethos? The progression of the gender-focused trajectory has been dramatic, but I was left wondering how representative were the more recent examples.

I think there is, more generally, a question to be asked of some of the choices of material. Why the preponderance of Protestants among the later

writers? Why are the online contributors all male? And I miss more consideration of the work of contemporary feminist writers, such as Sharon Ringe and Elaine Wainwright and many others who have written on the Canaanite. There is admittedly a word limit for theses, but in a revision?

A curious formal feature of this work is that the chapters are not numbered, although Klancher herself consistently refers to them by number. I found this confusing, with the further complication that the section "Sermons and Homilies" appears separately in the Contents Page, and has its own pages' Header (82–100), yet, according to Klancher's notes on the Organization of Readings (39–40), it belongs within chapter 2, and indeed ends with chapter 2's Conclusion (100–101).

The number of reception history studies continues to multlply. What Klancher adds to the field is not simply yet another study, but one focused on a significant aspect, "the construction of Christian Identity," an exploration that she undergirds with a clearly articulated reception theory. She has indeed illustrated the way in which reception history is able to describe and reveal "the malleable utility of biblical exegesis though complex and diverse genealogies of the cultural norms—in this case, normative Christian identities" (286). On the way, I was delighted to meet ancient authors, many of whom I had never met before. If, at times, I wished for a less formal style, there were places where the wording was delightfully evocative, as in her description of Calvin's more intellectual approach being "as though he has pinned the Canaanite woman, like a moth, to the wall for study" (219). There was a sense of watching Christian forebear after Christian forebear, each with pen in hand, gazing in pastoral or theological concern at the textual Canaanite before setting her to work upon the reader. But was she tamed? Perhaps the diversity of uses illustrates how she forever eludes taming!

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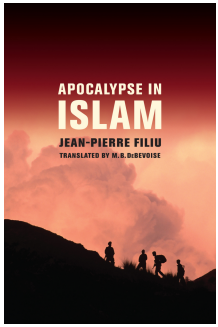
Apocalypse in Islam, by Jean-Pierre Filiu



Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011 | 288 pages | ISBN: 978-0-5202-6431-1 (hardcover) $47.95

Jean-Pierre Filiu's *Apocalypse in Islam* is an innovative and meticulous work, able to meet the expectations of scholars of Islamic eschatology. This book is a translation of *L'Apocalypse en Islam* published in 2008 and would indeed be more comprehensible if read along with additional supplementary works by Bernard Lewis, Michael Cook, and David Cook. The manifestation of several avatars, who have claimed to be, and introduced themselves as *enders of time* or *masters of time* (*sahib al-zaman*), exhibits the significance of apocalypse for human beings. Islamic texts have frequently employed different terms for the end of time, or *akhir al-zaman*, such as *yawm al-qiyamah*, *yam al-hashr*, *yawm al-hisab*, *yawm al-din*, etc., which imply the existence of a [divine] court and justice at the end. Apart from Islamic texts, many Muslims and non-Muslims have disclosed events and features of the final days of this world (*dunya*). In the theological-eschatological context, this type of prediction is called "apocalypse." As Filiu explains, the emergence of the notion of apocalypse in Islam dates back to the pre-prophecy period of Muhammad, when Bahira—a Christian hermit—foresaw that Muhammad would become a Prophet. Hence, the first part of the book ("True and False Messiahs of Islam"), opens with special reference to archeology and a background of the end of the world in Islam. The author aptly links cosmological-Qur'anic notes with certain specific events and calamities to indicate Islamic predictions regarding the final days of this world. Among examples of the Qur'anic apocalypse prophecy are splitting of the moon (*inshaqq al-qamar*) in Q 51:1-3, the sky's transformation into smoke (*dukhan*) in Q 44:10, and the mountains' dissolution in Q 70:9 in the last moments of life on earth. Nevertheless, these predictions cannot provide specific calendar dates concerning the final days of the world. Likewise, Filiu stated that "Rich though it is in descriptions of the Final Judgment and of hell and heaven, the Qur'an provides few clues regarding the apocalyptic calendar" (6). Filiu expanded his idea that Islamic traditions (i.e., Muhammad and his companions' statements, so-called *hadiths*) explore Islamic apocalypse more profoundly. Thus, for Filiu, "The

great schism" is the starting point which signifies that the death of Muhammad was the main basis behind schismatism among the prophetic *ummah*.

The death of Muhammad, struck down by a sudden illness in 632, plunged the young Muslim community into disarray. He left no political testament, no instructions to his followers regarding the collective management of the faith after his death (6). Similarly, several scholars have previously stated that the

> death of the Prophet precipitated a severe religious and political struggle within the Islamic community, which developed into bitter internecine conflict, eventually splitting the umma into two antagonistic sects: "the people of the Sunna" and the Shi'a.

It would however, have been more useful if the author had more strongly stated that many Shi'a believers remain confident that Muhammad left an important political testament and elected 'Ali as his successor in *Ghadir Khum* on 18 *Dhu'l—Hijjah* (March 10, 632).

When Muhammad was returning from his Farewell Pilgrimage he stopped at Ghadir Khum … to make an announcement to the pilgrims who accompanied him from Mecca and who were to disperse from this junction. By the orders of the Prophet, a special dais or pulpit made of branches of the trees was erected for him. After the noon prayer the Prophet sat on the pulpit and made his last public address to the largest gathering before his death three months later. Taking 'Ali by the hand, Muhammad asked his followers whether he was superior in authority and person (*awla*) to the believers themselves. The crowd cried out in one voice: "It is so, O Apostle of God." He then declared: "He of whom I am the *mawla* [the patron, master, leader, friend], of him 'Ali is also the *mawla* (*man kuntu mawlahu fa 'Ali-un mawlahu*). O God, be the friend of him who is his friend, and be the enemy of him who is his enemy (*Allahumma wali man walahu wa 'adi man adahu*)."

Moreover, the preceding detail regarding 'Ali ibn Abi Talib's status (as a *mawla*) following the Prophet's death could be linked by Filiu to the functions of the Umayyad heads (particularly after the 'Uthman's assassination), who were honored by two prophetic statements about the final moments of this world (Hour: *sa'ah*): "at the end of My community there will be a caliph who will spend money without counting" (9), and "The Hour will not come until a man from Qahtan appears and drives the people with his stick" (9).

Through a historical analysis, Filiu considers two core *hadith* collections in Sunnism compiled by two Persian traditionalists (*muhaddithun*), Muham-

mad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari (809–70) and Abu al-Husayn Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Nisaburi (c. 816–75). Astoundingly, *Sahih al-Bukhari* highlights a number of prophetic predictions which reveal that after Muhammad there would be conflicts, deviations and battles among the people of his *ummah*: "When I am no longer here, do not go back to idolatry, and do not kill each other," and "I see dissension falling among your dwellings as does the rain." Gradually the details of *akhir al-zaman* are associated to the emergence of a dissension (*fitnah*) and disappearance of knowledge and wisdom. Hereby, Islamic traditions examine further aspects of the final days. *Dajjal*, or Antichrist (plural: *dajjalun*: false Messiahs and charlatans), will come someday, and he will have a divine claim that he is *al-Masih* (Messiah). According to al-Bukhari and al-Muslim, the physical profile of *dajjal*, his followers, his location, and so on, are fully outlined. Subsequently, Filiu discusses the Shi'a doctrine of the Final Day and explains that it is based on Shaykh al-Mufid's *al-Irshad* and Shaykh at-Tusi's *Tahdhib al-Ahkam*.

Chapter 2 entitled "Grand Masters of the Medieval Apocalypse" evaluates the different views of five great Muslim scholars. Ibn 'Arabi (1165–1240), the author of *al-futuhat al-makkiyah*, is the first person who "accepts the classical traditions concerning the appearance of the Mahdi in the sacred enclosure of Mecca, which, he adds, the people of Kufa will celebrate with a very special joy. Mahdi will be followed by seventy thousand Muslims, all descended from Isaac" (32). Al-Qurtubi (d. 1273/671) is the second scholar mentioned, who assembled *al-tadhkirah fi ahwal al-mawta wa umur al-akhirah* in which he cited *al-Bukhari* and *al-Muslim*. His main contention about the *enders* of this world is that al-Mahdi will appear in Morocco and pass the first ten years of his return preaching there. (37) Isma'il Ibn Kathir (1301–73) claimed that Jesus will come down to the white minaret on the east side of Damascus and will kill the Antichrist. Jesus, for Ibn Kathir, would be a righteous leader. Later on, Filiu presents a rational image of Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) and his view towards the Islamic apocalypse. Ibn Khaldun referred to the *Sahihayn* of Bukhari and Muslims:

> The Muslims will follow him and he will subject all the lands of Islam to his authority. He will be called the Mahdi. After him will appear the Antichrist, as well as all the signs of the Hour, as these are laid down in the al-Sahih [of Bukhari and of Muslim]. Next, Jesus will come down to earth and kill the Antichrist. Or Jesus will come down with the Mahdi, help him to kill the Antichrist and take [the Mahdi] as Imam in his prayers (42).

The final figure is Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (1446–1505), who supported Ibn Hanbal's traditions by stating that "the Antichrist will stay on earth as long as Allah wishes it. Then Jesus, son of Mary, will come from the west, attesting the veracity of Muhammad and of his religion, and he will slay the Antichrist" (46). Hereby, Filiu displays various apocalyptical notes of Medieval Muslim thinkers who were directly or indirectly influenced by Sunni-Islamic *hadith*.

"Avatars of the Mahdi" comprises the third chapter of this book. It discusses individuals who introduced themselves as al-Mahdi. I truly enjoyed the way Filiu began by focusing on another crucial schism, i.e., the emergence of Isma'ilism. Although I expected Filiu to discuss other Shi'ite sects (e.g., Zaydiyah) more profoundly along with their views towards *the ender* and *owner of times*, he presented the diversity of the *Mahdism* doctrine in Shi'a thought quite nicely.

Likewise, he imparted how Muhammad, the son of Isma'il, who was the son of the sixth Imam of Shi'a, was ascribed to the Mahdi. Other examples of the Mahdi's Avatars in Shi'ism later on are Shaykh Fazlallah al-Astar Abadi (1339–94), notable for his virtues and the attempts of Antichrist at killing him, Nurbaksh, a Mahdi of Tajikistan, and Muhammad ibn Falah's (1400–65/66), contending as friends of Mahdi in Iraq.

Part 2, with special reference to the modern apocalypse, begins with a contemporary, Islamic-political event that occurred in the dawn of the fifteenth century of Islam. This important event was the Islamic revolution of Iran led by Ayatullah Khomayni in 1979 CE. Filiu undoubtedly included this chapter in his book since the Islamic revolution in Iran was accompanied by *wilayah al-faqih*, or the authority of jurisprudence, who (i.e., a jurist) can be referred to as God's representative on earth. Therefore, there is a direct connection with the Mahdi and his occultation.

It is certain that the September 11, 2001 disaster conducted by Islamic extremist parties as well as the United States' invasion of Muslim countries based on the motto "global war against terror" facilitated the conception of novel apocalyptic literature. The new apocalyptic literature, by harnessing the rhetoric and images of both Muslim and Christian traditions, is able to distort and redirect sacred prophecy for its own purposes, and, with the invasion of Iraq, to reach a new and larger audience while at the same time strengthening the plausibility of its forecasts (120).

"The Grand Return of the Shi'i Mahdi," "Diasporas of the Apocalypse" and the "Armageddon of Jihad" are the remaining chapters, which connect religious-political elements to religious-futuristic desires of Muslims communities.

In the end, Filiu provides readers with a valuable bibliography of apocalyptic works written by Muslim scholars. It would have been preferable if he had included supplementary apocalyptic works by Malay and Persian scholars.

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