

A MOST RELIABLE WITNESS

Program in Judaic Studies
Brown University
Box 1826
Providence, RI 02912

BROWN JUDAIC STUDIES

Edited by

Mary Gluck
David C. Jacobson
Maud Mandel
Saul M. Olyan
Rachel Rojanski
Michael L. Satlow
Adam Teller
Nelson Vieira

Number 358

A MOST RELIABLE WITNESS

Essays in Honor of Ross Shepard Kraemer

edited by

Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Nathaniel DesRosiers,
Shira L. Lander, Jacqueline Z. Pastis, and Daniel Ullucci

A MOST RELIABLE WITNESS

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF
ROSS SHEPARD KRAEMER

Edited by
Susan Ashbrook Harvey
Nathaniel P. DesRosiers
Shira L. Lander
Jacqueline Z. Pastis
Daniel Ullucci

Brown Judaic Studies
Providence, Rhode Island

© 2015 Brown University. All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by means of any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted by the 1976 Copyright Act or in writing from the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to the Rights and Permissions Office, Program in Judaic Studies, Brown University, Box 1826, Providence, RI 02912, USA.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A most reliable witness : essays in honor of Ross Shepard Kraemer /
edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Nathaniel DesRosiers, Shira L. Lander,
Jacqueline Z. Pastis, and Daniel Ullucci.

pages cm. — (Brown Judaic studies ; v. 358)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-930675-94-0 (hardcover : alk. paper) — ISBN

978-1-930675-96-4 (electronic book)

1. Judaism—History—Talmudic period, 10-425. 2. Church
history--Primitive and early church, ca. 30-600. 3. Rome—Religion.
4. Women in Judaism. 5. Women in Christianity. 6. Kraemer, Ross Shepard,
1948- honoree. I. Harvey, Susan Ashbrook, editor.

BM177.M67 2015

200.93—dc23

2015021985

Printed on acid-free paper.

*With deep gratitude for the continued wisdom
and instruction you have generously shared with us,
your students and colleagues, and for the enormous
contributions you have made to the field
of religious studies*



Ross Shepard Kraemer

Contents

Abbreviations	xi
Contributors.....	xv
Preface	
<i>Susan Ashbrook Harvey</i>	xvii

I: Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World

Jesus' Baptism by John in the Context of First-Century Judaism <i>Theodore A. Bergren</i>	3
Converts, Resisters, and Evangelists: Jews in the <i>Acts of Philip</i> VV II <i>Debra J. Bucher</i>	9
Thecla and the Governor: Who Clothes Whom? <i>Robert Doran</i>	17
If It Looks like a Duck, and It Quacks like a Duck . . . : On Not Giving Up the Godfearers <i>Paula Fredriksen</i>	25
Who Did What to Whom? Physical Violence between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity <i>John G. Gager</i>	3
How Do the Dead Sea Scrolls Help Us to Think about Gender in Ancient Judaism? <i>Maxine L. Grossman</i>	49
The Sound of Angels' Wings in Paradise: Religious Identity and the Aural Imagination in the <i>Testament of Adam</i> <i>Kim Haines-Eitzen</i>	9
The Night Rabbi Aqiba Slept with Two Women <i>Jordan D. Rosenblum</i>	67
The Social Formations of Paul and His Romans: Synagogues, Churches, and Ockham's Razor <i>Stanley K. Stowers</i>	77

Fashioning Witnesses: Hebrews' and Jews' in Early Christian Art <i>Arthur P. Urbano</i>	89
--	----

Entrusted with the Oracles of God? The Fate of the Judean Writings in Flavian Rome <i>Heidi Wendt</i>	101
--	-----

Cultural Creativity in Egyptian Judaism <i>Benjamin G. Wright</i>	111
--	-----

II: Women in Judaism and Christianity

Mothers, Martyrs, and Manly Courage: The Female Martyr in 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, and <i>The Acts of Paul and Thecla</i> <i>Lynn H. Cohick</i>	123
---	-----

Susanna's Choice <i>Mary R. D'Angelo</i>	13
---	----

What Is Her Word Worth?: Oath Taking and Women in the Mediterranean World <i>Nathaniel P. DesRosiers</i>	145
---	-----

Optatus's Account of Lucilla in <i>Against the Donatists</i> , or, Women Are Good to Undermine With <i>Jennifer Eyl</i>	15
--	----

Gender and Apocalypticism in Suzanne Collins's <i>The Hunger Games Trilogy</i> <i>Jordan Kraemer and Shira L. Lander</i>	165
---	-----

"To the Most Honorable Lady, Theophile" (Luke 1.3; Acts 1.1) <i>Robert A. Kraft</i>	175
--	-----

"This Poor Widow . . ." (Mark 12:43): From Donation to Diatribe <i>Amy-Jill Levine</i>	183
---	-----

Bayit versus Beit Midrash: Jewish Mother as Teacher <i>Susan Marks</i>	195
---	-----

In Her Own Words: Religious Autobiography and Agency in Lucia Brocadelli, a Woman Writer of Early Modern Italy <i>E. Ann Matter</i>	205
--	-----

Witnesses from Medieval Mediterranean Society: The Reliability of Jewish Women's Narratives from the Cairo Genizah <i>Renée Levine Melammed</i>	213
--	-----

Miriam's Well: Rabbinic Variations on a Folk Motif, Gender Views, and Contemporary Reception <i>Susan Niditch</i>	223
The Shape-Shifting Bride: Reflecting on Race and Ethnicity in Origen's Exegesis of the Song of Songs <i>Elaine Pagels</i>	23
E.T. Phone Home: Exile and Gender in Postexilic Storytelling <i>Adele Reinhartz</i>	243
Her Share of the Cursings: Grid and Group, Gender and Demons <i>Sarah L. Schwarz</i>	25
Working Women? Professions of Jewish Women in the Late Ancient Levant <i>Karen B. Stern</i>	263
Ungendering Andrea <i>Daniel Ullucci</i>	275
Index of Ancient Sources	285
Index of Subjects	295

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
ANF	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325</i> (ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing, 1887–1896; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).
AugStud	<i>Augustinian Studies</i>
AYB	Anchor Yale Bible
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCS	Classical Culture and Society
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CII	<i>Corpus inscriptionum iudaicarum</i> (ed. Jean-Baptiste Frey; 2 vols.; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1936–1952).
CIL	<i>Corpus inscriptionum latinarum</i> (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1862–).
CIQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CPh	<i>Classical Philology</i>
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EJL	Early Judaism and Its Literature
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>

JAC	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
JAJ	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
JAJSup	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements</i>
JANER	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Hellenistic, Roman, and Persian Period</i>
JSNTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	<i>Loeb Classical Library</i>
LSTS	<i>Library of Second Temple Studies</i>
MAAR	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
MTSR	<i>Method and Theory in the Study of Religion</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	<i>Supplements to Novum Testamentum</i>
NPNF	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBO	<i>Orbis biblicus et orientalis</i>
OTP	<i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> (ed. James H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985).
PG	<i>Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Graeca</i> (ed. J.-P. Migne; 162 vols.; Paris, 1857–1886).
PGM	<i>Papyri Graecae Magicae</i>
PL	<i>Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Latina</i> (ed. J.-P. Migne; 217 vols.; Paris, 1944–1964).
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
PTSDSSP	<i>Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project</i>
REJ	<i>Revue des Etudes Juives</i>
RevExp	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
SBLDS	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</i>
SBLMS	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series</i>
SBLSymS	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series</i>
SBLTT	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations</i>

SC	Sources chrétiennes
SEG	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum graecum</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SR	<i>Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TBT	<i>The Bible Today</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texts und Untersuchungen
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Contributors

Theodore A. Bergren
Debra Bucher
Lynn Cohick
Mary Rose D'Angelo
Nathaniel P. DesRosiers
Robert Doran
Jennifer Eyl
Paula Fredriksen
John G. Gager
Maxine Grossman
Kim Haines-Eitzen
Susan Ashbrook Harvey
Jordan Kraemer
Robert A. Kraft
Shira L. Lander
Amy Jill Levine
Susan Marks
E. Ann Matter
Renee Levine Melammed
Susan Niditch
Elaine Pagels
Adele Reinhartz
Jordan Rosenblum
Sarah Schwarz
Karen B. Stern
Stanley K. Stowers
Daniel Ullucci
Arthur Urbano
Heidi Wendt
Benjamin G. Wright

Preface

SUSAN ASHBROOK HARVEY

When Ross Kraemer retired in spring 2014, this volume of essays was already under way without her knowledge, conceived and produced by students, colleagues, and friends from the total span of her career, and bearing witness (reliably!) to the breadth of her own scholarly interests. At the joint annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in San Diego in November 2014, these same scholars hosted a session in honor of Ross's recent book, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Ross herself was respondent for the panel, composed of colleagues and former students, happily presenting to a packed conference room of her larger community. Amid rigorous scholarship, warm accolades, and thunderous applause, the project was unveiled: the panel papers were a foretaste of the feast to come, the heralds of the panoply brought together in this collection, dedicated to Ross Shepard Kraemer, teacher, colleague, mentor, friend.

With Ross Kraemer, one deals with a particular style. This is true whether encountering her scholarship or studying as her student, or working as her colleague—or, indeed, visiting her home. That style is one of unequivocal engagement and dialogue. Life with Ross is a matter of dynamic, vivid, energetic, and open conversation.

Conversation with Ross is laced with drama and humor, and with meticulous, elegant attention to detail. But here is the point: it is, in the end, a genuine conversation. There is always something to be said, something to be considered, something to reply to, something to ponder, and above all, much to be learned—by everyone, including and especially Ross herself. Conversation is how Ross works, and certainly how she does everything she does. This is not because words are easy for her. Rather, it is because learning, knowledge, scholarship, even life itself, for Ross, is always a matter of dialogue and exchange.

Ross Kraemer has been a trailblazer in the areas of women and religion, Jews and Judaism, and earliest Christianity in the ancient Mediterranean world for forty years now. Her publications since the late 1970s

have consistently defined and redefined the contours of how these areas are approached. This has been especially true for the study of women and religion as a topic more broadly, and within the study of religion in antiquity. She has contributed at every level of scholarly engagement. She has assessed and analyzed a huge number of primary sources, across a vast range of genres: documentary evidence (inscriptions and papyri), material evidence (archaeological data and visual culture), and literary texts (hymns, poetry, narratives, letters, treatises). She has handled materials in Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Coptic, and Syriac. She has treated materials from Greek, Roman, and Egyptian religions, from ancient Judaism, and from early Christianity.

At the same time, Ross has argued repeatedly for consideration of varied methodologies and the use of critical theory. Thus, she has offered her historical studies as interpretations of evidence treated with sophisticated, extensive, and rigorous command of the technical scholarship; at the same time, she has integrated source, form, and literary criticism with anthropological and cultural theory. As her work has developed over the years, she has experimented with different theoretical strategies. Her open-mindedness, her capacity to engage evidence analytically from a variety of theoretical frameworks, and her willingness to take the risk of doing so without enslaving herself to dogmatism have been hallmarks of her scholarship.

Take the example of her first anthology of texts, *Meanads, Martyrs, Matrons and Monastics* (1988), later revised, expanded, and reissued as *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* (2004). With this book, one could no longer treat Christianity in a vacuum, as if the Greco-Roman world provided a "background" or a "secular" context, whatever that would mean. Nor could one dismiss other religions as contexts from which Christianity "liberated" women. Instead, the complex, vibrant, and interactive daily life in which ancient women conducted their lives and practiced their religions—which shaped and informed their expectations, views, roles, practices, and possibilities—was set clearly before us. Students with little background were enabled to learn serious methodological strategies in the handling of ancient evidence, and scholars had to adapt their research to answer the challenge. I can think of no other primary source collection that has had such dramatic impact on a field.

One might argue the same for each of her books, in turn, although they are of different genres: some are studies, some are scholarly collections or reference tools. But if one takes up the example of her monographs—*Her Share of the Blessings* (1992), *When Aseneth Met Joseph* (1998), or, most recently, *Unreliable Witnesses* (2011)—one sees the same dynamic impetus. These books present and reassess textual evidence, variations, and transmission in terms that critique earlier critical editions by modern scholars. They provide meticulous analyses of a diversity of primary

sources and their techniques of composition and presentation. They sift judiciously, rigorously, and generously through mountains of secondary scholarship (again, in dialogic form and mode). They try out a variety of methodological and theoretical models. In the process, Ross invariably provides trenchant critique of her own earlier work. She lays out the evidence and the analytical and interpretive models in terms that challenge her readers—whether students or colleagues—to engage in the same reassessments and critiques. We see each step of the process; we see forest and trees at every point. We are invited to join the conversation at every turn.

Not surprisingly, Ross has undertaken her work in constant, vigorous conversation with colleagues from various disciplines of the Academy. Hers is scholarship necessarily interdisciplinary, carefully attuned to the distinctive perspectives and tools that different disciplines offer. Astute reading, painstaking analysis, and relentless reconsideration of inherited models are crucial elements of her studies. But what she cherishes above all is community that fosters collective intellectual effort.

Such community is what Ross herself fostered in the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University from the moment we hired her in the spring of 2000. She had done the same at the University of Pennsylvania, and before that at Princeton. In typical fashion, when asked her preference for a retirement event, she asked to host a conference of working papers and discussion panels. What she wants is a conversation in which everyone learns, including herself.

Ross Kraemer has charted new ground, rewritten old maps, taken risks, and continually tried new possibilities. She calls us to do the same. She offers us spadework, ideas, and possible paradigms. The work is hard and rigorous, the invitation open and warm. The studies brought together in the present volume are precisely this: colleagues, including former teachers and former students, honoring Ross Kraemer through the gift of scholarship, presented in dialogue with the problems, materials, and issues over which Ross herself has wrestled, with energetic fascination and curiosity, over her long and fruitful career.

In the Religious Studies department at Brown, one might notice a lovely reproduction of a Georgia O'Keeffe painting in the hallway; or a newly installed section of reference books in the Graduate Student study lounge. These are sure signs that Ross Kraemer has been here, with vitality, thoughtfulness, and tools for the next task. As the essays in this volume richly demonstrate, her colleagues and students are right there with her, in the thick of investigation. After all, there is still much work to do and many conversations to be had.

Thank you, Ross!

I

Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World

Jesus' Baptism by John in the Context of First-Century Judaism

THEODORE A. BERGREN

University of Richmond

Jesus' baptism by John is normally accepted without question as a historical certainty.¹ This supposition is most often based on the principle of dissimilarity: since the event, by its very nature, depicts Jesus in some sense as subservient to John, it is reasoned, no Christian author would have fabricated the story.² Although Christian tradition already by the time of the Gospel of Mark, almost certainly the earliest surviving literary witness to the baptism,³ had turned the event into a *theologoumenon* and a

1. See, for example, Dale C. Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 104; John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 230–34; Paula Fredriksen, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 236; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 100–105, 187–88 n. 22; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 91–93; Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study* (JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 164; Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 107, 111; and N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Christian Origins and the Question of God 2; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 160–62.

To my knowledge, the only modern scholars who seriously question the authenticity of the baptism are Morton Scott Enslin, *Christian Beginnings*, parts 1 and 2 (New York: Harper & Row, 1938), 151–52; idem, "John and Jesus," *ZNW* 66 (1975): 1–18; and Ernst Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesu: Eine Erklärung des Markus-Evangeliums und der kanonischen Parallelen* (2nd ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1968), 60–63. Neither, however, raises the kinds of points addressed in this paper.

2. Various early Christian authors do, of course, exhibit an extreme sensitivity to the issue of the relative status of John and Jesus: see Matt 3:14–15; John 1:20, 29–34; 3:28–30; and Acts 18:24–26.

3. Pace Crossan (*Historical Jesus*, 232–33), I cannot accept *Gospel of Hebrews* 2 as earlier than the Markan account. As Crossan himself demonstrates (pp. 232–34), every other early

classical “commissioning” or “spiritual initiation” account, the historical validity of the baptism itself is not questioned. Comparison with other Jewish spiritual (auto-)biographies of the mid-first century, however, suggests that such a supposition may be too hasty. We possess two other such biographies: that of Paul and that of Josephus. Comparison of Mark 1 with these other two sets of accounts indicates that even Jesus’ baptism itself may have been an expected component of the spiritual biography of a first-century Jewish sage, thus potentially subject to fabrication rather than *necessarily* being a genuine historical datum.

Our first step is to review the main details of Mark 1. We first read in 1:3 that John is one “crying out in the wilderness” (βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ);⁴ 1:4 repeats the phrase “in the wilderness.” Mark 1:6 emphasizes the harshly ascetic character of John’s raiment and diet: “John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.” (This dress is normally taken as an allusion to Elijah: cf. 2 Kgs 1:8.)⁵ Since I am concerned with the potential historicity only of the act of baptism itself, I will leave out of consideration the experiences Jesus is reported to have had during the event and his ensuing “temptation” in the wilderness. It is relevant to note, however, that after these “initiator” experiences Jesus is ready to begin his public career as a religious teacher (Mark 1:14–15).

Evidence for the “spiritual initiation” of Paul comprises an array of materials, some presented in Acts and some in Galatians and 1 Corinthians. Acts features three separate accounts of an incident in which Paul, on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians, first sees that “a light from heaven (φῶς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) flashed around him” (9:3; cf. 22:6; 26:13). After falling to the ground, he hears a voice: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (9:4; 22:7; 26:14). Upon Paul’s questioning, the voice identifies itself as “Jesus” and then enjoins Paul to enter the city and await further instruction (9:5–6; 22:8–10; cf. 26:15). According to Acts 9 and 22, Paul was blind for three days; Acts 9 records that during this time he neither ate nor drank. After this, Ananias restored Paul’s sight, after which Paul was immediately baptized (9:17–19; 22:12–16). According to Acts 22, Paul soon thereafter was praying in the Jerusalem temple when he had another

logion referring to the baptism is directly or indirectly dependent on Mark. Indeed, it is remarkable that no demonstrably independent first-century source besides Mark even mentions the baptism of Jesus by John.

4. Quotations from biblical sources are drawn from the NRSV.

5. It is interesting to note that Josephus, in his account of John (*Ant.* 18.116–119), does not hint that John was an ascetic or associated with the “wilderness”; on the contrary, for Josephus, John was an eloquent speaker who was surrounded by “crowds” of people and who could potentially foment a revolt (*Ant.* 18.118). On this point see also Wright, *Jesus*, 161 n. 67.

vision of and conversation with Jesus; this time, he was sent "far away to the gentiles" for the sake of his personal safety (22:17–21).

Paul's own letters also provide relevant historical data. 1 Corinthians 15 gives a lengthy list of persons to whom the risen Jesus has appeared; in 18 Paul says, "Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me" (ὥσπερ εἰ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὥφθη καί μοι).⁶ This is probably a reference to the same phenomenon alluded to in Gal 1:15–16: "But when God . . . was pleased to reveal his Son to me (εὐδόκησεν . . . ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί), . . . I did not confer with any human being." Earlier in Galatians, in leading up to this statement, Paul says of his teaching, "[it] is not of human origin. . . . I received it through a revelation (παρέλαβον αὐτὸ . . . δι' ἀποκαλύψεως) of Jesus Christ" (1:11–12).

Equally important for our purposes is the information that Paul provides in Galatians immediately after this: "I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem . . . , but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem. . . . Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (1:16–21).

We have here a rather interesting set of parallels between the stories of Jesus and Paul. These parallels, however, may not be entirely coincidental. Luke, author of the Acts stories, certainly knew the Markan account of Jesus' baptism, and it is probable that his story of Paul's "conversion" was colored by this Markan account. Indeed, we know that it was Luke's habit to draw parallels between the life of Jesus as depicted in the Gospel of Luke and the lives of the apostles as depicted in Acts.⁷ Therefore, for the purposes of this study, we are forced to leave out of consideration the material in Acts in order to avoid circular reasoning.

In the case of Paul's own letters, however, we may be more fortunate. Although Paul was probably familiar with collections of sayings of Jesus having to do with specific themes such as church order and hidden wisdom, there is no evidence that he knew "full" Gospel accounts of the type preserved in the Synoptics.⁸ In this particular case there is no reason to suspect that he based his account of his own early experiences on events with which he was familiar from the life of Jesus. Thus, we can reasonably accept Paul's accounts in 1 Corinthians and Galatians as being independent of accounts of Jesus' baptism such as the accounts found in the Synoptic Gospels.

What do we find when we compare these stories of Jesus and Paul?

6. See also 1 Cor 9:1: "Have I not seen (οὐχὶ . . . ἑώρακα) Jesus our Lord?"

7. See, for example, Charles H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (SBLMS 20; Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974) passim.

8. Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 52–62.

Both figures, presumably when they are relatively young (cf. Gal 1:14), before they launch into new public careers as religious functionaries or teachers, undergo an experience that may be described as a §piritual initiation.” In both cases this experience occurs at the hands of an authoritative figure or teacher. Both accounts stress the fact that this is an individual experience, a one-on-one encounter between student and teacher. In both cases, the idea of a solitary physical location is stressed: John is firmly situated “in the desert” (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ), while Paul “did not confer with any human being” but “went away at once into Arabia.”⁹ Interestingly, in both cases, as a result of the “spiritual initiation” experience, both figures receive and begin to teach a new “gospel” (Mark 1:14; Gal 1:11).

Josephus, in his autobiography *The Life*, also describes an experience remarkably similar to those outlined above. At the very beginning of his account of his life, thus in a narrative position similar to that occupied by the story of Jesus’ baptism in Mark and Paul’s autobiographical comments in Galatians, Josephus describes how, at the age of sixteen, already (by his own account) a recognized religious authority,¹⁰ he set out to determine by which religious discipline, or §ect,”¹¹ he should govern his life. Not content with experiencing the courses of ἔ raining” of each of the three main sects—Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes—Josephus travels to the “wilderness” (τὴν ἐρημίαν) to become the “devoted disciple” (ζηλωτής) of an ascetic named Bannus. Josephus’s description of this figure bears an uncanny resemblance to Mark’s description of John the Baptist: Bannus “dwelt in the wilderness (κατὰ τὴν ἐρημίαν διατρίβειν), wearing only such clothing as trees provided, feeding on such things as grew of themselves, and using frequent ablutions of cold water (ψυχρῷ δὲ ὕδατι . . . πολλάκις λουόμενον) by day and night, for purity’s sake (πρὸς ἀγνείαν)” (*Life* 11). Remarkably, this description covers not only the same elements as Mark’s description of John—dwelling in the wilderness, ascetic clothing, ascetic diet, and water ablutions—but in the same order!¹² Josephus lives with Bannus for three years, until, at the age of nineteen, he “return[s] to the

9. The term “Arabia” could refer either to the desert east and southeast of the Gulf of Aqaba or to the Nabatean kingdom. See Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Pauls Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 73–74.

10. Josephus’s statement, “While still a mere boy, about fourteen years old, I won universal applause for my love of letters; insomuch that the chief priests and the leading men of the city used constantly to come to me for precise information on some particular in our ordinances” (*Life* 9), is remarkably similar to Paul’s claim in the autobiographical survey in Galatians: Ἐ advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors” (Gal 1:14). Cf. Luke 2:46–49.

11. Quotations from Josephus’s *Life* are drawn from the translation by H. St. J. Thackeray in LCL.

12. Wink (*John the Baptist*, 2) perceptively notes the oddity of Mark’s mentioning John’s diet and clothing at all! Given this fact, the coincidences between Mark’s account of John and Josephus’s account of Bannus are all the more striking.

city" (*Life* 12). The next part of the *Life* (beginning in §13) describes the beginning of Josephus's public career, which combines politics and religion.

We have located in this brief narrative about Josephus some noteworthy parallels to the two accounts examined above. Josephus, as a young man immersed in religion and ready to begin a career that will combine religion and politics, first goes through the courses of study of each of the three main Jewish sects and then devotes himself as a disciple for three years to an ascetic Jewish sage. These experiences together constitute his period of "spiritual initiation." As in the cases above, the period of tutelage under Bannus is described as a one-on-one, teacher–student experience. As with Jesus and Paul, the solitary physical location ("in the wilderness") is emphasized. While Josephus does not claim to have received a new *g*ospel," he does stress that, as a result of his initiation experiences, he has determined to live according to the principles of the Pharisees; thus, as with Jesus and Paul, his initiation experiences have resulted in concrete personal religious consequences.

These three accounts of *g*piritual initiation," all from Jewish sources of the mid-first century CE, share a remarkable and highly distinctive pattern of characteristics. These parallels are all the more remarkable in that, in order to maintain a strictly logical chain of historical reasoning, we have bracketed from consideration both Acts and the more *g*ythologized" portions of Mark 1 (including these texts would have made the three accounts even more similar¹³). It is not the point of this study to comment on the historical veracity of the accounts of Paul or Josephus. I aim to demonstrate simply that, in Jewish religious (auto-)biographies of this period, there was a certain *expected* pattern of events revolving around "initiation" at the outset of one's public career. The fact that Jesus' baptism by John follows this pattern so closely indicates that this event could well have been a product of narrative fabrication in the early Christian tradition, in adherence to literary convention, despite its seeming conformity to the criterion of dissimilarity.

13. For example, Jesus' vision of "the heavens torn apart and the spirit descending like a dove on him" and his subsequent audition (Mark 1:10–11) bear affinities to Paul's vision of "a light from heaven" and subsequent audition of Jesus described in Acts 9:3–4 and 22:6–7. Likewise, according to Mark 11:24–3 Jesus, after his *g*nitiation experience," was again taken away *g*nto the desert" to be tested by Satan, just as Paul, after his vision of the risen Lord, "went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus" (Gal 1:16–19).

Converts, Resisters, and Evangelists

Jews in the Acts of Philip V–VII

DEBRA J. BUCHER

Vassar College

Before Ross Kraemer left the University of Pennsylvania for Brown, I had the honor of attending a number of courses she taught. In one of them, RELS 735, a special topic seminar, she guided me on a paper I wrote about the *Acts of Philip V–VII* (*Acts Phil.*).¹ Although my graduate studies eventually led me down another path, I want to return to the *Acts of Philip* to honor Ross Kraemer on this occasion. In this story cycle, three chapters in the *Acts of Philip*, a collection of stories about Philip most likely created and compiled by people promoting an ascetic brand of Christianity and then redacted in the fourth century, Philip the apostle comes to a town called Nikatera and quickly converts a leading Jewish townsman, Ireos, to his ascetic Christianity.² Ireos then invites Philip to his home, and after an initial period of resistance by his wife, Nerkella, she and the rest of the household also convert, only after experiencing Philip as “some great light.”³ Ireos gives up his wealth, and Nerkella and her daughter give up their finery in order to be saved. While in town, Philip competes in a spiritual battle with the leader of the synagogue, Aristarchos, and performs a resurrection. Ireos builds a “synagogue of Christians,” and at the end of the story, Philip appoints him bishop of the new church. Kraemer has

1. The critical edition of this text is François Bovon, Bertrand Bouvier, Frédéric Amsler, *Acta Philippi: Textus* (Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum 11; Turnhout: Brepols, 1999). Translations, unless otherwise noted, are from François Bovon and Christopher R. Matthews, *The Acts of Philip: A New Translation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012).

2. While other apocryphal acts promote a life of sexual renunciation, the *Acts of Philip* focuses much more on the renunciation of personal wealth.

3. While working as a librarian in the Penn Libraries, I went through a period of personal and intellectual reflection in the mid-1990s. As part of that, I audited a Historical Jesus Seminar taught by Ross Kraemer and experienced her great light. I have never been the same, and I owe her great thanks as a result.

discussed and analyzed extensively the themes of conversion, gender, and depictions of Jews that show up in this story; they will not be strange to her. But some elements of this story may sound odd, even to Kraemer. Normally, in the apocryphal acts, it is Roman women who convert and men who resist. But in the *Acts of Philip*, it is a Jewish male who converts and a wife who resists. Despite the obvious similarities of the story to other apocryphal acts—promotion of an ascetic Christianity, the arrival of the apostle in an unconverted town, the quick conversion of someone, the opposition of the convert's family along with the majority of townspeople, and ensuing conflict—the *Acts of Philip* brings something entirely new to the picture: the conversion of an entire Jewish family.⁴

What could account for a text that depicts the conversion of a Jewish male in a genre that emphasizes the conversion of elite Roman women? The closest point of comparison we might have is with another story in the *Acts of Philip*, *Acts Phil.* II, in which Philip arrives at Athens and competes with a Jew, Ananias, called from Palestine by the Athenian philosophers to debate Scripture. Christopher Matthews, in his work comparing these two stories, suggests that even small alterations can reflect change in underlying social situations. Using the earlier work of Christine Thomas, Matthews states that, in order to remain useful to changing audiences over time, [stories adapt] by easily accommodating new political and social realities into the tradition."⁵ Both of these stories include a Jewish antagonist who does battle with Philip in scriptural and spiritual matters; the Jewish antagonists attempt to sway the crowd with their scriptural acumen and (failed) attempts at the resurrection of an only son. Philip prevails on both accounts, of course. Matthews's comparison of the two stories highlights some key differences: *Acts Phil.* VV II not only has Jews in it, but has Jewish converts; *Acts Phil.* II has no counterpart to Ireos, and apart from the Jewish antagonist, there are no Jews in *Acts Phil.* II;⁶ Aristarchos is the one to proclaim the truth of Christianity, unlike his counterpart in *Acts Phil.* II, who speaks the words "We crucified him" (II.10). Because *Acts*

4. Except for the apostles themselves and a few other notable exceptions, Jews do not play large roles in the apocryphal acts genre. Mostly they are in the background, characterized by the texts as detractors (see *Acts Pet.* 1, in which there is an offhand comment stating that Paul often quarreled with the Jews), or they are not seen at all as active players in the lives of the apostles. The exceptions are Simon Magus in *Acts Pet.* 23–28; a story of Jesus commanding the Sphinx to tell the Jewish high priests that he is God in *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*; and a story in the Coptic *Acts of Andrew and Paul* about twenty-seven thousand Jews being baptized after witnessing the resurrection of a dead boy by Andrew and Paul.

5. Christopher R. Matthews, *Philip, Apostle and Evangelist: Configurations of a Tradition* (NovTSup 105; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 188. Matthews is citing Christine Thomas's dissertation, "The *Acts of Peter*, the Ancient Novel, and Early Christian History" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1995), 173–74.

6. Matthews, *Philip, Apostle and Evangelist*, 187.

Phil. II also includes elements from the martyrdom account, which *Acts Phil.* V–VII does not, Matthews believes that *Acts Phil.* VV II is the older text and *Acts Phil.* II represents the later adaptation. Based on these textual clues, Matthews claims that *Acts Phil.* VV II is the softer, kinder, gentler approach to Jews and Judaism, although it certainly betrays a fledgling anti-Judaism.” *Acts of Philip* II represents a deterioration of the relations between Jews and Christians over time that began in *Acts Phil.* VV II but continued in full force in the later version of the story in *Acts Phil.* II.⁷

Yet, while Matthews makes some astute observations in his comparison between these two stories, I maintain that when we examine all the Jewish characters in *Acts Phil.* V–VII, the text yields a different story about Jews. Ireos becomes a Roman citizen who leads his family and town to Christianity. In this light, the actions of the Jewish detractor Aristarchos and his Jewish compatriots are stereotypical of Jews: they are hard-hearted and unwilling to concede the truth of Christianity. I claim, therefore, that, even though *Acts Phil.* VV II may have originated in the context of a Jewish conversion narrative, its overriding concern is to minimize the original religious identity of the Jews and to emphasize their Romanness. In this process, we see an outright elimination of the Jewish origins of Christian converts, not just a “nascent anti-Judaism.”

The obfuscation of the religious identity of the Jewish converts begins when we first meet the protagonist, Ireos. With the exception of two passages in the story, we would be unaware of Ireos’s religious identity. Instead, we read about Ireos’s character as a fully realized Greco-Roman man, abounding in the characteristics that make men real men in antiquity: self-control, resistance to persuasion without reason, commitment to justice, and the absence of anger. In fact, even before Ireos encounters Philip, he is characterized as intelligent, good, and a hater of wrongdoing (V.6). It is only when we first meet Ireos that we learn of his Jewish identity. We discover that the “Jews were speaking many harsh words against Philip. . . . And a certain one of their leaders by the name of Ireos answered and said to them . . .” (V.6)⁸ His Jewish compatriots remark that, unless Ireos is willing to part with his material wealth, the stranger, Philip, will not enter his house. Ireos, though, is drawn to Philip and wants to follow him and “make a synagogue of Christians” (V.7).⁹ Shortly after, when Philip and

7. Ibid., 184–89.

8. Although Ireos is considered “one of their leaders,” he is never identified as a Jew, although there are numerous occasions in which the crowd and Aristarchos are described as Jews (Ιουδαίοι).

9. Καὶ γὰρ ποιήσω αὐτὴν συναγωγὴν χριστιανῶν. *Acts of Philip* VV II is extant in two manuscripts, Vaticanus graecus 824 and Xenophontos 32. Although Xenophontos 32 is the later manuscript, scholars think that it is the earliest form of the text. This phrase occurs only in Vaticanus graecus 824 at this point in the story; however, the phrase also occurs later in *Acts Phil.* VII in both manuscripts.

Ireos meet, Philip recognizes Ireos's inherent goodness and sees the lack of deceit in his soul (V.7). These traits are associated in the text with proper Christian behavior. Ireos's Jewish identity is of little concern, and as we shall see, contrasts sharply with that of his Jewish compatriots.

Ireos's interactions with Philip, his family, and the townspeople provide plenty of evidence of proper Greco-Roman traits. Throughout the text, Ireos urges restraint and self-control when talking to the crowd about their reaction to Philip: "let us not rise up against the stranger with wrongdoing and violence . . . let us hear and examine his teaching" (V.6). Ireos does not join in the disturbance (V.6) but remains calm and under control. His behavior is in contrast to what is exhibited by most of the inhabitants of the town—the angry mass of Jews and pagans, all of whom display an unseemly passionate response to Philip's arrival—and, to a lesser extent, his family. Throughout, the crowd is described as unjust, irritated, and wicked (VI.2). When the Jews, who were "speaking harsh words against Philip because he was destroying their traditions" (V.6) complain to Ireos, he tries to alleviate the tension by suggesting that they listen to Philip, refrain from "wrongdoing and violence" (V.6), and then determine "to do what we must" (V.6). Later in the story, during the debate between Aristarchos and Philip, Ireos, resisting the anger of the crowd, smiled as he approached them (VI.2). He refuses to turn his back on Philip (VI.5) even on pain of death, never yielding to the urging of the crowd. Although the crowd remains angry throughout the conflict between Aristarchos and Philip, Ireos reminds them, in a loud (but not angry?) voice that they cannot strike Philip, because "even Caesar hears about such things" (VI.6). Ireos is the voice of reason. In contrast to the continually angry crowd, he reacts to these negative situations with a thoughtful calmness.

Ireos is also a man of action. He invites Philip into his house, providing a kind of sanctuary from the tumultuous crowd. When he arrives, Philip immediately recognizes Ireos's purity of spirit by exclaiming that Ireos is "favored in the peace of Christ, because there is no deceit in your soul" (V.7). It is at this point that Ireos makes his decision to follow Philip, although worried about what will become of him. Philip assures him that he will have "est in the day of judgment" because he fought for Philip with the crowd. Ireos assures Philip that he has prepared his soul; and, in keeping with the overall Christian ascetic message of the text, Philip encourages Ireos to continue his preparation and to "þ ermit no wrongdoing, and part with your wife" (V.7). Perhaps in response and in anticipation of further angry behavior from the crowd, Ireos makes a vow to God to "fight even until death on behalf of your apostle" (V.7). As the story winds to a close, Ireos and another new convert act with assurance and confidence in building a church for the new Christian community. Philip appoints Ireos bishop and leader of the church, the confirmation

that Ireos, is, indeed, the sort of Christian man who can lead a fledgling group forward.

Ireos displays similar self-control when dealing with his wife. When Ireos invites Philip into his house, he instinctively knows that his own wife will be resistant. Instead of reacting with anger and violence as other rich Roman husbands and/or betrothed men in other apocryphal acts,¹⁰ Ireos speaks with gentleness to his wife (V.9) and patiently suggests that she witness for herself that Philip is a man of God, filled with grace (V.11). Even after another attempt at convincing his wife about the truth of Philip, when the text describes Ireos as inwardly upset, his outward demeanor never changes and his actions do not betray his inner turmoil (V.19). He is willing to take up the specifically Christian approach to a self-controlled life by living a married life without sex, something his wife initially objects to.

Instead of a hostile Roman husband, it is the wife, Nerkella,¹¹ who is suspicious, an initial opponent of Philip and reluctant to convert. But, again, unlike in other apocryphal acts stories, after a brief opposition she converts, bringing the entire household with her. As in the case of Ireos, her Jewish identity is unimportant and becomes subsumed by a conversion story of rich Romans to Christianity. It is the possible loss of wealth, influence, and family connections that concerns her, not the loss of her religious identity.¹² We see again, in the characterization of Nerkella, a story that is only teasingly about Jewish converts but a great deal more about a proper Roman wife setting an example for her household to follow.

The closest we come to understanding Nerkella as Jewish is in a conversation she has with Ireos after he has brought home Philip. After voicing some of the same concerns expressed by the townspeople, she threatens to leave and to take her dowry, including her servants, “some four hundred bodies” (V.9). She is also concerned about his children and the confusion that might be created if Ireos brings Philip into the house. Clearly, Nerkella is worried about the upheaval that Philip may cause. As the discussion continues, however, we see that Nerkella’s viewpoint is softened somewhat by Ireos’s description of Philip’s god. Nerkella asks Ireos if *h* is God is like the gods of our city, made of gold and secured in a

10. For example, in the *Acts of Thecla*, Thamyris becomes jealous and full of wrath and leads the crowd to the house of Onesiphorus, where Paul was staying, to bring the apostle Paul to judgment. This is in direct contrast to Ireos, who not only shelters Philip but also urges the crowd to remain calm.

11. The characterization of Nerkella in *Acts Phil.* VV II as a rich Jewish woman is unique in the apocryphal acts genre. With the exception of Mariamne, who appears in the martyrdom section of the *Acts of Philip* as Philip’s sister, nowhere else in this genre do we see Jewish women. As noted above, we do see some Jewish detractors in the apocryphal acts, but we do not see Jewish women actively participating in either the opposition or their conversion.

12. One wonders whether this focus on material possessions is also a swipe at Jews.

temple" (V.11). Ireos answers that Philip's god is "nothing like that, for his God is the God who lives in the heavens, able to shatter the arrogant, to do away with the evildoers. But the gods of our city are an exercise of craftsmanship by the impious" (V.11). Although Nerkella does not explicitly ask whether Philip's god is like "our (Jewish) god," both her question and Ireos's answer imply a judgment about the gods of the city and their (lack of) power. Their discussion demonstrates that their loyalties are divided; as a wealthy couple they feel an affinity toward the elite of the town, but as Jews, they cannot abide the worship of the idols in a temple. After this discussion, Nerkella concedes that, although she remains suspicious about Philip, she will not oppose Ireos, regardless of whether it is the will of the God of whom you speak or your own desire" (V.11). Nerkella then converts shortly afterward, as does the entire household.

As with Ireos, the text is not so much concerned with the religious background of Nerkella as with her appropriate Romanness as preparation for her conversion to Christianity. Similar to the depiction of Ireos, the text focuses on Nerkella's behavior as a Roman woman. If she is a Jew, that aspect is of little concern in the story. Nerkella is, first and foremost, wealthy. She brought a large dowry of four hundred slaves to her marriage, along with other possessions. The household contains "gold chairs" (V.15). When we first meet Nerkella, she is "covered by seven layers" (V.14), and later, as a sign of conversion, she removes her "garments interwoven with gold" and puts on "humble clothing" (V.21). Layers of clothing suggest not only wealth but also modesty; she stays indoors, refusing to be seen by any strangers, even exclaiming that those from the household have [not] seen my face" (V.14). Despite her modesty, Nerkella also is able to act independently and reject associating with Philip; in fact, she warns Ireos that she is perfectly willing to walk out of the house, taking her dowry with her if he continues his association with Philip (V.9). Even with this independence—she knows what her husband is up to outside of the house and makes decisions based on her own sense of propriety—she admits that Ireos can invite the apostle into their home and make decisions without consultation.

Although Nerkella, in a twist of the apocryphal acts motif, might appear as Philip's main opponent, another leading Jew, Aristarchos, the leader of the synagogue, actually plays that role. The Jews, upset because they believe Philip is threatening their traditions, urge Aristarchos to challenge him to a duel of sorts—a debate concerning Philip's teachings and understanding of Scripture. Aristarchos opens the argument by claiming that Jesus cannot be God because God made everything and that, since Jesus was born of Mary, he cannot possibly be God, a typical counter to Christian arguments about the nature of Jesus. But Aristarchos then contradicts his own argument by saying that Jesus is the power of God and the wisdom of God, who was present with God when God made the

world" (VI.13). His "proof" is Gen 1:26, in which God says, "Let us make a human being according to our image and likeness" (VI.13). Following up on this, Philip then concludes the debate with the suffering servant passages from the Psalms and Isaiah, after which Aristarchos responds, "Philip, this one is called Jesus and Messiah. Indeed I know that Isaiah has spoken with reference to an anointed one" (VI.15). It is, therefore, Aristarchos who declares Jesus the Messiah, quickly conceding the truth of Philip's teaching by citing proof-texts regarding the truth of Christ.

The disputation between Aristarchos and Philip reveals that Aristarchos, and to a lesser extent his Jewish compatriots in the crowd, knows that the Scriptures point to the importance and role of Jesus,¹³ and this reveals their hard-heartedness regarding the Christian message. The Jewish crowd is upset with Aristarchos for conveying this truth of Scripture, although they too are unwilling to believe or accept it when they exclaim to Aristarchos, "You yourself have called to mind all the more the things that have been written concerning the Messiah" (VI.15). By the conclusion of the story, the Jews are outsiders—where they should be—"jealous," saying "We have no pretext for hindering them [the new converts]. Rather, let us keep away from the foreigner, lest we suffer some wrong such as befell Aristarchos. Indeed, let us keep away from them, for their grace and power and glory is truly from God" (VII.3). Without the power of Philip's Christ behind him, Aristarchos has no real power to effect change through debate or miraculous intervention as displayed by Philip, or even Ireos. He serves as an unwitting evangelist, leading people to the powerful Christian god, which ultimately unsettles the status quo in both the pagan and Jewish traditions.

It is the non-Jews of the crowd who accept the truth that Philip has brought to them, saying "He himself [Philip] has guided us to the genuine truth. Therefore what charge might we find against him? On the contrary even the Jew who debated with him has shown all the more the hidden glory in the prophets concerning the Messiah. . . . we have examined the words of both speakers and have seen that Christ has been revealed beyond a doubt by everything" (VI.15). Before the crowd converts, they demand that Philip perform a miracle of resurrection. And just so the reader knows where truth and power really lie, Philip demands that Aristarchos attempt the resurrection first. Of course, he cannot do this and is,

13. Scholarship on the subject of Jews and Judaism in late antiquity is vast and growing, thanks in part to the work of Ross Kraemer. For some important examples, see Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews: The Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity* (Divinations; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

therefore, humiliated in his attempt and “he withdrew, ashamed” (VI.18). Triumphant, Philip raises the dead boy and from that, “three thousand souls believed in Christ” (VI.21). The text does not say whether these were pagan or Jewish souls, but just a few lines later, there is concern among the recently converted about the “Jews who are rising up against Philip” (VI.21), so we might assume that most of the Jews in the crowd remained unconverted.

In the end, what does this text tell us about Jews in late antiquity? Since this is a unique instance of Jewish converts in the apocryphal acts, it could reflect some historical moment of Jewish conversion. The fact that roles are reversed in this story—it is the male who is the immediate convert and the female who resists—adds to that possibility. The text, however, does its best to obscure the religious background of its protagonist and his family. When Ireos and Nerkella are read as rich Romans, their Jewish connections fade into the background. The *Acts of Philip* preserves the focus of the apocryphal acts genre as a vehicle for the conversion of Romans to Christianity. The Jewishness of Ireos and Nerkella does not conform to the pattern. On the other hand, Aristarchos and the Jewish crowd are clearly labeled as stereotypical Jews: they do not understand their own Scriptures; they refuse to believe even though they see the truth of Jesus (through Philip); and, contrary to appropriate Greco-Roman behavior, they are brash and impulsive. When read this way, the *Acts of Philip* no longer seems like a heretical story about Philip but rather a text that assumes Christianity’s mainstream role in late antique society, divorced from its origins, perhaps even a didactic tale warning newly converted Christians away from Judaism.

In a world in which Christians were establishing themselves as the powerful majority, the *Acts of Philip* represents the thinking among even those Christians (or maybe *especially* those Christians) who may have been considered heretical by other Christians. While we can spy shades of Jews and Judaism in the story of Ireos and Nerkella, what we hear loud and clear is Aristarchos and the Jewish crowd denying the truth of Jesus as the Messiah with their hard hearts. Jewish evangelists? Both Philip and, ironically, Aristarchos preach the truth of Christianity. Jewish resisters? Absolutely. Jews, with their typical hard hearts resist Philip’s truth. Jewish converts? Yes, but Jews made ready for conversion through their solidly Roman traits. This story does not just exhibit what Matthews’s calls “nascent anti-Judaism”; it presents an outright approach to eliminating Jews and Judaism from the Christian past.

Thecla and the Governor

Who Clothes Whom?

ROBERT DORAN

Amherst College

The evolution of the affianced gentile young woman into the virginal preacher of the message of Jesus who baptizes new members of the movement is, to say the least, complex. This remains so even when one accepts the arguments of Margaret Aymer and Elisabeth Esch-Wermeling that the narrative of Paul and Thecla in Antioch in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (ch. 4) is the earlier narrative to which was added the story of the events in Iconium (ch. 3) to emphasize the virginity of Thecla.¹

The Narrative Context

Paul's dealings with Thecla are quite strange. As they are about to leave Iconium, Thecla asks to be baptized, but Paul refuses and asks her to be patient. When the two enter Antioch, they are met by Alexander, who inquires about the relationship. Paul denies any relationship, "I do not know the woman of whom you speak, nor is she mine." The language here (οὐκ οἶδα) resonates with the denial of Jesus by Peter (Mark 14:71) and the rejection by the bridegroom of the five foolish maidens (Matt 25:12). In both of these cases, all ties are rejected. Some scholars have attempted to soften what Paul does by claiming that he behaves in the way that Abraham did when he said that Sarah was his sister, not his wife (Gen 12:11–20;

1. Margaret P. Aymer, "Hailstorms and Fireballs: Redaction, World Creation and Resistance in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*," *Semeia* 79 (1997): 51; Elisabeth Esch-Wermeling, *Thekla – Paulusschülerin wider Willen? Strategien der Leserlenkung in den Theklaakten* (NTAbh n.F. 53; Münster: Aschendorff, 2008), 71–148.

20:1–7), a stratagem repeated by Isaac and Rebekah (26:6–11).² But this is not comparable: sister is still a strong kinship relationship, whereas Paul denies any relationship. Denied any relationship to a man in a strange town, a young woman alone on the street of a Greek town falls into the category of a prostitute, as she is neither at her home nor accompanied by a male relative nor married. No wonder Alexander thinks he can take her away. By shaming the local official in charge of arranging the games, Thecla perhaps loses a further relationship. Dennis MacDonald has suggested that Alexander was a Galatarch and that on certain occasions Galatarchs wore gold wreaths bearing the emblem of the reigning emperor.³ As Glenn Snyder comments, if such were the case, Thekla's casting of the wreath to the ground would thus be an act of political sacrilege, as made explicit in an Armenian version.⁴ Thecla is thus removed from any kind of community, whether of Paul, of family, of city, or of empire.

She is bereft, but that all suddenly changes. She is immediately welcomed into another community, that of the women of the town. They all protest the condemnation of Thecla, and the rich woman Tryphaena takes her under her protection. A female beast protects her, as the women also use the female weaponry of perfume to overcome the beasts. Thecla gains another community when she throws herself into the water and a lightning flash appears.⁵ Like Saturus in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*, who drags the panther onto himself and so dies, Thecla embraces death on behalf of Jesus as she throws herself into the pool filled with ferocious seals. A lightning flash kills the seals and Thecla is saved and baptized. Lightning shows forth the presence of God, as at Sinai (Exod 19:16), and lightning flashes are the arrows (Ps 18:14; 29:7) of the rider in the heavens (Ps 68:33). God's approval of Aaron's priesthood is shown by fire coming out from before the Lord and consuming the burnt offering and the fat on the altar (Lev 9:24), whereas Aaron's unworthy sons are consumed by fire from the Lord when they offer unholy fire (Lev 10:1–2). Fire from God also consecrates Elijah's offering and puts the prophets of Baal to shame (1 Kgs 18:36–40). Thecla now belongs to God through this martyr's baptism, and a further sign of this is the cloud of fire, which now surrounds Thecla. Jeremy Barrier notes the presence of a light from heaven

2. See, for example, Glenn E. Snyder, *Acts of Paul: The Formation of a Pauline Corpus* (WUNT 2/352; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 129–34.

3. Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 41.

4. Snyder, *Acts of Paul*, 114 n. 53.

5. Esch-Wermeling (*Thekla-Paulusschülerin wider Willen?*, 84–89) shows that the first jump into the water where Thecla says, "I baptize myself in the name of Jesus Christ for the last day" is an interpolation. Snyder rejects this proposal (*Acts of Paul* 143 n. 154) and suggests, rather implausibly, that the first mention could mean either that she struck herself or that she cast off her loincloth.

that flashed around (περιήστραψεν) Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:2), and that tongues of fire came upon the apostles at Pentecost (Acts 2:3). He comments that Thecla's actions (prayer, stepping into the water naked, and then covered and protected by the cloud of fire) reflect the ceremonial rite for baptism.⁶ When Alexander has Thecla bound by her feet between two bulls and sets red-hot irons beneath their penises, this flame around Thecla burns the ropes and she is free. She now is surrounded by a community of women and has joined the community of the baptized. For Jeremy Barrier, the narrative has shown the development of Thecla as an apostle of God.⁷

She still is under the condemnation of sacrilege against the empire, and the narrative continues with an interaction between Thecla and the Roman governor. When the governor asks Thecla who she is and what power surrounds her, she preaches to him the power of her God, the living God, and his Son. The governor, witness to the power of this (to him) unknown God, commands that she be clothed as she had been stripped, except for underpants, when she entered the arena. When she is clothed, the governor decrees that Thecla be released, and so the sentence against her is rescinded.

The Answer of Thecla to the Governor

The usual translation of the response that Thecla gives to the governor when he has garments brought and tells Thecla to put them on is that of Wilhelm Schneemelcher: *But she said, 'He who clothed me when I was naked among the beasts shall clothe me with salvation on the day of judgement.'* And taking the garments she put them on."⁸ Basically the same translation is given by Barrier and Willy Rordorf in their more recent translations. Particularly interesting is the fact that Barrier, who provides text-critical commentary on other parts of his translation, offers no text-critical commentary on this verse. Schneemelcher based his translation on the text in Lipsius.⁹ We still await the text-critical edition of Willy Rordorf, which is due to appear in *Corpus Christianorum*, Series

6. Jeremy W. Barrier, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla: A Critical Introduction and Commentary* (WUNT 2/270; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 163–64.

7. *Ibid.*, 164.

8. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, "Acts of Paul," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, *Writings Relating to the Apostles, Apocalypses, and Related Subjects* (ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher; Eng. trans. ed. R. McL. Wilson; 1965; repr., Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 363.

9. R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (1891–1903; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1959), 264.

Apocryphorum, but we now have the most complete text from him in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*.¹⁰ They all read *§* hall clothe me." The apparatus in Lipsius, however, shows that this reading is based on the three Latin manuscripts c, d, m, and the Syriac version. Unfortunately the Greek manuscript from Sinai and the Coptic version both have lacunae at this point. In six Greek manuscripts, however, from each of the three text families recognized by Lipsius, *σε* (= you) is read. Lipsius gives no reason for his preference for the Latin and Syriac manuscripts. It may be that, because the four Latin translations were independent of one another,¹¹ their evidence seemed stronger. Yet nowhere else in the apparatus does Lipsius prefer the reading of these manuscripts over the Greek manuscripts. For example, in 3.19 c, d, m, and s omit a reading in the Greek manuscripts (*τρόπον τινά*) but Lipsius does not follow their lead. When he does accept the evidence of c, d, m, and s, it is always in conjunction with some of the Greek manuscripts. At 3.25, Lipsius accepts the reading of one Syriac manuscript but puts it in brackets. Rordorf does not follow him in accepting this reading.¹²

One should also note how Schneemelcher begins the response of Thecla by translating *ἡ δὲ εἶπεν* as, "But she said." Here Schneemelcher has taken *δέ* as adversative. Earlier in 4.12, however, when the governor asked Thecla who she was, Schneemelcher translated the same phrase simply as, *§* he answered," where he took *δέ* as copulative. The same distinction is found also in Rordorf.¹³ The only reason for the adversative translation in 4.13 would seem to be that Thecla's response is seen as a rebuke to the governor, which we will note in our further discussion. By itself, *δέ* is capable of being either adversative or copulative.¹⁴ I would suggest that in both instances it should be taken as copulative, marking a transition to Thecla's response.

10. Willy Rordorf et al., "Actes de Paul," in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens* (ed. F. Bovon and P. Geoltrain; Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 442; Paris: Gallimard, 1997) 1115–77. In a private communication, Prof. Rordorf noted that all the fifty manuscripts at his disposal had *σε*, "beside K (already known by Lipsius) who reads *ἐνδύσεται*, and two manuscripts of the *Ambrosiana* (C 123^{sup} and F 144^{sup}, both italo-greek, XIth) who explain the *σε* by the addition *ἐαν αὐτὸν ἐπιγνώσιν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ*."

11. Oscar von Gebhart, *Passio S. Theclae virginis: Die lateinischen Übersetzungen der Acta Pauli et Theclae nebst Fragmenten, Auszügen und Beilagen* (TU n.F. 7.2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).

12. Rordorf, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, 1136.

13. Ibid., 1140–41; Barrier (*Acts of Paul and Thecla*, 170, 174) is consistent in translating both as, *B* ut she said," whereas Esch-Wermeling translates the response of Thecla to the first question posed by the governor as copulative ("Sie antwortete") but the response to the second question as adversative ("Doch sie antwortete") (*Thekla-Paulusschülerin wider Willen?*, 335).

14. Herbert W. Smythe, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 644–45.

The Consequences of the Reading

Two Different Motifs

§ hall clothe me"

The reading § hall clothe me" resonates with the theme of nakedness that runs throughout the story. In 4.8, Thecla is stripped (ἐξεδύθη) but given underpants (διαζώστραν). As she casts herself into the water, however, a cloud of fire surrounds her so that she cannot be seen naked (4.9: μήτε θεωρεῖσθαι αὐτὴν γυμνῶν). The sexual imagery is continued as a fiery iron is placed under the genitals of two bulls (4.10). When the governor wants her to be clothed (ἐνδύσαι), Thecla claims that the one who clothed her while she was naked among the beasts (ὁ ἐνδύσας με γυμνῶν) will clothe (ἐνδύσει) her with salvation (4.13). The contrast between ἐκδύω and ἐνδύω is clear. The language resonates with that of Paul in 2 Corinthians:

longing to be clothed [ἐπενδύσασθαι] with our heavenly dwelling—if indeed when we have taken it off [ἐκδυσάμενοι]¹⁵ we will not be found naked [γυμνοί] . . . because we wish not to be unclothed [ἐκδύσασθαι] but to be clothed [ἐπενδύσασθαι]. (2 Cor 5:2–4)

The motif of the exchange of garments as reflecting change of status is strong in the Syrian exegetical tradition. Sebastian Brock noted how Adam and Eve were forced to take off their garments of light (אור) and put on garments of skin (עור)—to exchange glorious garments for shameful ones.¹⁶ The *Hymn of the Pearl* also has the protagonist of the story take off his jewel-studded garment before going down to the land of Egypt, where he is tricked into putting on their dirty clothing but finally returns to his homeland and puts on his royal garment.¹⁷ In *Gos. Thom.* 22, the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, and 2 *Clem.* 12.2, the advice is to take off the shameful garments. There is thus a long tradition of the saved putting on new garments. Ephrem in describing the last judgment states, "I saw there beautiful people, and I was desirous of their beauty. I saw them clothed

15. Most manuscripts read ἐνδυσάμενοι, "have put it on."

16. Sebastian Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter: Internationales Kolloquium, Eichstätt, 1981* (ed. Margot Schmidt; Eichstätter Beiträge 4; Regensburg: Pustet, 1981), 11–38.

17. *Acts of Thomas* 108–13, esp. 108.9–10; 109.29; 111.62; 113.97–98 (as numbered in Hans J. W. Drijvers, "Acts of Thomas," in Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:322–411); 9–10; 46–47; 62; 72–78 (as numbered in Paul-Hubert Poirier, *L'hymne de la Perle des Actes de Thomas: Introduction, texte, traduction, commentaire* [Homo religiosus 8; Louvain-la-Neuve: Centre d'histoire des religions, 1981]).

with the 'robe of light,' and I was grieved that I had prepared no virtuous raiment."¹⁸ It is to this motif that the manuscript tradition whereby Thecla claims that God will clothe her alludes.

Yet, if one accepts the reading *ἡν εἶ*, "the narrative continuation seems rather pedestrian. After stating that Jesus would clothe her with salvation in the day of judgment, "taking the garments, she put them on." The contrast of the claim with the action is dizzying.

§ hall clothe you"

In the later *Life and Miracles of the Holy Apostle and Martyr of Christ, Thecla*, Thecla promises the governor salvation.

When the clothing was brought and the governor was urging her with a friendly voice to make use of the clothing, the virgin received these words with pleasure and, in response, said, O God, who helped me when I was naked and placed before the beasts as food, and who bestowed shelter to me by the light, and who clothed me with his own glory at the time and appearance of contempt, may He clothe you [σέ], who are still ruling on earth and who clothed me with these garments, at the time of the resurrection and the kingdom with unceasing and everlasting salvation and, in place of these corruptible and perishable things, may He repay you with his imperishable and eternal gifts."¹⁹

The rendering whereby Thecla promises that the governor will be clothed on the day of salvation belongs to another traditional motif, that of reciprocity. If *σε* is read, Thecla's reply becomes a promise of salvation for the governor. His action in procuring clothes for Thecla will procure for him salvation. The wordplay is clear: ὁ ἐνδύσας με γυμνὴν ἐν τοῖς θηρίοις, οὗτος ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως ἐνδύσει σε σωτηρίαν. The "among the beasts" is placed chiasmatically with "on the day of judgment"; "me naked" reflects "you salvation." This is a fine example of reciprocity, where the reward suits the deed. This motif of reciprocity is found earlier in the narrative where Thecla asks that Tryphaena be awarded that her daughter be translated to the place of the just because Tryphaena had had compassion on Thecla and had preserved her pure. Such reciprocity is expressed in Prov 19:17: "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and will be repaid in full." It is found where Jesus states that whoever gives a disciple a drink will not lose a reward (Mark 9:41//Matt 10:41–42), where those who clothe the naked inherit the kingdom (Matt 25:34–40), and where the good thief who recognizes Jesus' innocence is rewarded with the promise of being beside Jesus in paradise (Luke 23:43). In the later monastic tradition, one finds the

18. Ephrem, *Letter to Publius* #12, as quoted by Brock, "Clothing Metaphors," 19.

19. Gilbert Dagron, *Vie et miracles de Sainte Thècle: Text grec, traduction et commentaire* (Subsidia Hagiographica 62; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1978), 262.

story of the flute player, formerly a brigand, who is honored more than the famous ascetic Paphnutius because he had helped a woman who was being attacked.²⁰

The two readings thus reflect two different traditional motifs, one in which the saint will be reclothed from the garment of this life, the other in which reciprocity for a good action is stressed. In the first, there is no connection between Thecla and the governor. In the second, Thecla promises the governor salvation for his deed to her.

The Role of the Roman Authorities

The first reading ("shall clothe me") places a distance between Thecla and the Roman authorities. Her reply appears almost as a rebuke of the governor's offer, even if she does put on the garments. The second reading ("shall clothe you") emphasizes the sympathetic attitude of the Roman official as contrasted with the violent opposition to the Christians by the local people. The males are out for Thecla's blood, and the persecution of Thecla is sparked by local discontent, as it had been also in Iconium. Before the emperor Decius, the persecution of Christians was sporadic and the result of local, often unknown, causes. Often the Roman officials had no qualms about sentencing Christians brought before their court, as in the case of Pliny and the Scillitan martyrs. This disdain for Christians can be seen in the way a Roman governor is said to have laughed at Christians who volunteered for death. He told them that, if they were so eager to die, there were plenty of ropes with which to hang themselves or cliffs from which to jump off (Tertullian, *Ad scapulam* 5.1). As Herbert Musurillo imagined the pre-Decian procedure: "When it became clear to the magistrate that the accused were actually Christians, he would follow the terms of his *mandata* in exercising his *exercitio*."²¹ In the pre-Decian acts of the martyrs, the Roman officials are portrayed as doing their job and attempting to persuade the martyrs to reflect and change. This process is particularly clear in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, where first all the multitude cry out, "Away with the atheists" (3.2), and then the proconsul tries his best to persuade Polycarp to deny being a Christian (9–11).²² The portrayal of the prefect in the martyrdoms of Lyons and Vienne (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*

20. Norman Russell, trans., "Paphnutius," in *Lives of the Desert Fathers* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian, 1980), 94–95.

21. Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), lxi.

22. The redating of the writing of Polycarp's martyrdom by Candida Moss does not affect its pre-Decian status. See Candida R. Moss, "On the Dating of Polycarp: Rethinking the Place of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* in the History of Christianity," *Early Christianity* 1 (2010): 539–74.

5.1.3–5.2.8) was probably influenced by post-Decian coloring, according to Musurillo.²³ The Roman governor in the trial of Thecla is shown not to initiate the proceedings, but he condemns Thecla to the wild beasts because she has dishonored a leading citizen of the Iconians (4.2) When Alexander cannot take Thecla out of the hands of Queen Tryphaena, the governor sends soldiers to bring her (4.5–6.8). He carries out his job. Yet he is not portrayed as hostile toward Thecla. Rather, he allows her request to remain pure and gives her into the custody of Queen Tryphaena (4.2); he weeps when he thinks that the seals will kill her (4.9), and he is dejected when Alexander suggests that she be killed by bulls (4.10). Finally, he orders that clothes be brought to Thecla (4.13). Nevertheless, the reading “I shall clothe you with salvation” goes beyond what is found in other martyrdoms where the Roman authority is shown as sympathetic to Christians. Does not one have to believe in order to be saved? At the end of her statement before the governor, Thecla echoes the language of the Gospel of John: “Whoever does not believe in [the Son of the living God] shall not live, but die for ever” resonates with “who believes in the son has eternal life, he who does not believe in the son will not see life” (John 3:36; see 8:24; 10:28; 1 John 5:12). Yet, when one considers the powerful motif of reciprocity, one can understand how this statement of Thecla fits within that tradition. Standing within that tradition, the image of Thecla is enhanced and her power of intercession made manifest. The sense of reversal is palpable. The naked Thecla, who appears so helpless and powerless before the Roman governor, whose clothes proclaim his position, is in fact the one through whom a great gift is given to the governor. The weak has become the strong.

Conclusion

This small textual difference—between $\mu\acute{\epsilon}$ and $\sigma\acute{\epsilon}$ —has interesting consequences. If one reads $\mu\acute{\epsilon}$, then Thecla is rebuking the Roman authority and insisting that she will be changed at the final judgment. If one reads $\sigma\acute{\epsilon}$, then Thecla rewards the Roman governor for his concern, the gulf between the Christian and the Roman authority is bridged, and the status of Thecla enhanced. On the one reading, Thecla remains passive waiting to be clothed. On the other, she is the empowered one who promises a boon.

23. Musurillo, *Acts*, xxi–xxii.

“If It Looks like a Duck, and It Quacks like a Duck . . .”:

On Not Giving Up the Godfearers

PAULA FREDRIKSEN

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

With her characteristic concern for terminological clarity and methodological rigor, Ross Kraemer has recently issued a swingeing critique of the use of the term “Godfearer” in academic discussions of Roman antiquity’s “interstitial Gentile persons” who engaged in some way with Jewish practices. The meanings of θεοσεβής vel sim. are various, she argues, as well as ambiguous and uncertain, the category itself undertheorized, its utility fatally compromised by its confusions.¹ I continue to think that the term is both useful and usable, its range of meanings fittingly elastic, its attestation in ancient evidence of various sorts as secure as our evidence usually gets. Rather than turn the present essay into the second half of a

1. Ross Kraemer, “Giving up the Godfearers,” *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 5 (2014): 61–87. The essay recapitulates some of her earlier discussion in *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 179–232. Kraemer’s objections in her shorter piece cluster around four main points: (1) *Rigidity of the category*: Scholars use the term “Godfearers” as a “sweeping static category” with a single, static meaning” (p. 62). (2) *Diversity of the actual larger phenomenon*: The whole category of “godfearing” is “conceptually and theoretically flawed,” because no such term exists for other such boundary-crossing behaviors (e.g., we have no set term for “paganizing” Jews or for “Christianizing” pagans). The focus on this one putative group seems to confer a unique status on them, whereas such cross-cult activity in ancient Mediterranean society appears to have been widespread” (p. 62). (3) *Diversity of motivations*: The motivations for such practices are likely to have been diverse and situational” (p. 62), presumably not only or always “pious,” which is one of the other, nonspecific meanings of the term. Finally, (4) *False utility*: Just because modern historians find the term “Godfearers” useful does not mean that it should be used. On the contrary, in light of the problems reviewed above, “this utility is unacceptable justification for its continued employment” (p. 62). I will address her points in the course of this discussion.

dialogue between a lumper and a splitter, however, I propose to reframe “god-fearing” with a different set of considerations. In the cities of Roman antiquity, how did gods and humans interact?

My Ph.D.—like that of my *alta soror*, Ross—is in a specialization that, in antiquity, did not actually exist: the ancient Mediterranean knew no such thing as “religion.”² In Greco-Roman antiquity, gods and humans formed vertically integrated family groups, and what we think of as “religion”—relations between divinity and humanity—ancients saw as a set of protocols inherited across generations, “ancestral custom.”³ From the “micro” level of the family to the “macro” level of the city, ancient gods ran in the blood. For this reason, pantheons coincided with (variously sized) human groups, from the individual domestic unit⁴ to the wider *γένος* or *ἔθνος*. Proper awareness of and appropriate deference to superiors within this numinous-human hierarchy were deemed *pietas* or *εὐσέβεια*; one’s *πίστις* or *fides* expressed one’s loyalty to these bequeathed practices and to the divine human and intra-human relationships that they articulated.⁵ Harmonious relations—showing respect, and being seen to show respect—began at the hearth and extended outward to the city, to the larger empire and, thence, to the cosmos itself. Enacting these arrangements at the micro-level was pious common sense; at the macro-level, it was tantamount to safeguarding the *pax deorum*.⁶

These relations were conceived of “realistically”: deference was a public and observable behavior as much as an attitude or an idea. At the micro-level the bride, entering her husband’s household, assumed responsibility for what were for her new ancestors and new gods. So too with an adopted son.⁷ At the *polis*-level, citizens were imagined as blood

2. On the nonexistence of our category of “religion” in antiquity, and for the ways that ethnicity coordinated with cult and with family practices, see Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 6–15; on the whole issue, see Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

3. The usual terms for designating pious behavior include this idea of “family” inheritance: *mos maiorum*, *ta patria ethē*, *paradoxeis tōn patrikōn*, *fides partum*, *hoi patrioi nomoi*, and so on.

4. On domestic cult, see esp. *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity* (ed. John Bodel and Saul M. Olyan; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008); also Caroline Johnson Hodge, “Married to an Unbeliever,” *HTR* 103 (2010): 1–25.

5. Thus, according to Plato, *eusebeia* involves proper deference to both gods and parents (*Resp.* 615c; see discussion in Nongbri, *Before Religion*, 4–5); and the properly pious wife in Plutarch (*Mor.* 140D), defers to her husband in deferring to his gods.

6. On enlisting the gods’—or the God’s—support in defense of the empire, see esp. John H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), esp. 292–93.

7. The ritual creation of obligations to new gods and new ancestors through marriage and/or adoption gives us our closest contemporary correlations to the effects of “converting” to Judaism; see Paula Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Chris-

relations (thus, outsiders were ἀλλόφυλοι); when negotiating treaties with other cities, common ancestors were discovered, so that the parties under agreement themselves became "kin."⁸ At the level of empire, this family organization also held sway: positioning himself as the empire's *pater*, Augustus through the worship of his *genius*, turned his new political unit into a single, vast, multiethnic οἶκος or *domus* or "family."⁹

The city itself, post-Alexander, was thus a sort of family-based "religious" institution. Urban well-being depended on heaven's beneficence, and thus the organs of city government were in effect media for showing respect to the presiding god(s). These gods structured both urban time and urban space. Dedicated festivals, celebrating seasons sacred to divine patrons celestial and imperial punctuated the civic year. The venues of these celebrations—the town council, the theater, the circus, the stadium—held altars to and images of the gods. Household calendars and domestic space replicated in miniature these civic structures, wherein celebrations of the life-cycle—adulthood, marriages, naming ceremonies—also invoked and honored presiding deities. The gods were everywhere, not only in the public and private buildings of ancient municipalities but also on insignia of office, on military standards, in solemn oaths and contracts, in vernacular benedictions and exclamations, and all throughout the curricula of the educated. It was impossible to live in a Greco-Roman city without living with its gods.¹⁰

How did diaspora Jews (or Jews in mixed or pagan-majority Palestinian cities) cope in this god-congested environment? Jews knew that these other gods existed: their own sacred Scriptures said as much. "Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods (ἐν θεοῖς)?" Moses asked (Exod 15:11 LXX). True, these other gods were in the Jewish view less exalted than Israel's god. "The θεοί of the nations are δαιμόνια," sang the Psalmist (Ps 95:5 LXX): a δαίμων was specifically a lower, cosmic god. But Moses, in Exodus, seemed to counsel that these deities be treated with some courtesy: "Do

tian Origins Whose Time Has Come to Go," *SR* 35 (2006): 231–46. On Roman adoption, see Michael Peppard, *The Son of God in the Roman World: Divine Sonship in Its Social and Political Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 50–60.

8. Christopher P. Jones, *Kinship Diplomacy in the Ancient World* (Revealing Antiquity 12; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

9. Peppard, *Son of God*, 60–67, on empire as family.

10. Tertullian fulminates against the gods' omnipresence particularly in *De Spectaculis* and in *De Idololatria*, in the latter treatise specifying also private family festivities (16), the insignia of civic office (18), military standards (19), education (10), oaths, contracts, and vernacular expressions (20–23). Mishnah *Avod. Zar.* 1:3 names the Kalends (a winter festival eight days after the solstice), the Saturnalia (eight days before the winter solstice), and the *kratasis* (days celebrating imperial accession to office) as well as imperial birth days and death days as "the festivals of the gentiles"; see esp. Fritz Graf, "Roman Festivals in Syria Palestina," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture* (ed. Peter Schäfer; 3 vols.; TSAJ 93; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2002), 3:435–51.

not revile the gods (θεοός)" (Exod 22:28 LXX). Commenting on this verse, Philo of Alexandria remarked, "eviling each others' gods always causes war;" and he went on likewise to encourage respect for pagan rulers, "who are of the same seed as the gods" (QE 2.5). The images of the gods might be nugatory (1 Cor 8:4; 10:19; cf. Wis 7:17; 13:1; 15:2–3), but the gods themselves were real. "Indeed," Paul noted to his community in Corinth, "there are many gods and many lords" (1 Cor 8:5–6).¹¹

Their ancestral traditions put Jews in a potentially awkward situation: Israel's god famously demanded that his people worship him alone. And, despite dealing daily with all these other gods, Jews in the diaspora—if we can trust the pagan complaints about them—do generally seem to have drawn the line at λατρεία, excusing themselves (to the occasional irritation of their contemporaries) from performing acts of public cult.¹² Nevertheless, whenever they joined in civic social and cultural life—in council meetings, in law courts, and whether as participants in or as spectators at theatrical performances or musical, rhetorical, or athletic competitions—Jews were present when these gods were celebrated, and Jews were members of those bodies whose municipal duties required showing honor, publically, to the gods.¹³

How did these Jews manage? Our inscriptional and papyrological evidence in particular should caution us against taking at face value the confluence of classical ethnographers' complaints of Jewish ἀσέβεια

11. On the normative polytheism of ancient monotheism, see Paula Fredriksen, "Judaizing the Nations: The Ritual Demands of Paul's Gospel," *NTS* 56 (2010): 232–52, here 240–41; further eadem, *Augustine and the Jews*, 6–20. On Jews respecting pagan gods, see Pieter van der Horst, "'Thou Shalt Not Revile the Gods': The LXX Translation of Exodus 22:28 (27). Its Background and Influence," *Studia Philonica* 5 (1993): 1–8.

12. Pagan complaints of Jewish *asebeia* are assembled in Menahem Stern, ed., *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols.; Fontes ad res Judaicas spectantes; Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1974–84); for anti-Jewish ethnographic slurs more generally, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 440–91. The principle of Jewish exemption from public cult was so well established that emperors, attempting to recruit Jews into onerous service in the civic curiae, stipulated that civic liturgies should not "transgress their religion" (*Digesta Iust.* 50.2.3.3, text with translation and analysis in Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987] 103–7); and Jews were explicitly excused from worship of the emperor (*y. Avod. Zar.* 5.4 [44d]).

13. Inscriptional material on Jews as ephebes, town counselors, and officers in gentile armies is assembled in Margaret Williams, *The Jews among the Greeks and Romans: A Diasporan Sourcebook* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998) 107–31. Two recent discussions of Hellenistic Jewish acculturation may be found in John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan* (323 B.C.E.–117 C.E.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) and in Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). Perhaps these Jews, like Tertullian, were prepared to draw a distinction between being present at (private, domestic) sacrifices and actively participating in them (*De Idol.* 16). For more on Jews in pagan places, see the next note.

and ἀμιξία, rabbinic prescriptions in *Avodah Zara*, and modern notions of "orthodoxy" or of "monotheism." Different Jews negotiated their responsibilities differently. The ephebes Jesus son of Antiphilos and Eleazar son of Eleazar appear in a first-century inscription that was itself dedicated to Heracles and Hermes, the gods of the gymnasium. A papyrus fragment of roughly the same period alludes to an athlete whose "Jewish load" (circumcision) publicly emphasized his Jewish identity precisely when his prowess in foot racing publicly expressed his Greek identity. One inscription, a synagogue manumission, invokes the god of Israel at its beginning while closing with the witness of Zeus, Gaia, and Helios; another, marking a tomb, likewise commemorates funds to be distributed on Passover, Pentecost/Shavuot, and Kalends. Jews in the city of Miletus reserved seats in the theater; they turn up elsewhere in hippodromes and odeons; they both watched and acted in pantomime performances. These sites host divine-human interactions as well as intrahuman ones.¹⁴

If we find Jews in pagan places, we no less find pagans in Jewish places. Some traveled to the temple of the Jews' god in Jerusalem, where they collected in the largest courtyard.¹⁵ Others, closer to home, appear variously engaged in diaspora Jewish activities, most specifically in and around the Jews' ἑθνικαὶ ἀναγνώσεις, their prayer-houses or synagogues. These pagans range across a broad spectrum of activity, from occasional contact, to the voluntary assumption of some Jewish ancestral practices, to major benefaction and patronage.¹⁶ The first point to note

14. On this gymnasium inscription, see Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (135 B.C.–A.D. 75) (rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman; 3 vols. in 4 pts; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1973–87), 3:130–31; Barclay, *Diaspora*, 234–35. On Jews as athletes and gladiators (thus contestants in dedicated events), see Allen Kerkeslager, "Maintaining Jewish Identity in the Greek Gymnasium: A 'Jewish Load' in CPJ 3.519," *JSJ* 28 (1997): 12–33; more recently, Zeev Weiss, *Public Spectacles in Roman and Late Antique Palestine* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 195–226. Pothos son of Strabo in his synagogue inscription invokes both the god of Israel and the Greek divine witnesses: Is Pothos himself, then, a Jew or a godfearer? See Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting* (Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting 5; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 111–16, with full text of the inscription on p. 239; and Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 113–23. On the endowment of Glykon, whose inscription mentions Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Kalends, see, most recently, Walter Ameling, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* (3 vols.; TSAJ 99, 101, 102; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2004), 2:414–22, no. 196. Ameling concludes (p. 422) that either ethnic ascription, Jewish or non-Jewish, is plausible. This ambiguity is itself an important historical datum: "ethnic boundaries" were obviously not patrolled borders.

15. On the pagan presence in the temple precincts, see Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 3:309–13; see too E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 63 BCE–66 CE (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 72–76.

16. On synagogues as "ethnic reading houses," see Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 13. The literature on the godfearers is enormous, the primary materials no less varied than the behav-

about these crossover activities is that they seem to have been ad hoc, voluntary, and not all that unusual: after all, the pagan–Jewish foot traffic went in both directions. The second point to note is that such mutual and fluid arrangements—pagans (and, eventually, gentile Christians) in Jewish places and Jews in pagan (and, eventually, in gentile Christian) places was on the evidence both extremely widespread and extremely socially stable: for centuries into the Common Era, well into the post-Constantinian period, ideologues of separation—Christian literati, bishops, emperors, and rabbis—all still complain about it. In the cities of Mediterranean antiquity, it seems, often if not always, no fences made good neighbors.¹⁷

How do we identify all these ancient actors as they comfortably cross these ethnic/cultural/“religious” lines? And do the data themselves give us any assistance in this effort? Some ancient formulations emphasize the *ét hnic*” aspect, though what we think of as *“religious”* behaviors would also be entailed: Jews can act “gentilely” or “paganly” (*ἐθνικῶς*) and pagans can act “Jewishly” (*Ιουδαϊκῶς*) (Gal 2:14); non-Jews can “Judaize”

iors that they record. For older discussions, see Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 3:150–76; Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 483–501; Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 175–97; and the extensive note in Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, 2:103–7. See, more recently, Fredriksen, “Judaizing the Nations,” 232–52; Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007). Gentile Christians also later complain about pagan Judaizing: Tertullian: some pagans keep Sabbath and Passover but also worship at their own altars (*Nat.* 1.13, 3–4); Commodian: the *medius Iudaeus* runs between synagogue and altar, behavior that the Jews are wrong to tolerate (*Instruct.* 1.37.10); Cyril of Alexandria (fifth century): some men call themselves *θεοσεβείς* while following consistently neither Jewish nor Greek custom (*De Adoratione* 3.92.3). Levine collects and analyzes epigraphical and archaeological evidence for pagan presence in Jewish communities (*Ancient Synagogue*). The famous Aphrodisias inscription lists in separate categories *ἡ ῥοσelytes*” and *ἡ ὀδφearers*,” some of whom are town councillors. Its redating from the third to the fourth/fifth century raises the interesting possibility the some of the *ἡ ὀδ-fearing*” town councillors might be not pagans but Christians; see Angelos Chianotis, “The Jews of Aphrodisias,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 21 (2002): 209–42; Fergus Millar, “Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, C.E. 379–450,” *JJS* 55 (2004): 1–24.

17. Non-Jews continued to frequent Jewish community gatherings even after they became Christian: Origen (ca. 230, Caesarea) tells his Christians not to discuss in church questions they heard raised the day before in synagogue, and not to eat meals in both places (*Hom. Lev.* 5.8; *Sel. Exod.* 12.46); John Chrysostom, notoriously before the high holidays in 387 in Antioch: Christians fast, keep Sabbath, go to synagogue, take oaths in front of Torah scrolls, co-celebrate Passover and Sukkot (“When did they ever feast on Epiphany with us?”). Church canons forbid such co-celebration on through the Visigothic and Byzantine period in the seventh century: see primary material gathered in Amnon Linder, *Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997); see too the essays collected in Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007).

and Jews can "Hellenize."¹⁸ Other formulations emphasize the "religious" aspect, but they thereby entail an ethnic aspect as well. In this second category, in first- and second-century Hellenistic Jewish literary sources, we find pagans who "fear god;" and in later inscriptions, third through fifth century (and most dramatically in Aphrodisias), we find non-Jews who are identified as "godfearers."¹⁹

As with the English, so with the Greek: sometimes ὁδοφάειν "godfearing" simply means "pious," indicating nothing particularly about ethnicity. But sometimes, and especially in Jewish contexts, "godfearing" indicates what we might elsewhere find designated as "Judaizing" (e.g., as in Josephus, *J.W.* 2.18.2). Its "religious" cast notwithstanding, "godfearing" also connotes "ethnic" behaviors. This is all to say that we are looking at, and endeavoring to speak about, ancient Mediterranean phenomena; and in that cultural context, gods and humans formed family groups, and cult is another expression of ethnicity.

When can we as historians know which kind of "godfearer"—a pious person full stop, or a voluntarily Judaizing pagan—our ancient evidence bespeaks? As usual, we have to consider critically each case, without expecting complete agreement among our different interpretive arguments. Sometimes the "ethnicity"—thus, also, the "religious" orientation—of an inscription or (especially) of an incantation will elude us, thus reinforcing the larger social-historical interpretive point: different peoples mixed with and borrowed from each other.²⁰ But sometimes we will find in our evidence a Roman synagogue benefactor (such as Julia Severa) or a Septuagint-celebrating pagan (Philo, *Life of Moses* 2.41–42) or a non-Jew who rests on the Sabbath (as in Juvenal's satire). Such pagans are "sym-

18. On this last point, see Nongbri's remarks, *Before Religion*, 46–50.

19. Thus, the famously Judaizing father in Juvenal's satire "fears" the Sabbath (*metuentem sabbati patrem*; *Sat.* 14:96); Josephus speaks of *σεβόμενοι* who contribute to the temple (*Ant.* 14.7.2); Acts features *φοβούμενοι* and *σεβόμενοι*; inscriptions mention *θεοσεβής*. While problematizing all this literary and inscriptional evidence, Kraemer reviews it in "Godfearers," 63–82.

20. "Magic" is a great opportunity for cross-ethnic/"religious" sharing, in part because of the eminent practicality of its goals. Origen notes that the names of the patriarchs are "so powerful when linked with the name of God that the formula 'the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, the god of Jacob' is used not only by members of the Jewish nation . . . but also by almost all those who deal in magic and spells" (*Cels.* 4.33). On the difficulty in discerning the "ethnicity" of spells, see further Joseph E. Sanzo, "'For Our Lord Was Pursued by the Jews . . .': The (Ab)Use of the Motif of 'Jewish' Violence against Jesus on a Greek Amulet (P. Heid. 1101)," in *One in Christ Jesus: Essays on Early Christianity and "All that Jazz," in Honor of S. Scott Bartchy* (ed. David Matson and K. C. Richardson; Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014), 86–98. Recently, Mika Ahuvia has explored a fascinating case of a Jewish female adept who calls on Babylonian goddesses to mediate her spell: see *Yisrael among the Angels: A Study of Angels in Jewish Texts from the Fourth to Eighth Century CE.* (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2014), 171–78.

pathizers” or (to use another contemporary term) “Judaizers.” The particular inscription or mosaic or literary reference itself might not designate these Judaizing non-Jews specifically as “godfearers.” But as historians, might we?

I think so. “Godfearing” is one of those terms, like “Judaizing,” that is both emic and etic: that is, one of its ancient cultural definitions maps closely onto its modern, academic one. Historiographically, “godfearing” can serve us as an identifier for a long-lived and internally various subgroup that evinced a broad range of behaviors (pious, political, practical) across this specific ethnic divide: the one between Jewishness and everything else.

Of course, “to Persianize” (Μηδίζειν) or “to Egyptianize” would likewise indicate crossover behavior between ἐν everything else” and a particular ethnic/religious group. “Godfearing” specifically—that is, pagan Judaizing—is significant to historians of ancient Mediterranean religions, however, because of the ways that it complicates our conceptualization both of Roman-period Judaism and of ancient Christianity. If so many and such different diaspora Jewish communities over so great a stretch of time so readily accommodated such a broad range of interests and involvements from pagan neighbors, a standing separateness cannot be presupposed, for example, to account for Paul’s remarks in Galatians 2, or for “Peter’s” in Acts 10.²¹ Pauline communities need not be imagined as having the sort of biblical literacy crash courses that would be the envy of modern Methodists.²² And the later gentile Christian pattern of keeping Saturdays as the Sabbath, or of fasting on Yom Kippur, or of taking oaths before Torah scrolls need not be explained by appeal to a sudden interest, via the Old Testament,” in Jewish practices, but can be seen for what it is: a long-lived social pattern within the Greco-Roman city.

Diaspora Jewish involvement in pagan cult and culture also needs to be seen, and to complicate our conceptualization of Roman-period Judaism and of ancient Christianity. We do not have a contemporary term for this ancient (and entirely unremarkable) Jewish behavior in the way that

21. N. T. Wright mirror-reads especially Gal 1:13–14 to construct a diaspora Judaism sharply contrasting with the “Christian” Paul (*Paul and the Faithfulness of God* [2 vols.; Christian Origins and the Question of God 4; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013], e.g., 89, 93, 177, 194 and passim); Philip F. Esler conjectures that diaspora synagogues would have fought against the *ekklēsia*i because of their “potentially idolatrous practice” of mixed table fellowship (*Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul’s Letter* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003], 101) ignoring all the abundant evidence of Jewish/non-Jewish social, thus religious, interactions.

22. The addressees of all of Paul’s letters are pagans who, up until forging their commitment to the god of Israel through the gospel, were actively involved in worship of their native deities, but who were sufficiently familiar with Israel’s sacred Scriptures so that key terms and ideas—e.g., messiah, kingdom of God, law, Moses, David, the prophets—must have already meant something to them. Godfearers fit both of these criteria.

we do, with "godfearing," for the corresponding pagan behavior. Terms such as "simulated" or "not orthodox" come from much later periods of European Jewish history, and inevitably embody anachronistic value judgments. (And "Hellenized" seems too non-specific: after Alexander, what eastern Mediterranean culture was not to some extent "Hellenized"?) Still, the nonexistence of an ancient term for "paganizing Jews" does not, it seems to me, require that we let go of an existing ancient term for "Judaizing pagans."

These normal Jewish negotiations with the majority culture should also complicate our construction of what it meant for a pagan to "become" an "ex-pagan"—a "convert" in our modern terms, a *προσήλυτος* (and that only eventually) in Hellenistic Greek.²³ If native Jews (such as, perhaps, Pothos [Ameling, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, 1:303–7]) summoned lower gods to witness synagogue manumissions, or if one (such as Moschos son of Moschion [Ameling, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, 1:177–80]) placed inscriptions honoring foreign gods in foreign temples while identifying himself as "Ιουδαῖος," how uninvolved with his former gods need a *προσήλυτος* actually have been? And what would it mean, via ritual actions, to change ancestors and ethnic groups? What, indeed, would it mean in antiquity "to convert"?

These are important and interesting questions, none of which I can address in the space remaining here. But, given the difficulties that we have when speaking of all these mixing and mingling gods and humans, it seems overfastidious to shelve our hybrid emic/etic term that *can* still work, should we choose to let it, to identify some of these ancient actors: a "godfearer" is a pagan who voluntarily assumes (like the sympathizing father in Juvenal's *Satire* 14), or who supports (like the patron Julia Severa, who builds the οἶκος for Acmonia's Jews [Ameling, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, 2:348–55]), or who utilizes (like the adept who invokes "the god who was a pillar of fire by night" in order to work his spell, PGM 11.3,007–85) some aspects of Jewishness, which eo ipso implies some degree of contact both with (local) Jews and (thus and also) with their god. As an identifying category, such a term may indeed be "weeping," but so is the phenomenon that it names.

For all the reasons reviewed above, then, but especially for this last one, I would not give up the "godfearers."

23. Matthew Thiessen, "Revisiting the *προσήλυτος* in 'the LXX,'" *JBL* 132 (2013): 333–50.

Who Did What to Whom?

Physical Violence between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity

JOHN G. GAGER

Princeton University

. . . because there were many Jews in the village, and they went about with great freedom, he [Sergius] carried on a continuous contest with them and every day he used to contend against them as with slayers of God . . . gnashing his teeth and saying, "These crucifiers of the Son of God should not be allowed to live at all." And he used to upbraid Christians who had dealings with them in the way of taking and giving. One day he led about twenty of their disciples by night, and took fire and went and burnt their great synagogue to the ground, with their books and their trumpets and all their furniture. . . . But these men [the Jews], when they saw that all their hope had been cut off through the burning of their books and all of their furniture, lamented bitterly, and because they were settled in the territory of the church of Amida and used to pay many contributions to the members of the church . . . all the members of the church became their supporters, threatening the blessed Sergius and saying, "This man wishes to destroy the property of the church." But this zealous man . . . took water and went and put out the fire; they cleared the soil and collected stones and within three days they built a small martyr's chapel in that place, in the name of the Blessed God-bearer (Mary Theotokos).

—John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*¹

Religions produce violent behavior. Or, better, religious people frequently produce physical violence against persons and property, often in the name of religion. Sometimes this violence centers on religious beliefs and practices, but just as often, as Marx and Freud have taught us,

1. Ed. and trans., E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* 17 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1923), 91–92.

religion serves as a cover for other forces—psychological disorders, economic stress, social conflict, and so on. Sometimes this violence is directed against others within a single religious tradition, as with conflicts between “orthodox” parties and those whom they regard as “heretics.” But just as commonly, violence takes place with “outsiders”—Christians against Jews, Jews against Christians, both against pagans, Christians against Muslims, Muslims against Christians, and so on. Here I intend to explore just one aspect of this complex, namely, physical violence by Christians directed at Jews and their synagogues. What forms did this violence take? Where and when did it happen? How do we learn about violent incidents against synagogues? Can we trust our sources? Were these acts of violence a major chapter in the story of relations between Jews and Christians in late antiquity, roughly from the mid-fourth century to the early sixth, or a minor sidelight? And what caused them?

The evidence of Christian violence against Jews lies in the destruction and expropriation of Jewish property, that is, synagogues. Violence against Jewish persons comes much later. The evidence, both literary and archeological, for violence against property remains scattered in a variety of scholarly sources, and for this reason it has seemed useful to create a catalogue here, listing all of the available evidence for Christian violence against synagogues. I will give the location of each event, its date, an indication of whether we are dealing with destruction or appropriation, whether the evidence is literary or archaeological, and finally the primary scholarly source where information and discussion can be found.² My list is surely incomplete. New evidence will show up, and some incidents never made it into public media. Brent Shaw mentions two texts of Augustine that may point in this direction. In one sermon, the bishop warns his flock of the danger posed by the Jews: “See in what great honor the Christian people are now held and in what disrespect the Jewish people are now held. Not long ago, when by chance they dared to oppose the Chris-

2. W. Kinzig has written an important article on relations between Jews and Christians in the early centuries: “Juden und Christen in der Antike: Trennungen, Transformationen, Kontinuitäten und Annäherungen,” in *Among Jews, Gentiles and Christians in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Oskar Skarsaune on his 65th Birthday* (ed. R. Hvalvik and J. Kaufman; Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, 2011), 129–56. In section 5 of the article (“Die Faszination des Judentums für das Christentum bei gleichzeitiger Abgrenzung des Christentums vom Judentum führt zu einer Spannung, die nicht aufgelöst wird”), Kinzig approaches the issues of physical violence between Jews and Christians. He offers a list of twenty incidents, of which six deal with Jewish violence against Christians and fourteen with Christian attacks on synagogues. While recognizing that not all attacks made it into print, he comments that this is a small number, given that it covers the entire Mediterranean basin and some 250 years. Kinzig’s list is incomplete. It does not include several sites with archaeological evidence (Acquileia, Stobi, Gerasa, Apamea) and neglects a number of ancient texts that make mention of attacks. My list numbers twenty-seven references, literary and archaeological.

tians, *you heard what happened to them.*"³ In another sermon, he reminds his listeners that because it so happens that the Jews have been disciplined in some places for their misbehavior, they accuse us, suspect, or pretend that we are always getting them treated like that."⁴ Shaw concludes, *Such statements hint at the use of force.*"⁵

* * * * *

Early fourth century: **Tipasa** (coastal Algeria). The local synagogue, built on the site of a former temple of the Roman god Dragon, was later converted to a church in honor of the local female saint/martyr Salsa (*nunc in honore martyris triumphet Ecclesia*). Literary evidence includes *Les martyrs*, ed. and trans. H. Leclercq, vol. 3 (Paris: H. Oudin, 1921) 57–70; the story of the synagogue's conversion appears in the *Passion of Salsa in Catalogus Codicum hagiograficorum latinorum antiquiorum saeculo xvi . . . biblioteca nationali Parisiensi*, vol. 1 (1889) 346; Seaver;⁶ Parkes, 187.⁷

Early fourth century: **Dertona** (Italy). Bishop Innocentius ordered all citizens to be baptized; those (Jews) who refused he sent away from the city (*dispersi sunt*); the local Christians with their leader then demolished (*everterunt*) the synagogue and erected a church; pagan temples were also destroyed. Literary evidence includes *Vita Innocentii* ch. 2, in *Acta Sanctorum*, April 2, 484; the online version is available at <http://acta.chadwyck.com>; Seaver, 45; Simon, 225;⁸ Parkes, 187.

Late fourth century (date uncertain; close to 386): **Antioch**. The famous synagogue dedicated to the Maccabean martyrs was taken over by Christians, who retained its Maccabean associations. Literary evidence: Simon, 225; Levine, 296–97;⁹ Brenk;¹⁰ Schatkin;¹¹ Millar.¹²

Before 88: **Rome**. In a letter to his sister Marcellina (*Ep.* 42.23),

3. Sermon 5.5 in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (CCSL)* 51:532–56; cited by Brent D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 282–83.

4. Sermon 62.12.18 (CCSL 41Aa, 132); Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 283.

5. Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 283.

6. James E. Seaver, *Persecution of the Jews in the Roman Empire (300–438)* (University of Kansas Publications: Humanistic Studies 30; Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1952), 45–46.

7. James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964).

8. Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135–425)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

9. Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

10. B. Brenk, "Die Umwandlung der Synagoge von Apamea in eine Kirche," in *Tesserae: Festschrift für Josef Engemann* (JAC, Ergänzungsband 18; Münster: Aschendorff, 1991), 14–17.

11. M. Schatkin, "The Maccabean Martyrs," *VC* 28 (1974): 97–113.

12. Fergus Millar, "Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379–450," *JJS* 55 (2004): 1–24, esp. 16–18.

Ambrose, bishop of Milan, writes that Magnus Maximus (who sought unsuccessfully to dethrone Theodosius I and was killed in 388) having heard that a synagogue had been burned in Rome, ordered the synagogue rebuilt by the Christians of the city. Ambrose notes that Maximus issued the command in the name of maintaining public order. The people of Rome, says the bishop, mocked the usurper by saying that he had become a Jew. His death, he adds, was the divine punishment for his command regarding the rebuilding the synagogue. Literary evidence.

Ca. 388: **Acquileia/Milan?** In the same letter to his sister (41.1), Ambrose writes that, while he was in Acquileia, he received word that a synagogue of the Jews and a meeting-house (*conventiculum*) of the Valentinians had been burned at the instigation of the local bishop. It is not clear if the event took place at Acquileia or elsewhere, perhaps in Milan, but it seems not to be identical with the incident in the previous note. A Jewish community had existed at Acquileia at least since the third century CE. A mosaic floor with inscriptions containing possibly Jewish names, along with signs of a fire, has been excavated below a Christian basilica. Some think that the lower mosaic floor belonged to an earlier synagogue; others hold that the names point to Christians from Syria.¹³ Ambrose admits, "I declare that I set fire to the synagogue, or at least that I ordered those who did it, that there might not be a place where Christ was denied. If it be objected to me that I did not set the synagogue on fire here, I answer, it began to be burnt by the judgment of God, and my work came to an end" (*Ep.* 40.8). Whether this sardonic remark is connected to the fire at Acquileia is uncertain. Archeological and literary evidence; Steuernagel.¹⁴

88: **Callinicum** (approximately 250 miles east of Antioch, on the Euphrates River). The synagogue was destroyed by local Christians (with monks?) and the local bishop. The emperor Theodosius I ordered that it be rebuilt at the bishop's expense. Bishop Ambrose of Milan (*Ep.* 40 and 41) urged the emperor to rescind his order and halted a worship service until the emperor agreed. The building may have been converted to a church. Ambrose states that there is no good reason to rebuild a synagogue and then adds, "There is, then, no adequate cause for such a commotion, that the people should be so severely punished for the burning of a building, and much less since it is the burning of a synagogue, a home of unbelief, a house of impiety, a receptacle of folly, which God Himself has condemned" (40.14). If the synagogue were to be rebuilt, says Ambrose, it

13. See the discussion in David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), xiii–xiv. Noy notes that there are signs of Jewish missionary activity in two Acquilean Christian writers, Rufinus and Chromatius (p. xiii).

14. Dirk Steuernagel, *Kult und Alltag in römischen Hafenstädten: Soziale Prozesse in archäologischer Perspektive* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 2004), 149.

should bear the title "THE TEMPLE OF IMPIETY, ERECTED FROM THE PLUNDER OF CHRISTIANS." Literary evidence: Levine, 298; Juster, 462–64;¹⁵ Parkes, 166–68; Millar, among others.

Late fourth/early fifth century: **Stobi** (modern Macedonia). Two earlier synagogues, one related to the well-known inscription dedicated to Polymarchus, under a later church. One excavator speaks of an "apparently deliberate expropriation of a synagogue which had been in active use up to that time."¹⁶ In 88 Emperor Theodosius issued from Stobi two decrees (Cod. Theod. 16.4.2 and 16.5.15) which forbade dialogue with heretics and excluded them from conducting secret meetings; these decrees may lie behind the displacement of the synagogue by a church. Archaeological evidence: Moe;¹⁷ Levine, 27–273.

Early fifth century, ca. 415–420: **Apamea** (Syria, on the Orontes River). Church mosaics have been found laid over an earlier synagogue mosaic. Archaeological evidence: Levine, 211; Brenk; Millar, 14.

411: **Edessa** (eastern Turkey). Bishop Rabbula expropriated the local synagogue and converted it to church of Saint Stephen; the episode is noted briefly in the *Chronicle of Edessa* 51. Literary evidence: Juster, 464–65; Millar, 15–16.

414: **Alexandria** (Egypt). In 414, following clashes between Jews and Christians in which murders took place on both sides, Bishop Cyril expelled the Jews from the city, expropriated their synagogues and converted them to churches. According to John of Nikiu (ca. 690), in his later account of these events, one of the expropriated synagogues was named after St. George (*Chronicle* 84.90–103). Literary evidence: Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.13; Juster, 465; Parkes, 234–35; Millar, 20–22; Irshai.¹⁸

418: **Magona** (Minorca). Led by the local bishop, Christians first debate with Jews, seek to convert them, and then burn the synagogue. The Jews "convert" and build a church on the site at their own expense. There is a lengthy account in the Letter of Severus. Literary evidence: Bradbury;¹⁹ Sivan.²⁰

419–422: **Palestine–Rabbat Moab** (Aeropolis in contemporary Jordan)

15. Jean Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain: Leur condition juridique, économique et sociale* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1914).

16. D. Moe, "The Cross and the Menorah," *Archaeology* 30 (1977): 57.

17. *Ibid.*, 148–57.

18. Oded Irshai, "Christian Historiographers' Reflections on Jewish–Christian Violence in Fifth-Century Alexandria," in *Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire. The Poetics of Power in Late Antiquity* (ed. Natalie B. Dohrmann and Annette Yoshiko Reed [Jewish Culture and Contexts; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013], 137–53.

19. Scott Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca, Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (Oxford Early Christian Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

20. H. Sivan, "Between Gaza and Minorca: The (Un)making of Minorities in Late Antiquity," in Dohrmann and Reed, *Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire*, 128–36.

and other sites. Barsauma, a monk (not Barsauma of Nisibis) with some forty followers, burned the synagogue at Rabbat Moab, despite Jewish resistance, and destroyed pagan temples and other Jewish synagogues in Roman Palestine. Literary evidence: Juster, 464–65; Parkes, 236; Nau,²¹ Brenk.

423 Eastern Empire, possibly at Antioch (Southeast Turkey). In a law promulgated by Theodosius II (Cod. Theod. 16.8.25) in 423 and addressed to Asclepiodotus, the Roman governor (Praefectus Praetorio) of the East, the emperor forbade the burning and expropriation of synagogues and required that new land be given to Jews for rebuilding lost synagogues. The Syriac *Life of Simeon Stylites*²² mentions the law (121) and adds that it required that the rebuilding should be at Christians' expense. Under pressure from Christian leaders, among them Simeon, the decree was briefly rescinded. The *Life* (121) concludes the story with the remark that the Jews became a laughing-stock in the world as their Sabbaths and synagogues remained deserted and empty." This may be an allusion to synagogues that had been destroyed; Theodosius's law may have been a response to the expropriation of a synagogue at Antioch or to Barsauma's maraudings in 419–422. Literary evidence: Linder.²³

442: Constantinople. In response to news that Jews had erected a synagogue in the Copper Market of the city, the emperor Theodosius II authorized the confiscation of the synagogue and its conversion to a church, dedicated the Holy Virgin. Literary evidence: Juster, 470–72; Parkes, 238.

450: Gerasa (Jordan). In 530–531, a church was built over the remains of a long-standing synagogue. Archaeological evidence: Levine, 257–58; Dvorjetski.²⁴

489: Antioch. Another synagogue, together with bones dug from graves surrounding the synagogue, was burned by the Greens faction. John of Ephesus, in his *Ecclesiastical History* (fragments published by Nau), reports that the emperor Zeno, annoyed by the act, exclaimed, "Why didn't they burn the living Jews along with the dead?" Literary evidence: Nau,²⁵ Juster, 469.

21. F. Nau, "Deux episodes de l'histoire juive sous Théodose II (423 et 438) d'après la vie de Barsauma le Syrien," *REJ* 83 (1927): 184–206.

22. *The Lives of Simeon Stylites* (trans. Robert Doran; Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 189–90.

23. Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1987), 287.

24. E. Dvorjetski, "The Synagogue-Church at Gerasa: A Contribution to the Study of Ancient Synagogues," *ZDPV* 121 (2005): 140–67.

25. F. Nau, "L'histoire ecclésiastique de Jean d'Asie," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 2 (1897): 462.

507: **Antioch.** In that year the Jews of the city were massacred by the Greens, and their synagogue (Daphne) was transformed into the Church of Saint Leontius. The events were undertaken at the order of the Roman consul, Anastasius. The Jews were caught in a violent dispute between the Greens and the Blue. Literary evidence: John Malalas (d. 578), *Chron.* 15.4; Juster, 469.

491: **Rome.** Christian slaves' assassination of their Jewish masters led to an uprising in the city and the burning of a synagogue. King Theodoric, king of the Germans and ruler of Italy, wrote a letter (4.43 in Cassiodorus's edition of Theodoric's letters) to the Roman senate expressing his displeasure at such disorderly behavior and ordering an inquiry into their causes: "enquire into the complaints which are brought against the Jews, and if you find that there is any foundation for them, punish accordingly." Literary evidence: Juster, 466.

49: **Ravenna.** Charges of desecration of the host were lodged against the Jews (that they had thrown the Eucharistic elements into a river). In response, Christians burned their synagogues. King Theodoric ordered the citizens of Ravenna to pay for the rebuilding of the synagogue, with penalties for those unwilling or unable to pay. Literary evidence: Juster, 467, with citation of the relevant texts.

454–546: **Asia Minor** (Turkey). With support from the emperor Justinian, John of Ephesus (mid-sixth century) claimed to have converted eighty thousand pagans, founded ninety-eight churches and twelve monasteries, and transformed seven synagogues into churches (John's *Lives of the Eastern Saints*) Literary evidence: John of Ephesus (PO 18:681); Parkes, 263; Millar.²⁶

Sixth century: **Kalesh near Amida** (Syria). In a small village, a monk, Sergius, and his zealous followers burned down the local synagogue, despite efforts by Christians to prevent them. When the Jews sought to rebuild their synagogue, Sergius and his followers came by night and pulled it apart, stone by stone. Literary evidence: John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, PO 17:90–93; Parkes, 263–64; Sizgorich, 133–34.²⁷

ca. 550: **Borion/Boreium** (ancient Cyrene, modern Libya). "The emperor Justinian (d. 565) 'converted' the Jews of the city and transformed their ancient synagogue into a church" (Procopius, *On Buildings* 6.2). This act reflects a decree of Justinian directed at the churches in North Africa: "We will not allow their synagogues to exist, rather we want to change them into churches" (*Novella* 37 of 532 CE). Literary evidence: Juster, 251; Parkes, 250.

26. Fergus Millar, "A Rural Jewish Community in Late Roman Mesopotamia, and the Question of a 'Split' Diaspora," *JSJ* 42 (2011): 351–74.

27. Thomas Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam* (Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

576: **Clermont** (France). Following a perceived insult directed at a recent Jewish convert, Christian mobs assaulted the Jews. The bishop Avitus sought to calm passions, but a group of Christians defied the bishop and destroyed the synagogue. The bishop then baptized a large number of the Jews. Those who refused were expelled from the city. Literary evidence: Brennan,²⁸ Fredriksen/Irshai.²⁹

Before 85 **Orleans** (France). In his *History of the Franks* (8.1), Gregory of Tours reports the destruction of the local synagogue, "long ago torn down by Christians." The Jews demand, in accordance with the law, that the synagogue be rebuilt at public expense. King Gunthram replied, "By the Lord's command, I will never do it." Literary evidence: Brennan, 335.

91: **Terracina** (Italy). The local bishop, Peter, expelled the Jews from two sites, intending to consecrate the sites as churches. Peter also complained that religious songs of the synagogue disturbed the adjacent church. The episode is discussed by pope Gregory the Great (d. 604 CE) in two letters (*Ep.* 1.34 and 2.6); Gregory urged Peter to leave the Jews alone. Literary evidence: Juster, 467–68; Katz;³⁰ Parkes, 211, 213; Levine, 211.

98: **Palermo** (Italy). Bishop Victor seized the synagogues of the city and consecrated them as churches; Pope Gregory the Great, in response to an appeal by the Jews of Rome on behalf of the Jews of Ravenna, ordered the return of the synagogues to the Jews. The bishop ignored the pope's order and consecrated the buildings as churches, thus settling the matter (Gregory, *Ep.* 9.38). Literary evidence: Juster, 468; Parkes, 213–15.

ca. 604: **Cagliari** (Sardinia). In one of his many pastoral letters (*Ep.* 9.6), Gregory the Great reports that a certain Peter, a recent Jewish convert, had entered the local synagogue (called Caralis) and placed a cross, an image of Mary, and the white robe he had worn during his own conversion ceremony (the day before); the date of the letter is uncertain. Literary evidence: Parkes, 214.

The catalogue yields several insights that deserve more attention than I can devote here; instead I will outline what I take to be the major issues:

1. The evidence for the destruction and expropriation of synagogues must be read with caution, not just the saints' lives, where such acts are frequently recorded, but the archaeological evidence as well.³¹ The report

28. B. Brennan, "The Conversion of the Jews of Clermont in A. D. 576," *JTS* 36 (1985): 320–37.

29. Paula Fredriksen and Oded Irshai, "Christian Anti-Judaism: Polemics and Policies," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 4, *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period* (ed. Steven T. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1022.

30. Steven T. Katz, "Pope Gregory and the Jews," *JQR* 24 (1933): 113–36.

31. For a thoroughgoing and refreshingly skeptical survey of the evidence, see Pierluigi Lanfranchi, "Des paroles aux actes: La destruction des synagogues et leur transformation en églises," in *Chrétiens persécuteurs: Destructions, exclusions, violences religieuses au IV^e siècle*

that the monk Barsauma destroyed many pagan temples and synagogues is no doubt exaggerated; so also the claim that John of Ephesus converted eighty thousand pagans and transformed seven synagogues into churches.³² The number seven is surely derived from the seven letters that open the book of Revelation. But in general, there is no reason to doubt the basic veracity of these reports. The imperial laws forbidding destruction and expropriation (see below) indicate that such events were not uncommon. Similar caution applies to archaeological evidence. Evidence from burned synagogues can be ambiguous. No doubt Christians burned synagogues, but in some cases the evidence is uncertain. Sometimes buildings just burn.³³ And in cases where a church floor has been superimposed over an earlier synagogue mosaic, it is not always clear that the synagogue was still in use at the time (Gerasa), although the act still carries significance as erasure and degradation. The synagogue was no longer just a building where Jews met to pray. It had become a metonym for Judaism itself.

2. In general, Roman imperial legislation protected synagogues and imposed penalties on Christians who violated them.³⁴ Soldiers were forbidden to demand billeting in synagogues (Cod. Theod. 7.8.2). Destruction or expropriation of synagogues remained a crime, although punishments were often ignored. Converted synagogues were to be returned to the Jews (Cod. Theod. 16.8.20) or the Jewish community was to be granted

(ed. Marie-Françoise Baslez; Paris: Albin Michel, 2014) 311–35. I am grateful to my colleague Anne Marie Luijendijk, for calling this article to my attention. Two archeological sites have been proposed as evidence of Christian expropriation of synagogues: Leptis Magna in modern Libya and Volubilis in modern Morocco. The evidence in both cases is entirely hypothetical; see the discussion in Karen B. Stern, *Inscribing Devotion and Death: Archaeological Evidence for Jewish Populations of North Africa* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 161; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 196 n. 2.

3 . In this sense, Christians were equal-opportunity destroyers of non-Christian religious sites; see *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity* (ed. Johannes Hahn, Stephen Emmel, and Ulrich Gotter; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 163; Leiden: Brill, 2008).

3 . S. Fine cites three cases of burned buildings (Ein Gedi, Caesarea Maritima, and Huseifa/Isfiya on Mount Carmel) and comments that the burning “has been attributed to Christians.” But in two cases (Ein Gedi and Caesarea), the archaeological reports make no mention of Christians, and in the case of Huseifa the report states only that “the destruction may have been due to some riot connected with the anti-Jewish policy of Justinian” (see M. Avi-Yonah, “A Sixth-Century Synagogue at Isfiya,” *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 3 [1934]: 131); see Fine, “The Menorah and the Cross: Historical Reflections on a Recent Discovery from Laodicea on the Lycus,” in *New Perspectives on Jewish-Christian Relations: In Honor of David Berger* (ed. Elisheva Carlebach and Jacob J. Schachter; Brill Reference Library of Judaism 33; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 34. In the same article (34) Fine cites the case of the synagogue excavated at Ilici/Elche (Spain) as having been transformed into a church. This interpretation has been favored by Spanish scholars, but L. Levine observes that recent “scholarly opinion has generally come to view these remains as those of a synagogue”; see Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 281.

34. See Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, 1:495–72.

new land for the construction of a replacement synagogue. The basis of these laws is clear: synagogues were *loca religionum* and thus protected sites (Cod. Theod. 7.8.2). This legislation remained in effect even during the reign of Justinian, despite his pronounced anti-Judaism.³⁵ Nonetheless, Justinian's actions at Borion signaled a shift away from the firm protection of synagogues in the Codex Theodosianus.

3. The famous case involving the confrontation of a bishop, Ambrose of Milan, with the emperor Theodosius points to important limitations of Roman laws concerning the protection of synagogues. In 388, a local bishop and his followers had incinerated a synagogue at Callinicum in distant Mesopotamia. When the emperor received word of the event, he ordered the bishop, in accord with the law, to rebuild the synagogue at his own expense. Ambrose, well known for his anti-Judaism, was furious. With the emperor present, Ambrose interrupted a worship service and demanded that Theodosius rescind his order. The emperor complied. Roman law bowed to religious authority. Here is a classic case of the clash between state and church, one that will be repeated many times over in succeeding centuries. In such cases, Roman legislation became void. In 98, the bishop of Palermo circumvented Pope Gregory the Great's order to return expropriated synagogues by a clever ruse; he consecrated the buildings as churches. Lee I. Levine speculates that the very inefficiency of Roman rule created the space in which Christian leaders operated: "Perhaps it was the laxity, ineffectiveness, and perceived corruption of the Imperial bureaucracy in enforcing its decrees limiting non-Christian practice that influenced some elements within the church, from bishops to monks, to seize the initiative."³⁶

4. The case of Gregory the Great highlights several divides that limited the power of the emperor and Roman law. Local bishops felt free to ignore commands from on high. Episcopal authority was paramount on the local scene. Thus, it is a common feature in literary accounts of Christian attacks on synagogues in which bishops took the lead.³⁷ John Chrysostom of Antioch (at the time of his anti-Jewish sermons in Antioch he was a presbyter/priest; he became archbishop of Constantinople only later), Victor of Palermo, Ambrose of Milan, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Rabula of Edessa are bishops known for their violence against synagogues; but they also stand for anonymous others. As noted above, bishops fre-

3 . See *ibid.*, 472. Curiously, Juster does not mention Justinian's decree.

6 . Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 149.

37. See the discussion of Brenk "Die Umwandlung der Synagoge, 19–24; and Johannes Hahn, *Gewalt und religiöser Konflikt: Studien zu den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Christen, Heiden und Juden im Osten des Römischen Reiches (von Konstantin bis Theodosius II)* (Klio: Beihefte n.F. 8; Berlin: Akademie, 2004), 276–80 ("Der Bischof als Schlüsselfigur").

quently worked in concert with local, or sometimes wandering, monks.³⁸ Monks too stood for local religious authority and autonomy, and, in Syria, many bishops rose up from monasteries. A final divide stood *within* local communities, this time *between* leaders and their flocks. When the monk Sergius launched his attack on a synagogue, “the local Christian community turned on him.”³⁹ Here the Christian laity spurned the bishop. The same holds for John Chrysostom in Antioch. As is clear from his eight sermons against the Judaizers, his Judaizing congregants did not share John’s violent rhetoric against the synagogue.⁴⁰ In fact, most of them did not hear John’s anti-Jewish tirades because they were celebrating the high holidays with their Jewish friends and neighbors in one of the synagogues in the city. For them, the synagogue was a *locus religionis*. Similar divisions between leaders and flock surely held true in other communities.

5. The reinforcing intersection of Roman imperial laws with reports of Christian attacks on synagogues enables us to paint a clear picture of when and where these attacks took place. Keeping in mind that the imperial decrees and laws were regularly destined for specific locales, as with Justinian’s novella of 529 concerning the synagogue at Borton, it is possible to locate clusters of violence at particular times and places. The earliest recorded attacks occurred in the early to mid-fourth century (Tipasa, Dertona). Juster speaks of the year 412 as “particulièrement fatale” for synagogues, as proven by the number of laws issued during this period for the protection of synagogues (Cod. Theod. 16.8.20, 21, 25 and 26; from 412 to 423) and the reported instances of synagogues turned into churches (Edessa under Rabbula, Cyril in Alexandria, the bishop of Magona on Minorca, the synagogues at Antioch and Apamea, and the reports of Barsauma’s ravaging of synagogues in Syria and Palestine). It is noteworthy that the latter two were addressed to Asclepiodotus, the Praefectus Praetorio of the East (including Syria and Palestine). The *Life of Simeon Stylites* (121) records that Jews and pagans rejoiced at the law, which had been decreed in response to “pitiful supplications” by the Jews. The *Life* gloats over a temporary reversal of the decree (the Jews “became a laughing-stock in their world as their Sabbaths and synagogues remained deserted and empty”), but in the end it was upheld. Much of this activity took place in the Roman East (Syria and Palestine). Thus, Brenk concludes that North Syria was the primary region in which, between the end of the

8 . After surveying a number of sources, Brenk concludes, “Diesen Quellen zufolge sind es also die Bischöfe und die Mönche, welche Synagogen Brand steckten und gegenfalls christianisierten” (“Die Umwandlung der Synagoge,” 23).

9 . Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief*, 133; see the account in John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, PO 17.1, 90–93.

40. See Parkes, *Conflict of the Church*, 264, for an account of an incident at Nisibis, where local Christians appealed to their bishop about the behavior of zealous monks.

fourth century and the beginning of the fifth, attacks on synagogues clustered.⁴¹ Rome, Ravenna and Milan in the early sixth century mark another cluster.

6. While emperors through the period from the late fourth through the early seventh century maintained the Theodosian laws that protected synagogues, emperors and lower administrative functionaries felt free to modify or ignore them as they saw fit.⁴² As is often the case, there existed a large gap between the letter of the law and its application. At some point, the church produced a Mass for the consecration of former synagogues as churches; the Mass appeals to God to expel (*expulsa*) the *Iudaeicus error* and to wipe away (*detersa*) the filth (*foeditas*) of the *Iudaeicae superstitionis*.⁴³

7. Anti-Judaism was not always, or even regularly, the sole or simple motivation for Christian attacks on synagogues and Jews. In his *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium*, Alan Cameron notes the ties of Jews in several cities to the faction of the Blues;⁴⁴ their frequent opponents, the Greens, were noted for their dislike of Jews. Discussing a series of Green attacks on synagogues at Antioch, Cameron concludes that 't would be wholly misleading to suggest that the issue around factional rivalry revolved in Antioch was Judaism. . . . [I]t is likely that the Blues of Zeno's day protected Jews less out of disinterested philo-Judaism than simply to annoy the Greens.'⁴⁵ And of the events at Alexandria in 412, he comments that "anti-Semitism was again the consequence rather than the cause of the trouble."⁴⁶ The issue was a dispute about pantomime dancers. At Amida, the efforts by the zealous monk Sergius to burn the local synagogue appear to have been spurred by his opposition to business relations between Jews and Christians in the town.⁴⁷ Still, anti-Judaism

41. Brenk, "Die Umwandlung der Synagoge," 16–17. Brenk includes the destruction of the synagogue at Callinicum in 388 in his grouping.

42. See Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, 466–68.

43. The text is preserved in the Gelasian Sacramentary I.93, produced around 750; see the discussion in Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain*, 468–69.

44. Evidence from Miletus, Aphrodisias, and Antioch points to ties between Blues and Jews; see Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976) 79. Of interest is a Byzantine midrash attached to the Targum Sheni of Esther. King Solomon presides over the games in the hippodrome of Jerusalem. The spectators were divided into four sections, each under one of the colors of the four circus factions: R. abbi Yossi said, 'The King and his household, the sages and their disciples, the priests and the levites were dressed in blue; the people of Israel wore white . . . the nations who came from abroad who came to bring gifts to the King were clothed in green.' " See E. Ville-Patlagean, "Une image de Salomon en basileu byzantine," *REJ* 71 (1962): 9–33. On the role of the colors—blues on top, greens at the bottom—Ville-Patlagean comments that it represents "le point de vue juif habituel" (p. 15).

45. Cameron, *Circus Factions*, 150.

46. *Ibid.*, 151.

47. Millar, "Rural Jewish Community," 359. Millar suggests that the Jews may have been "tenants on land owned by the Church."

or, better, anti-Semitism was never far from the surface. Sergius is said to have gnashed his teeth at the Jews of Amida and cried, "These crucifiers of the Son of God should not be allowed to live at all."

8. The end result is a mixed picture of Christianization in the Roman East. Jews and, to a lesser extent, pagans posed a serious threat to the triumphalist self-understanding of many Christians and certainly of many church leaders. For them, as Ignatius had put it already in the early second century, if we still go on observing Judaism, we admit that we never received grace" and "it is monstrous to talk Jesus Christ and to live like a Jew" (*Mag.* 8.1; 10.2). Fergus Millar, in his refreshing study of Jews and Christians in the Roman East, has put this in strong terms: "the Jewish presence was felt as a recurrent threat."⁴⁸ A combination of factors forces us to what he calls a radical reconsideration of the place of Judaism in the predominantly Christian Greek empire."⁴⁹ Here I can only list some of these factors: the continued appeal of synagogues for Christians; the series of new synagogues built, mostly in Palestine, throughout the period; the presence of Jewish Christians/Christian Jews in the region; Jewish criticisms of Christian beliefs and biblical interpretations; Jewish celebrations at Christian setbacks; the emperor Julian's attempt to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem;⁵⁰ occasional violent confrontations between Jews and Christians, for example, during the reign of Julian and again in the early seventh century (Millar relates the story of Jews in Laodicea who "took an arch-deacon, an excellent man, into the theater and beat him");⁵¹ repeated and successful appeals by Jews before emperors, pleading that they uphold the laws protecting synagogues; the belief that in the East, at Purim, Jews mocked the cross and ridiculed Christianity;⁵² and the famous incident at Inmestar (Syria), reported by the church historian Socrates (*Ecclesiastical History* 7.16), during which drunken Jews allegedly mocked Christians for their belief in the redemptive value of the cross, seized a Christian boy, crucified him and tortured him to death.⁵³ Whether these events actually

48. *Ibid.*, 2.

49. *Ibid.*, 10.

6 . On the centuries-long and frequently hysterical responses to Julian's efforts, see David Levenson, "The Ancient and Medieval Sources for the Emperor Julian's Attempt to Rebuild the Jerusalem Temple," *JSJ* 35 (2004): 409–60.

5 . Millar, "Christian Emperors," 1. *Cod. Theod.* 16.8.21 (issued in 420 and addressed to the Praefectus Praetorio of Illyricum) stipulates that synagogues shall not be burned or damaged and goes on to warn Jews not to become insolent or commit rash acts against the Christian cult. The violence was mutual.

2 . So Theodosius II in a law of 408 addressed to the Prefectus Praetorio of the East (*Cod. Theod.* 16.8.18).

3 . For a biting history of Jewish and Christian interpreters of these events, see Elliott Horowitz, *Reckless Rites: Purim and the Legacy of Jewish Violence* (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 213–47.

happened and whether we believe every report about destroyed synagogues in the saints' lives is here beside the point. These were not ephemeral events, here today forgotten tomorrow. Like nuclear waste, they have a long afterlife, in popular memory and in the popular literature (sermons, tracts, public debates, posters, etc.) that sustained the stories. John Chrysostom's sermons survive in as many as two hundred minuscule manuscripts alone;⁵⁴ they were translated into other languages, including Syriac, Latin, and Russian and were later incorporated into the Byzantine liturgy.⁵⁵ It is difficult to imagine that they did not play an important role in the later destruction of synagogues in Antioch (423, 489, 507). What these sermons and stories reflect is the official, and sometimes popular, Christian *imaginaire* about Jews at a time and in a region where Jews were very much a prominent feature of the cultural landscape. Here, in the Roman East, the triumph of Christianity was very much a spotty affair. That the fourth and early fifth centuries were an *aurea saecula*, a golden age, for Jews, as some have argued, seems questionable. Was this true for the Jews in Rome and Milan, in Antioch, in greater Syria and Palestine, in Alexandria, in Stobi (modern Macedonia) and Callinicum (near the Persian frontier), or in Magona on Minorca? Probably not.

54. See S. Krawczynski and U. Riedinger, "Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des Flavius Josephus und Klemens von Alexandria," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 56 (1964): 8.

55. See the brief discussion in Robert Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late 4th Century* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage 4; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 161–62. A fragment of the sermons against the Judaizers is preserved in a ninth-century manuscript.

How Do the Dead Sea Scrolls Help Us to Think about Gender in Ancient Judaism?

MAXINE L. GROSSMAN

University of Maryland

Treatments of women and gender in the Dead Sea Scrolls have often focused on questions of marriage and celibacy.¹ Early readings of the sectarian *Community Rule* (1QS), influenced by classical descriptions of celibate Essenes, highlighted the text's presentation of individual, nominally male "volunteers" to the *yahad* community and noted the absence of references to wives, children, or marriage practices. These "celibate Qumran Essenes" were contrasted with non-Qumranite communities of "marrying Essenes" (following a brief reference in Josephus), associated with the *Damascus Document* (CD). Recent scholarship has challenged this

*Ross Kraemer is a teacher, scholar, and role model extraordinaire. I am grateful to have had the chance to learn from her in so many ways. It is especially appropriate that I focus here on a topic related to gender and the scrolls, given her many contributions to my thoughts on those subjects and their intersection.

1. Studies of women in the scrolls now number more than a single footnote can contain, but see esp. Tal Ilan, "Women in Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 123–47; William Loader, *The Dead Sea Scrolls on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Sectarian and Related Literature at Qumran* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Sidnie White Crawford, "Not according to Rule: Women, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran," in *Emanuel: Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (ed. Shalom M. Paul et al.; VTSup 94; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 127–50; and Eileen M. Schuller's original programmatic treatments, "Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2:117–44; and Schuller, "Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects* (ed. Michael O. Wise et al.; Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 722; New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1994), 115–31.

dichotomy. Some scholars now argue that marriage was the norm in the scrolls movement, with celibacy as a minority practice or absent altogether.² The centrality of Qumran as the key habitation site of the group has also been called into question.³

The binary of marriage versus celibacy" is actually deceptive, assuming the presence of a familiar category ("ordinary Judean marriage practice") and an unfamiliar one (celibacy). As the evidence demonstrates, however, it is the apparently familiar category that must be queried and redefined. Consideration of the treatment of marriage and the status of women—especially as articulated in the *Damascus Document* and the *Rule of the Congregation* (1QSa)—will help us to highlight some of the surprising contributions of the scrolls to our understanding of gender in an ancient Judean context.⁴

Sectarian Marriage and Women's Authority: Some Evidence

The *Damascus Document* articulates a number of norms for marriage practices and women's authority.⁵ Married couples within the Damascus covenant group are permitted to divorce, but only with the permission of the group's Examiner (מבקר).⁶ Marital sexual behavior is constrained by strict communal standards: One who comes to fornicate with his

2. See esp. Cecilia Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document* (SBL Academia Biblica 21; Leiden: Brill, 2005); Eyal Regev, *Sectarianism in Qumran: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Religion and Society 45; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007).

3. See esp. Alison Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yahad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for the Community Rule* (STDJ 77; Leiden: Brill, 2009); and John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

4. Although I continue to find merit in judicious use of the term "Jews" in reference to the ancient Mediterranean, I am happy to use "Judean" here, as a nod to Ross Kraemer's arguments on the subject. See Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 179–200, and the literature cited there.

5. For the text of the Damascus Document, see Joseph M. Baumgarten and Daniel Schwartz, "Damascus Document (CD)," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*, vol. 2, *Damascus Document, War Scroll, and Related Documents* (ed. James H. Charlesworth et al.; PTS DSSP 2; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 4–57; and Joseph M. Baumgarten, *Qumran Cave 4.XIII: The Damascus Document (4Q266–73)* (DJD 18; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996). On treatments of women in the text, see esp. Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document*; Maxine L. Grossman, "Reading for Gender in the Damascus Document," *DSD* 11 (2004): 212–39.

6. See the fragmentary statement at CD 13.17; CD 13.7–19 comprises a treatment of the responsibilities of the Examiner.

wife contrary to the law (יקרב לזנות לאשתו אשר לא כמשפט) shall depart and return no more," a standard that may refer to sex during pregnancy (following Josephus's statement that marrying Essenes have sex only for procreation), or to other inappropriate sexual behavior.⁷ The *Damascus Document* also famously rejects unclear incest marriages and prohibits polygyny (or perhaps marriage after divorce).⁸ The laws of the *Damascus Document* further urge participants not to create marriages between mismatched partners (possibly referring to priestly–nonpriestly marriages, marriage to non-Judeans, or marriage between couples of highly disparate ages) and to reveal the flaws of a potential bride to her husband prior to their marriage.⁹ In addition, marriage is forbidden if the intended wife has been sexually active, either "as a virgin in her father's house, or after having been married"; women with a "bad reputation" (שם רע) need to be evaluated before they can enter into marriage with a male covenanter.¹⁰

These laws are in character with sectarian legal structures more generally. A common penal code, found with variations in both the *Community Rule* and the *Damascus Document*, creates something of a reciprocal disciplinary structure, assuming that all participants will be vigilant in observing themselves and others for inappropriate speech and deeds.¹¹ The code punishes participants for a variety of challenges to the authority and order of the sectarian group and its leadership; the code also penalizes such transgressions as unnecessary nakedness and accidental exposure of the genitals. Penalties for transgressions are of varied duration; outright banishment is possible for some transgressions (including the *zēnūt* case noted above).

Enforcement of constraints on sexual behavior requires structures of supervision that go beyond the ordinary sectarian discipline, as several textual witnesses demonstrate. In the *Rule of the Congregation*, a life-cycle pattern that lists the periods of childhood and adulthood for group members includes the assertion that a man may not marry and enter a sexual relationship until the age of twenty, at which point his wife will be received to witness with regard to him (concerning) the judgments of the

7. 4Q270 7 i 12–13; par. 4Q267 9 vi 4–5. See Baumgarten, DJD 18, 110–11, 162–65.

8. CD 4.20–5.11.

9. 4Q271 3 7–10; par. 4Q267 7 12–14; 4Q269 9 1–3; 4Q270 5 14–17. See Baumgarten, DJD 18, 175–76; par. 103–4, 132, 154–55.

10. 4Q271 3 10–15; par. 4Q269 9 4–8; 4Q270 5 17–21. See Baumgarten, DJD 18, 175–76; par. 132, 154–55.

11. The most complete version appears in the *Community Rule* (1QS 6.24–7.25). *Damascus Document* parallels include 4Q266 10 i–ii; 4Q267 9 vi; 4Q270 7 i; see Baumgarten, DJD 18, 72–75, 110–11, 162–64. A version also appears in 4Q265, "4QMiscellaneous Rules," formerly known as 4QSD for its combined use of language familiar from both the *Serekh* (*Community Rule*) and *Damascus Document* traditions.

Torah and to take a place in the pronouncement of judgments.”¹² The reference to the sectarian wife stands out in contrast to the rest of the text: her responsibilities are defined not by her age or sectarian status but rather by her relationship to her husband. And it is precisely on the subject of that private intimate relationship that she is permitted to serve as a witness.¹³

The Damascus Document, similarly, notes that the evaluation of women with problematic reputations should be made through אֵלָּא amination by trustworthy and knowledgeable women (בראות נשים נאמנות וידעות) selected by the command of the Examiner over the Many.”¹⁴ It is thus on the authority of certain women’s rulings that such marriages can take place, even as the final sanction for their performance lies in the hands of the Examiner.

The result is a curious social dynamic: while participants—and especially women—in the covenant group are held to a rigorous and invasive standard of sexual constraint, that standard of sexual constraint also gives some women an unusual degree of social power. Their power extends, furthermore, beyond the reach of certain elements in their groups’ male authority structure: at some level, and in some cases, the men must simply “trust” that their women are “knowledgeable.” There is an ironic tension in the presence of rules so strictly patriarchal that their enforcement requires a potential destabilization of the ordinary patriarchal order.

If sectarian group leaders needed these knowledgeable women, it does not follow that they had to like it. The tensions in their disciplinary structure are evident in a multilayered, and much-discussed, passage from the *Damascus Document* penal code:

Whoever complains against the Fathers shall be expelled from the congregation and not come back again. But if against the Mothers, he shall

12. 1QSa 1.11. For the text of 1QSa, see D. Barthélemy, “28a. Règle de la Congrégation (1QSa),” in *Qumran Cave 1* (ed. D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik; DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 108–18. Translations of this passage vary; see, in contrast, “1Q28a (1QSa) 1QRule of the Congregation,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (ed. Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar; Leiden: Brill; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1:99–103. For fuller discussion of gender in 1QSa, with more extensive bibliography, see Maxine L. Grossman, “Women and Men in the Rule of the Congregation: A Feminist Critical Assessment,” in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods* (ed. Maxine L. Grossman; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 229–45; and, independently reaching similar conclusions, Tal Ilan, “Reading for Women in 1QSa (Serekh ha-Edah),” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures* (ed. Armin Lange, Emanuel Tov, and Matthias Weigold; 2 vols.; VTSup 140; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 1:61–76.

13. This passage has generated substantial scholarly response; see further below.

14. 4Q270 5 21; par. 4Q269 9 7–8; 4Q271 3 13–15; see Baumgarten, DJD 18, 154–55, par. 132, 175–76. “Trustworthy” is probably a technical term; see, e.g., CD 9.22, 23, where a judgment requires the testimony of “trustworthy witnesses” (עֵיִדִּים נְאֻמָּנִים).

be punished for ten days, because the mothers have no רוקמה in the midst of the congregation.¹⁵

Fathers" and Mothers" appear here as parallel roles, apparent foils to one another, and the framing appears to indicate some type of official identification, rather than simple parental status.¹⁶

The parallel presentation does not, however, indicate an *equal* status for the two roles. To the contrary, the penalty for speaking against the Fathers falls within the most severe category in the penal code, punished by outright banishment, while the ten-day penalty for transgressions against the Mothers represents the *least* severe of any in the code, on a par with penalties for making rude hand gestures or interrupting someone who is speaking.¹⁷ The text thus gives with one hand and takes back with the other, acknowledging women with public status while denying the importance of that public role.¹⁸

The text then asserts, in addition, that women have no רוקמה in the congregation. Other uses of this expression indicate something visual: "variegation," "multi-coloredness," or "embroidery."¹⁹ Some scholars have suggested that רוקמה refers to an embroidered article of clothing (akin to a stole), representative of authorized status in the group.²⁰ By extension, its meaning here seems to be something like "distinction" or recognized public authority.

15. 4Q270 7 i 13–15; see Baumgarten, DJD 18, 162–64.

16. Attention to this terminology brings to mind the discussion around "honorific" or "unctional" roles of terms like *archisynagōgos* in ancient Judean inscriptions, for which see most recently Kraemer, "Women Office Holders in Ancient Jewish Synagogues, Revisited," in Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses*, 232–41, and the extensive bibliography referenced there.

17. See n. 11 for textual references; the 4QDamascus material is fragmentary on these particular examples but seems consistent with the more complete witness present in 1QS.

18. Even the possibility of public status is a point of dispute. Although the *Rule of the Congregation* speaks of women "making their place," a term that elsewhere appears to designate a public role (compare 1QSa 1.11 with 1.16 and 1.20), the *Damascus Document* mentions only the evaluation by "rustworthy women" and not the means by which they communicate their findings (to the Examiner, most likely, or to the group as a whole).

19. Scholars have translated רוקמה as "multicolored" or "variegated" in the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (e.g., 4Q405 14–15 i 3, 6; 15–16 4; 11Q17 4.10, 5.3, 5.5, 7.13, 9.7). Similar descriptions of "multicolored" decorations (רוקמה) appear in the *War Scroll*; see 1QM 5.6, 9, 14: 7.11; 4Q391 1–3 18. Biblical references suggest "embroidered" cloth (Judg 5.30), sometimes in connection with relationship to God (Ezek 16:10, 13, 18; 17:3; 1 Chr 29:2) and sometimes in relation to kings (Ezek 26:16). See Ilan, "Women in Qumran," 137–38, and the sources cited there.

20. On this, see esp. George J. Brooke, "Between Qumran and Corinth: Embroidered Allusions to Women's Authority," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St. Andrews in 2001* (ed. James R. Davila; STDJ 46; Leiden: Brill, 2003). For the term רוקמה in close proximity to the term "ephod" (אֶפֶד), see 11Q17 9.7–8.

The statement of explanation (“because”) is also rhetorically interesting. It suggests a need for some mechanism of support to prove the validity of the claim, and it gives an *in medias res* quality to the text’s assertions. Together, these elements suggest that what we have here may reflect a point of contestation in a larger conversation, rather than a view shared by all members of the group.²¹

Some Considerations of the Evidence

In her introduction to *Unreliable Witnesses*, Ross Kraemer remarks on developments in the study of women’s religion in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean. She notes that her earliest scholarship focused on “the recovery and accurate description of what women themselves did and thought within contexts that could be labeled ‘religious,’” alongside explorations of theoretical models that might help to make sense of the historical evidence.²² Developments in the field—with regard to both evidence and theory—led Kraemer and other scholars to attend “far more carefully to the degree to which the rhetorical uses of gender obscure our vision of antiquity.”²³ Discussion has thus moved from real women and their lived experiences to imagined women and the ways that people might “hink with women,” and in turn to larger conceptual questions about gender construction in the ancient world.

Our evidence for sectarian marriage practices and women’s authority provides an opportunity in microcosm to follow this same line of academic development. What might we say about the possibilities for real lived experience among sectarian women, and for methodological insights for understanding them? How were women imagined and constructed in these sectarian texts? And how do these constructions contribute to a particular understanding of gender in a sectarian context?

An optimistic feminist historian might do a lot with this evidence. Unlike most other texts from the ancient Judean world, the *Damascus Document* and the *Rule of the Congregation* purport to recognize women as *reliable* witnesses. The concept itself was so foreign to scholars of ancient Judaism that initial interpretations of the latter text actually sought to emend it to erase the reference to women entirely.²⁴ The text further states

21. A similar *in medias res* quality is apparent, e.g., in the text’s discussion of polygyny, which cites scriptural examples in ways that suggest an ongoing disagreement. See CD 4.19–5.6.

22. Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses*, 4.

23. *Ibid.*, 11.

24. See, e.g., Joseph M. Baumgarten, “On the Testimony of Women in 1QS_a,” *JBL* 76 (1957): 266–69; and the revised discussion in Baumgarten, *DJD* 18, 165.

that women witnesses “take their place” in witnessing, using a term that elsewhere in the text appears to carry the sense of a recognized public role in the group.²⁵ The *Damascus Document*, with its reference to Mothers of the congregation, as well as “knowledgeable and trustworthy” women, implies a general awareness of important roles for women in the sectarian group, even if some members of the group were unhappy with this situation.

Theoretical models from the sociology of sectarianism add another layer to this discussion.²⁶ Sectarian movements often begin as relatively small in scale and tend to use specialized language in presenting a novel religious message. Such groups often make exclusive claims on a shared cultural and religious tradition. In addition, they tend to prioritize collective needs, norms, and authority structures over personal autonomy and private family relationships. Sectarian groups also often have norms with respect to gender roles and sexual practices that differ significantly from the norms found in the larger society.

This sociological framing allows us to better contextualize the otherwise apparently surprising treatments of women and marriage in our texts. The relocation of formal authority over marriage and divorce in the Examiner and the ideology of collective control over even personal behavior create a circumstance that might serve to decrease the control of individual husbands and fathers over the actions of their particular daughters and wives. The increased authority at the top of the social ladder, in effect, creates a bit of a power vacuum *within* intimate relationships, because the ultimate control over those relationships lies not with the individual men or familial patriarchy but rather with the group as a whole. The sectarian movement’s disciplinary structure thus creates an unusual space for women’s activity and expertise.

At the same time, the treatment of women’s roles in these texts deserves close scrutiny. Whether they were expected to witness in private to the Examiner or actually to “take their place” in collective meetings of the group as a whole, it remains the case that their areas of expertise were explicitly constrained. Expert women remained accountable *to* a masculine authority structure and reliable *about* a narrowly constrained set of topics. Our evidence suggests that it was only in the contexts where the reciprocal sectarian panopticon was thwarted—in the personal sexual lives of sectarian couples or women who would become part of a sectarian

25. See n. 18 above.

26. See Jutta Jokiranta, “Sociological Approaches to Qumran Sectarianism,” in Lim and Collins, *Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 200–231, and the sources cited there, esp. David J. Chalcraft, ed., *Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Sociological Advances* (London: Equinox, 2007).

couple—that a woman’s knowledge and credibility might contribute to her communal authority.

From this observation, it follows that the novel opportunity for women to serve as witnesses in these rule texts probably did not arise primarily in response to a desire to have women witnessing. That was most likely a secondary effect, an accidental opportunity that was a by-product of the group’s more central concerns about collective discipline.²⁷ That the result of such a situation might have included an improved status for some women participants in the group is always possible, and the fact that some participants in the Damascus covenant community felt the need to explicitly deny such status hints all the more at that possibility. The dynamics of social power here are unpredictable; beyond the evidence of the texts, we cannot really say how people experienced these social norms and whether they might have felt liberatory or onerous, to particular sectarians in particular times. But we must acknowledge the possibilities for a very different set of social experiences and feelings, in light of this sectarian social framing.

Attention to power dynamics serves as a reminder, as Ross Kraemer has demonstrated so well, that textual evidence has its limits, and that the path from evidence to “history” in some objective sense is always treacherous. In place of firm historical claims, then, we are perhaps best suited to address the discursive framing of gender, power, and social order, and to ask how that framing might have constructed an understanding of gendered sectarian identity for participants in the movement.

Here we might return once more to those “rustworthy and knowledgeable women.” This striking choice of language carries with it the multiple layers of possibility that we have seen already in the sectarian texts. On the one hand, it concedes the possibility that women sectarians might be knowledgeable and, in perhaps highly specific ways, educable; relevant here is the *Rule of the Congregation’s* assumption that “children” will be educated, which may imply only boys but does not say so explicitly.²⁸ Similarly, the reference to women as trustworthy lines up nicely with a statement about oaths in the *Damascus Document*: while fathers and husbands can cancel a woman’s oath, they cannot do so if they are unsure whether the oath transgresses the sectarian understanding of Torah (CD 16.10–12).²⁹ Both of these examples hint at possibilities for a wider range of women’s behavior in the sectarian movement.

Against this interpretation, however, is the observation that a refer-

27. For another case of attention to gender as a result of sectarian ideological concerns, see CD 5.8–11, which expands the case of aunt–nephew marriage to include a ban on uncle–niece marriage, as well.

28. On this, see esp. Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document*, 136–43.

29. See Ilan, “Women in Qumran,” 137, and sources cited there.

ence to “rustworthy and knowledgeable women” carries with it the assumption that some women are *not* trustworthy and *not* knowledgeable. How was this text intended, and how was it understood by sectarians who took it seriously? Were *all* women in the group deemed trustworthy, by virtue of their participation alone (as the reference to wives in 1QS*a* might imply), or did the expression refer to some few women, perhaps the “others” of the congregation, whose authoritative status was limited but at times necessary? The texts simply do not give us access to the sensibility—or competing sensibilities—of the sectarians.³⁰

Like other ancient Judean texts, the sectarian rules are also engaged in “hinking with women” for the purpose of saying something about *men*. But again it is hard to say precisely what it says about them. Perhaps the intense authoritative structuring of the group was experienced as a limitation on individual men’s authority and domestic power. Would the experience of answering to a group leader in advance of divorcing one’s wife, marrying off one’s daughters, or confirming one’s family’s norms with respect to oath taking create a reassuring sense of the legitimacy of the group, or a more problematic sense of personal limits? To have women serving in disciplinary roles within the group might have served as confirmation of patriarchal authority: “Our group is so strong and so correct that even our women take part in its maintenance.” But the texts themselves record evidence for a very different view, that women’s roles in the disciplinary order, however necessary, might also be a threat to the authority of individual sectarian men. Again, the ten-day penalty against speaking ill of the Mothers suggests that at least some men within the authority structure of the group were committed to keeping women “in their places,” rather than having them “ake their place” within the group leadership.

Conclusions

Consideration of the Dead Sea Scrolls highlights for us, as Ross Kraemer has so often demonstrated, the challenges of making historical claims about women’s religious experience in the ancient Mediterranean. At the same time, the evidence of the sectarian scrolls does suggest some important insights. Chief among these is the possibility for ancient texts to take us

30 . A larger-scale comparison with women’s participation in the early church would be helpful in this context. Earliest Christianity may provide the best parallel for the social dynamics under consideration here; see esp. Jörg Frey, “Critical Issues in the Investigation of the Scrolls and the New Testament,” in Lim and Collins, *Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 517–45; and George J. Brooke, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).

genuinely by surprise. In a world that imagines all women as “unreliable witnesses,” here we find a collection of texts that assumes that women—at least *some* women—*will* witness, reliably and helpfully. But at the same time, we are reminded of the limitations and the power dynamics that constrain women’s participation, with respect to when and how they will witness, on what topics, and to what ultimate effect.

This evidence also allows us to rethink, in fundamental ways, the dichotomous framing of sectarian groups as “married” or “celibate.” A different understanding of marriage—as reflective of a sectarian social order with its own unique power dynamics—leads to new insights not only about the gender construction of male and female sectarians, but in fact about group participation and discipline more generally. Thus, while the scrolls help us to think differently about gender, it is also the case that thinking about gender in the scrolls helps us to think differently about Qumran sectarianism writ large.

The Sound of Angels' Wings in Paradise

Religious Identity and the Aural Imagination in the Testament of Adam

KIM HAINES-EITZEN

Cornell University

Arguments from silence here are only dangerous . . .

—Ross Kraemer

Overture

In 1995, I moved to Philadelphia from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where I had just completed my doctoral exams. I was ready to begin writing my dissertation, but I felt like an academic orphan. Ross Kraemer and Robert Kraft generously took me in and provided me with an intellectual community. In that first fall, I audited Kraemer's seminar, "Judaism in the Hellenistic Era." The seminar was methodologically rich and astonishingly wide-ranging, and it shaped many of the ideas I pursued in both *Guardians of Letters* and *The Gendered Palimpsest*. Above all, Kraemer emphasized the constructed and fluid nature of religious identities in antiquity, the fraught controversies about ancient identities in modern scholarship, and the complex issues at stake in doing historical work. I owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude, and this essay offers me one opportunity to revisit her mentorship and to consider carefully the ways in which her work on issues of religious identity continues to shape my own thinking. In what follows, I pursue a thread in my current research on sound, landscape, and religious identity in late antiquity—namely, how sound (real and/or imagined) works to construct identity. Perhaps in some way, my turning to sound can be read as one echo of her concern for "arguments from silence."¹

1. Ross Kraemer, "Jewish Tuna and Christian Fish: Identifying Religious Affiliation in Epigraphic Sources," *HTR* 84 (1991): 152.

Sound, Landscape, and Identity

In countless ways, sounds construct, inform, and shape identity; sounds situate individuals in time and place; they indicate seasons, landscapes, and built environments; and they bind a community through shared experience. The growing field of sound studies is too extensive to rehearse here, but it has begun to disrupt Western academic preoccupations with the visual and visuality. Jonathan Sterne defines the field as “the interdisciplinary ferment in the human sciences that takes sound as its analytical point of departure or arrival. By analyzing both sonic practices and the discourses and institutions that describe them, it redescribes what sound does in the human world, and what humans do in the sonic world.”² I would extend sound studies as a field even further—beyond the human—to include research in the fields of bioacoustics and acoustic ecology, both of which would resist (or at least temper) an exclusively anthropocentric approach to sound.³ Although the origins of “Sound Studies” as an academic field may be debated, Murray Schafer’s 1977 book *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*, has been highly influential, especially for encouraging us to ask “what is the relationship between man [*sic*] and the sounds of his environment and what happens when those sounds change?”⁴ Anthropologists, historians, philosophers, and literary critics have attended to the ways in which sound constructs community: language itself, uttered and heard, is of course the most obvious example of meaningful sound for communication and community; the work of Michelle Hilmes (and others) shows how radio fashioned “imagined communities”; the bells of nineteenth-century French villages “shaped the habitus of a community,” Alain Corbin has argued; how sound as a cultural system shaped ritual performance in Papua New Guinea is the subject of Steven Feld’s influential work—these are just a few illustrative examples of how sound shapes community.⁵

My own current research treats the intersection of sound, landscape, and identity in a particular landscape (the “desert”) in late antiquity.

2. Jonathan Sterne, “Sonic Imaginations,” in *The Sound Studies Reader* (ed. Jonathan Sterne; London: Routledge, 2012), 2.

3. For an introduction to soundscape ecology, see esp. Bryan C. Pijanowski et al., “Soundscape Ecology: The Science of Sound in the Landscape,” *BioScience* 61 (2011): 203–16.

4. R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (1977; repr., Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1994), 3–4.

5. Michelle Hilmes, “Radio and the Imagined Community,” in Sterne, *Sound Studies Reader*, 351–62; Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside* (trans. Martin Thorn; New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 95–158 (the quotation here is taken from his abridgment “Identity, Bells, and the Nineteenth-Century French Village,” in *Hearing History: A Reader* (ed. Mark M. Smith; Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 185).

Landscape studies are also a field of their own, of course, and the influential work of Simon Schama, Denis Cosgrove, and others has shaped my thinking about sound and landscape, even though their interests reside not in sound but in the mythical and material features of landscape—both “natural” and built landscapes—and in spite of the fact that the term “landscape” itself returns us to the visual: as Denis E. Cosgrove puts it, landscape “represents a way of seeing—a way in which some Europeans have represented to themselves and to others the world about them and their relationships with it, and through which they have commented on social relations.”⁶ In my view, one of the central features of a landscape—whether rural agricultural fields, modern urban streets, or the uninhabited wilderness—is a set of sonic characteristics that serve as signatures revealing the distinctive characteristics of a place. Signature sounds (e.g., ocean waves rolling to shore, a loudspeaker in the London Underground calling out *Mind the Gap*,⁷ the call of peepers on a pond in the spring, etc.) serve to situate an individual in time and place—“sonic emplacement,” if you will.

Landscapes may be real or imagined, mythical or historical, remembered or forgotten, sublime or grotesque, and many of our richest literary representations of “landscape” would replace the word *or* in these pairings with the word *and*.⁸ Paradox, indeed, is what makes landscapes as well as sounds so productive for religious thought: just as the sound of the demons might terrify you in the desert, the sound of angels might save you; the distractions of the city with its bustling streets and noisy baths might encourage you to withdraw to the quiet of the country or offer you a way to exercise your skills in concentration; imagining paradise replete with sounds might inspire nostalgia or stand in tension with the noise of the apocalyptic battle.

The Testament of Adam

How does the evocation of sound in a landscape work to construct identity? To be sure, identity has become something of a fraught concept, especially for the ancient context; for this essay, I regard the term in relation to place and a sense of belonging. I take as a case study the opening section of the *Testament of Adam*, widely regarded as the Horarium, an enumeration of the hours of the night and the hours of the day. The *Testament of Adam* is a useful text for thinking through issues of ancient religious

6. Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 1. See also Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

affiliation and the difficulties with establishing a text as “Christian” or “Jewish” — a theme that runs throughout Ross Kraemer’s work and echoes in Simon Schama’s claim: “unstable identities are history’s prey” — as well as how sound works to construct identities.⁷ I do not need to rehearse the history of scholarship or complexities around provenance and date here: Stephen Edward Robinson and others have provided excellent treatments of the issues.⁸ I am persuaded by Robinson’s argument in favor of a Syriac original and although the dating remains to my mind quite obscure, there is much to commend a loose “late ancient” date. In what follows I want to explore the way in which the *Horarium* utilizes sound to speak of identity. In doing so, I am stretching Cosgrove’s notions of landscape as an “ideological construct,” Schama’s “strata of memory,” and — to bring in another theoretical field, affect theory — Lawrence Grossberg’s “ecology of belonging.”⁹

Recension 1 of the *Syriac Testament of Adam* opens with a description of the hours of the night: “The first hour of the night is the praise of the demons (*shada*; δαίμονες); and at that hour they do not injure or harm any human being. The second hour is the praise of the doves. The third hour is the praise of the fish and of fire and of all the lower depths” (*T. Adam* 11–3).¹⁰ Although it may be difficult to understand the connections between demons, doves, and fish in the earliest hours of the night, such creatures animate this text from its beginning. Demons, as we know, were especially useful in the making of late ancient religious identities and they haunted and tempted late ancient Christians and Jews.¹¹ Above all, demons pro-

7. See Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 24.

8. See, most thoroughly, Stephen Edward Robinson, *The Testament of Adam: An Examination of the Syriac and Greek Traditions* (SBLDS 52; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982) and also his abbreviated summary and revised translation, on which I rely, in “Testament of Adam,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983–85), 1:989–95. More recent summaries are also helpful: see, esp. Michael E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (EJL 3; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 95–98; Marinus de Jonge and Johannes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 83–85.

9. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 15; Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 7; Lawrence Grossberg, interviewed by Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg, “Affect’s Future: Rediscovering the Virtual in the Actual,” in *The Affect Theory Reader* (ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth; Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 325.

10. My translations generally follow Robinson’s translation of Recension 1, for which he depends on a ninth-century vellum codex: British Museum Additional manuscript 14, 624 (Robinson, *Testament of Adam*, 46); however, in some instances he expands on the text in order to smooth out the reading and I have placed such expansions in brackets to preserve a more literal translation. I do not have space here to discuss the relationship between the Syriac and Greek texts (nor other versions).

11. See esp. David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

vided a way in which to map difference and, in doing so, were especially productive in the apocalyptic, ascetic, and gnostic projects.

As the text continues, sonic dimensions emerge more explicitly:

The fourth hour is the ["holy, holy, holy"] praise of the seraphim. And so I used to hear, before I sinned, the sound [*qal*] of their wings in Paradise [when the seraphim would beat them to the sound of their triple praise]. But after I transgressed against the law, I no longer heard that sound. The fifth hour is the praise of the waters that are above heaven. And so I, together with the angels, used to hear the sound of mighty waves, a sign which would prompt them to lift a hymn of praise to the Creator. (*T. Adam* 1:4–5)

This passage is useful for my interest in sound and the making of religious identity. To be sure, the evocation of the angels' praise is in dialogue with Isaiah, where King Uzziah's vision of the heavenly throne includes the seraphim, who have six wings and call out "holy, holy, holy" (Isa 6:1–6). In the *Testament of Adam*, however, Adam is able to hear a particular sound—the sound of the angels' wings whirring and the sound of waves—in a "landscape," and hearing it marks time as well as difference. Paradise, of course, has a dynamic descriptive history by the time this text is written or, at the very least, coterminous with it.¹² Ephrem's *Hymns on Paradise* are just one manifestation of the late ancient Paradise/Eden preoccupation. What strikes me as peculiar and instructive in the *Testament of Adam* is that before Adam "sinned" he could hear the seraphim, but after he "transgressed the law" he could no longer hear their wings or the sound of the "mighty waves." It may well be that this distinction is a continued expansion on the rest of Isaiah 6, where the prophet is instructed to say to the people: "Hear, but do not comprehend; see, but do not understand" (Isa 6:9). The passages in both Isaiah and the *Testament of Adam* raise several questions—for ancient interpreters no less than for modern readers. For my purposes here, I remain most interested in sound as a marker of identity: here, particular sounds—signature sounds of Paradise such as the seraphim and water—and the ability to hear those sounds, craft an identity, and, even more, the memory and nostalgia of an prelapsarian identity.¹³

12. For an excellent listing of pseudepigraphic and apocryphal passages, see Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:xxxiii. In the future, I hope to expand especially on the connections to Ephrem's *Hymns on Paradise*.

13. It is difficult to avoid a modern comparison: "I shook the bell. It made the most beautiful sound my sister and I had ever heard. But my mother said, 'Oh, that's too bad.' 'Yes,' said my father, 'it's broken.' When I'd shaken the bell, my parents had not heard a sound" (Chris Van Allsburg, *The Polar Express* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985]).

The sonic aspects to the Horarium do not end with the fourth hour of the night. The text continues (*T. Adam* 1:6–12):

The sixth hour is the construction of clouds and of the great fear which comes in the middle of the night. The seventh hour is the viewing of their powers while the waters are asleep. And at that hour the waters (can be) taken up and the priest of God mixes them with consecrated oil and anoints those who are afflicted and they rest. The eighth hour is the sprouting up of the grass of the earth while the dew descends from heaven. The ninth hour is the praise of the cherubim. The tenth hour is the praise of human beings, and the gate of heaven is opened through which the prayers of all living things enter, and they worship and depart. And at that hour whatever a man will ask of God is given to him when the seraphim and the roosters beat their wings. The eleventh hour there is joy in all the earth when the sun rises from Paradise and shines forth upon creation. The twelfth hour is the waiting for incense, and silence is imposed on all the ranks of fire and wind until all the priests burn incense to his divinity. And at that time all the heavenly powers are dismissed. The End of the Hours of the Night.

The description of the night continues to attend to sounds at various hours: the praise of the cherubim and humans, the seraphim (again) and the roosters beating their wings, and, finally, the evocation of the silence of fire and wind. The silence here is instructive, especially as it is “entangled” with the burning of incense, for both silence and incense are intrinsic to Christian liturgies of late antiquity and the Middle Ages.¹⁴ Moreover, silence will come to have a rich monastic tradition in which it is variously understood as stillness and quietude.¹⁵

A fully intertextual reading of the Hours of the Night in the *Testament of Adam* would take us well beyond Isaiah and the use of Isaiah 6 in the canonical Gospels and the book of Acts, where hearing (and seeing) is deployed to distinguish insiders and outsiders in the Jesus movement. It would also take us beyond late ancient descriptions and developments of Paradise, the seraphim, and Adam’s “fall.” I regard the sonic features of the *Testament of Adam* as part of at least two wider traditions: first, ancient philosophical positions on sound, concentration, and distraction. Recall,

14. The bibliography here is significant; on incense, see esp. Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage 42; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), esp. 75–83; more recently on Byzantine liturgy, see Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); and on silence, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Silence: A Christian History* (New York: Viking, 2013).

15. I have written of this elsewhere; see my “Geographies of Silence in Late Antiquity,” in *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls* (Dumbarton Oaks, forthcoming).

for example, Dio Chrysostom's claims about "Retirement" (*ἀναχώρησις*): the true philosopher, the ideal Stoic, is made by an ability to concentrate in the midst of noisy disturbances and great crowds (*Or.* 20); Seneca, similarly, tests his own ability to concentrate above the noise of a bathhouse (*Ep.* 56). In both of these instances the concession of hearing (they both recognize that hearing cannot be prevented) but not listening or paying attention to the cacophonous sounds is what makes a philosophical identity. Such ideas become crucial to the late ancient Christian ascetic and monastic project—a monk, indeed, emerges by winning a contest with noisy demons, as the *Life of Antony* so clearly describes the "acophonous ravings" of the beasts (i.e., demons) and their howls, hisses, and shouts (e.g., *Life of Antony* 9).

But there is also another context in which to read the Hours of the Night in the *Testament of Adam*—namely, the affective use of sensory landscapes. In the *Testament of Adam*, the night is replete with sights, sounds, smells, touch, movements, weather: for example, the vision of the sun and of light; sounds of demons, angels, doves, roosters, humans, fish, water; smells of incense and oils; and the evocative use of weather (clouds, dew, wind, etc.). Throughout the enumeration of the hours, the author draws attention to affect: "the great fear that comes in the middle of the night" (1:6); desire and petitioning of the divine (1:10); "joy in all the earth when the sun rises from Paradise" (1:11); and so forth. The night itself becomes a sensory landscape—a territory and a time—in the *Testament of Adam*. In doing so, it works again to imagine, reimagine, and formulate identities, not just the figure of Adam, but the readers (individual and collective) of the text itself. We might go so far as to say there is a "feel of an atmosphere" in the *Testament of Adam's* night hours—the swell of the waves, the dew of the morning, the crowing of roosters—and it is this "feel" that renders the text so affective.¹⁶

Conclusion

The *Testament of Adam* offers us one entry into the relationship between sound, landscape, and identity as it points us repeatedly toward time (indeed, its whole structure is built around marking time), place(s) (not just the place of Paradise but places implied by the dew on the grass, the gates of heaven, the waters of the deep), sensations (seeing, smelling, hearing, etc.), and affect (e.g., fear)—each of which is crucial to notions of identity, religious and otherwise. The "ecology of belonging," to return to

16. See Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, "An Inventory of Shimmers," in *Affect Theory Reader*, 19.

Grossberg's phrase, happens within specific places and spaces. I would argue that this is no more true of how religious spaces cultivate communal identities and belongings than it is of texts that affectively imagine and describe landscapes "of the mind." Just as the mapping of pilgrimage routes contributes to the "making" of pilgrims and the hagiographical rendering of monks as desert solitaires contributes to a monastic ideal, so too the sensory Horarium poses a dualistic challenge: sinner or saved; insider or outsider; and, perhaps, even Jewish or Christian, depending on how we understand the milieu of the text itself.

The Horarium in the *Testament of Adam* may also usefully speak to the possibilities for reimagining late ancient Jewish and Christian notions of the "environment" or the natural world. To be sure, sounds—and their interpretation—are not universals: as environmental historian Peter Coates has argued, "notions of noise, sound, and silence—like any other cultural phenomena—are invariably historically contingent, varying according to time, place, and human constituency."¹⁷ The *Testament of Adam* carefully distinguishes between pleasing and terrifying sounds and thus illuminates the way in which sound can be productive not only for religious ideology but also its cultural contingency. Moreover, the shifting soundscape of the night hours highlights the very ephemerality of sound itself and, by extension, the ephemerality of place and identity. If sounds are signs in a text like the *Testament of Adam*—a position I have taken from the start—then they are living, breathing, and always moving signs. In this sense, Eduardo Kohn's compelling claims in *How Forests Think* are appropriate by way of conclusion: "Signs," he writes, "are more than things. They don't squarely reside in sounds, events, or words. Nor are they exactly in bodies or even minds. They can't be located in this way because they are ongoing relational processes. Their sensuous qualities are only one part of the dynamic through which they come to be, to grow, and to have effects in the world."¹⁸

The sounds of the seraphim's wings, ocean waves, roosters crowing, and silence are indeed signs, but they are more than that: they speak of "relational processes" that exceed discursive description; they evoke a sense of places beyond imagining, and situate always emergent identities within and among acoustic landscapes.

17. Peter A. Coates, "The Strange Stillness of the Past: Toward an Environmental History of Sound and Noise," *Environmental History* 10 (2005): 643.

18. Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 33.

The Night Rabbi Aqiba Slept with Two Women

JORDAN D. ROSENBLUM

University of Wisconsin-Madison

In the rabbinic worldview, man goes through life surrounded by temptation. Whether it be the idolater who cannot resist the urge to libate every drop of wine in sight,¹ or the well-endowed rabbi who must overcome his sexual desire, which is as large as his gigantic phallus,² the world is a place where temptation lurks on every street corner, at every table, and at every moment. For the rabbis, Torah—both Written and Oral—is the solution to controlling the *yēšer* (יצר), the inclination to act on one's desires.³ The ability to control one's *yēšer* is essential for proper rabbinic comportment. Unfortunately for women, according to the rabbis, only men are capable of controlling their *yēšer*.⁴ Given that only men could control their *yēšer*, women often appear in rabbinic literature in the role of the temptress, seeking to seduce men into transgressive social, ethical, legal, and theo-

1. For a brief discussion, see David M. Freidenreich, *Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 57–60.

2. For discussion, see Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel: Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture* (New Historicism 25; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 197–206.

3. On the concept of *yēšer* and rabbinic ethical formation, see Jonathan W n Schofer, *The Making of a Sage: A Study in Rabbinic Ethics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 84–115.

4. The rabbis are not unique in the ancient Mediterranean in holding this gendered view. In general, see Michael L. Satlow, "'Try to be a Man': The Rabbinic Construction of Masculinity," *HTR* 89 (1996): 19–40. For this reason, I will often employ gendered language in this essay. When I say "man" or use masculine pronouns (as I did in the first sentence of this essay), it is because the rabbis themselves believe a certain view is attributed only to men; when I employ gender neutral or inclusive language, it is a reflection of a rabbinic belief that is attributed to both genders. Such statements should not be considered a reflection of my own beliefs but only those of the ancient rabbis.

logical practices.⁵ All of this helps to explain how Rabbi Aqiba found himself in bed with two women.

But before we enter Rabbi Aqiba's bedroom, we must first properly contextualize this story. This account is part of a series of three stories in which women test men's self-control.⁶ Jonathan Schofer summarizes well the issues encountered in these incidents:

[T]hese stories present tests of exemplary male figures. Each one is subjugated to powerful non-Jews, yet at the same time each is offered the possibility of sexual intercourse: they are both under threat and sexually tempted. Gender and power are intertwined in complex ways, and the key point is that in all three cases, the hero withstands both the threat and the temptation.⁷

In the reversal of the Hollywood cliché of our day, the hero does not end up with the leading lady. He neutralizes the threats, one of which is sexual temptation. It is a chaste ending to which the rabbis aspire and, at least in this instance, which they achieve.

While I will not discuss at length the first two stories of this trilogy, it is worth briefly mentioning them in order to contextualize the tale that will be the focus of this essay. In the first narrative, the biblical account of Joseph and Potiphar's wife with its midrashic expansions appears.⁸ This narrative depicts "Joseph the Righteous" parrying the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife.⁹ It is fitting that an essay in honor of Ross Kraemer's distinguished academic career at least briefly touch on this narrative, the

5. On this theme in rabbinic literature in general, see Michael L. Satlow, *Tasting the Dish: Rabbinic Rhetorics of Sexuality* (BJS 303; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 158–67 (and, on nonrabbinic parallels, see pp. 167–69).

6. There are two versions of this text: *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* Supplement 3:2 (ed. Mandelbaum 460–61); and *'Abot R. Nat.* A16:15–18 (ed. Schechter, 63). For previous scholarly treatments of this passage (which focus on the *'Abot R. Nat.* version), see Moshe David Herr, "The Historical Significance of The Dialogues between Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 123–50, esp. 135–37; Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 106–11; and David Stern, "The Captive Woman: Hellenization, Greco-Roman Erotic Narrative, and Rabbinic Literature," *Poetics Today* 19/1 (1998): 91–127, esp. 114–15. In the version in *'Abot R. Nat.*, there are actually four stories that comprise the narrative. For reasons that I explain below, however, I focus on the version in *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* and therefore I will refer to this narrative throughout as being comprised of three stories.

7. Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 106.

8. On this particular motif, see James L. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), 28–65 (which notes this text on pp. 52–53).

9. On the title, "Joseph the Righteous," see Kugel, *In Potiphar's House*, 24–26, esp. 26, where Kugel also notes, "Joseph the Righteous," the Scriptural example of resistance to temptation, whose heroic struggle against the advances of his master's wife might serve as a model to later generations."

subject of Kraemer's masterful book *When Aseneth Met Joseph*.¹⁰ The gendered implications of these various tellings and retellings of this narrative are well documented by many, especially Kraemer herself, but for our present purposes we only need to note that this is the first narrative in the trilogy in which a Jewish man manages to avoid the seductive temptation of a non-Jewish woman.¹¹

Lest one be astonished by Joseph's actions, a second narrative is immediately offered, wherein Rabbi Šadok displays even greater self-restraint than Joseph.¹² In this story, which as we shall see shares the same narrative structure as the Rabbi Aqiba story, Rabbi Šadok is taken captive and sent to Rome.¹³ Upon arriving in Rome, a matron purchases him and sends him a beautiful maidservant, with whom he is supposed to copulate so as to produce slave children. Upon seeing this beautiful woman enter his bedroom, the pious and temperate Rabbi Šadok stares at the wall and sits in silence all night long.¹⁴ Once morning arrives, the maidservant complains to her mistress that she would rather die than be given to that man, who ignored such a beautiful woman instead of fornicating with her throughout the evening. The mistress inquires of Rabbi Šadok why he did not act with the maidservant as men usually act when left alone with a beautiful woman—that is, why did he show self-restraint in the face of sexual pleasure? He replies that he is of priestly descent and, should this coitus result in a child, that child would be a *mamzer*.¹⁵ Apparently, his argument is very persuasive, since she immediately releases him “with great honor.”

10. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

11. Although the terms “Jew” and “non-Jew” are anachronistic in regard to the biblical account, I employ them here because that is how the rabbis understand Joseph and his neighbors: as Jew and non-Jews, respectively. This flattening of difference is part of a normative claim in which rabbis are the final link in an unbroken chain of tradition that goes back to Moses (whom they call “Moses our Rabbi”) and God on Mount Sinai. On the development of the term “Jew,” see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000 [1999]). Cohen briefly references the main text of this essay on p. 245 n. 12.

12. The phrasing of this sentence consciously echoes the wording of the text itself, which exhorts its reader not to be astonished (ואל תתמה). As we shall see below, this same wording introduces the next story.

13. See Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 108.

14. Though the story does not explicitly locate the narrative in his bedroom, the context suggests that this is where the events took place. In the ‘*Abot R. Nat.*’ version, Rabbi Šadok spends the night studying rabbinic traditions all night long!

15. For a good discussion of the issues surrounding defining, and the stigmas associated with being, a *mamzer*, see Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness*, 263–307, which discusses the development of the rabbinic principle of matrilineal descent. Cohen briefly references Rabbi Šadok's situation (p. 280), where he correctly notes that Rabbi Šadok's interpretation represents an exception to the general rabbinic view on these issues. Also see n. 25, below.

I have recounted Rabbi Ṣadok's narrative in more detail since it provides several parallels with that of Rabbi Aqiba. By comparing some key differences, we can better understand the latter tale. Therefore, keeping Rabbi Ṣadok's story in mind, we are now prepared to analyze Rabbi Aqiba's story.

[A] And do not be astonished by Rabbi Ṣadok, for Rabbi Aqiba was greater than he.

[B] When Rabbi Aqiba went to Rome, they slandered him before a certain general.¹⁶

[C] [The general then] sent him two very beautiful women.¹⁷ They were bathed, anointed, and adorned like brides for their grooms.

[D] All night, they fell all over him. One said: Turn toward me! [חזור אצלי] And the other said: Turn toward me! [חזור אצלי]

[E] Sitting between them, he spat at them.¹⁸

[F] In the morning, they went and met with the general and said to him: Death would be better for us than being given to this man!

[G] The general said to Rabbi Aqiba: Why did you not do with these women what men usually do? Are they not beautiful? Are they not children of Adam like you? Did not the One who created you create them?

[H] [Rabbi Aqiba] said to him: What could I do? Their body odor, like [the stench of] carrion meat or pig [חזיר] meat, overcame me.¹⁹

While many of the elements from Rabbi Ṣadok's story appear in this tale, there are some key differences.²⁰ First of all, Rabbi Aqiba arrives in Rome as a free man, not as a captive. Rabbi Aqiba therefore has the agency to act of his own freewill.²¹ Second, it is slander (presumably that he enjoys

16. Following the emendation suggested by Mandelbaum. On this phrase, see Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 239 n. 84.

17. In the 'Abot R. Nat. version, the two women are simply "beautiful" and not "very beautiful."

18. In the 'Abot R. Nat. version, Rabbi Aqiba is described as spending the night sitting between them, "spitting and did not turn [פנה] towards them."

19. *Pesiq. Rab Kah*. Supplement 3:2 (ed. Mandelbaum, 461). In the 'Abot R. Nat. version, their offending odor is compared to carrion meat [נבלה] but also to that of meat torn by wild animals [טרפה] and land swarmers [שרצים], which like the therein unmentioned pig, are biblically forbidden for consumption (for the rabbinic definition of the first two terms [carrion and torn meat], see *m. Hul.* 2:4, a conversation in which Rabbi Aqiba takes part). I will discuss the importance of pig in this tale further below. Though Schofer divides this tale into five sections (Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 108–9), I have divided it further so as better to separate what I deem to be important narrative elements.

20. Much of my commentary here draws from Herr's insights ("Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," 136–37); however, we do not share a fundamental assumption: underlying Herr's interpretations is a presumption of the intrinsic historicity of the narrative itself. Despite this important difference, I agree with many (though by no means all) of his conclusions.

21. Similarly, see Herr, "Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," 137; and below, n. 26.

"the company of loose women") that sets the scene for sexual temptation, not a matron's desire to propagate her servants.²² It is important to note that in neither case does the sexual desire actually originate with the rabbi himself; rather, it is forced upon him. Third, it is a Roman man who sends the women to Rabbi Aqiba, while a Roman woman sends the woman to Rabbi Šadok.²³ Fourth, Rabbi Aqiba is tempted with two women, double the number of females that tempt Rabbi Šadok. Fifth, Rabbi Aqiba must listen to the women talk to him all night, as they beg him to "Turn toward me!" Rabbi Šadok, on the other hand, shared a bed with a woman who is depicted as being silent, mirroring his own evening-long silence. Of course, as Ross Kraemer's work continually reminds us, even when we "hear" women's voices in these texts, they are "unreliable witnesses"; they teach us more about cultural constructions and gendered assumptions than about actual historical speeches and events.²⁴ Sixth, and finally, while Rabbi Šadok was concerned about the religious and social status of potential offspring from his encounter with a Roman woman, Rabbi Aqiba never got that far.²⁵ His reason for abstaining was the women's body odor: it reminded him of biblically forbidden foods.²⁶

Several of these points require further elaboration. In particular, I will focus on two issues: (1) Rabbi Aqiba's interaction with the women while sharing a bed; and (2) Rabbi Aqiba's explanation for his actions.

22. This provocative phrase and interpretation come from William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein, *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana: R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days* (1975; repr., Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 2002), 635 (the entire narrative appears on pp. 634–36). I prefer this understanding to another common translation: "informed against" (e.g., Stern, "Captive Women," 115). In both translations, however, Rabbi Aqiba is in a potentially dangerous situation and his self-control is being tested.

23. Rabbi Aqiba is on an official mission to Rome, so it makes sense that he would interact with male Roman officials. Rabbi Šadok could have been purchased by a male in the slave market, but perhaps it is a woman who purchases him so that, in the end, he can sway her and escape both physical and sexual servitude. Such a gendered understanding of Rabbi Šadok's appeal to emotions underlies Herr's interpretation of the events, wherein he states, "Such was the spirit of the time that [Rabbi Šadok's] reply struck a responsive chord in the heart of the matron, who thereupon liberated him 'with great honours'" ("Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," 137). If this interpretation is correct, then Rabbi Aqiba had a harder task ahead of him: he could not appeal to the emotions (gendered as feminine) of his male interlocutor.

24. See esp. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

25. On the religious and social status of a *mamzer*, see Satlow, *Tasting the Dish*, 56–60. Also see n. 15.

26. Herr may be correct when he asserts that Rabbi Aqiba's argument only works for a free man with his own agency. In contrast, Rabbi Šadok was a captive who could not openly disobey his matron; therefore, his only course of action was to use a legal claim regarding his "ancient and noble descent" ("Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," 137).

When the two women enter Rabbi Aqiba's bed, we know a few important details about them: (1) they are very beautiful; (2) they are all gussied up, wearing their finest clothes, jewels, and makeup; (3) they are sent there by a Roman general (דגמון; from the Greek ἡγεμῶν), so this is not a task that they can take lightly; and (4) based on slander, they expect to encounter a willing participant in their *ménage à trois*. The reader also knows that this (both ancient and modern) male fantasy is a temptation to which many—even a supposedly pious rabbi—would succumb. Thanks to the foreshadowing by the text's introduction ("And do not be astonished by Rabbi Šadok, for Rabbi Aqiba was greater than he"), we are not surprised by Rabbi Aqiba's refusal to participate in the evening's activities. However, the reader is not prepared for Rabbi Aqiba's expression of disgust, though perhaps not as shocked by it as are the women themselves.²⁷ Remember, they are 'two very beautiful women,' who have ornamented themselves to the fullest extent possible, and then entered the bedroom of a man they believe to be a willing participant, only to find him less than cooperative.

With one very beautiful, bathed, anointed, and adorned-like-a-bride-for-her-groom woman on his right, and another very beautiful, bathed, anointed, and adorned-like-a-bride-for-her-groom woman on his left, Rabbi Aqiba chooses to sit all night between them and practice self-control. Though Rabbi Aqiba's self-control in regard to choosing Torah study over sexual gratification is the stuff of legend elsewhere in rabbinic literature, this is quite the crucible in which to test one's mettle.²⁸ Further, while Rabbi Šadok had only one beautiful woman to share a bed with in silence, Rabbi Aqiba had two women who spent the night talking to him, continuously entreating him "Turn toward me!" His response was to spit each time they made their request, treating the erotic situation with contempt. At this moment, we take a turn for the carnivalesque.²⁹ Rabbi Aqiba does not stare at the wall and study rabbinic texts all night long, like Rabbi Šadok; rather, he has internalized and embodied Torah, which

27. In his translation of the *'Abot R. Nat.* version, Judah Goldin softens Rabbi Aqiba's actions by not translating it directly. Thus, rather than describing him as spitting (which the text explicitly does—see n. 18 above), he renders the text: "But he sat there in disgust and would not turn to them" (*The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* [1955; Yale Judaica Series 10; repr., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983], 84).

28. For a general survey of rabbis choosing Torah study over sexual intercourse, with particular attention to traditions about Rabbi Aqiba, see Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, 134–66. For a recent reassessment of these Rabbi Aqiba traditions, see Azzan Yadin, "Rabbi Akiva's Youth," *JQR* 100 (2010): 573–97.

29. This term, popularized by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, has been usefully applied to rabbinic texts in recent years. For example, see Daniel Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Barry Scott Wimpfheimer, *Narrating the Law: A Poetics of Talmudic Legal Stories* (Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

has transformed him into a sage with legendary self-restraint.³⁰ Despite the fawning attention of two gorgeous, but non-Jewish, women literally falling all over him all night, Rabbi Aqiba proves he is the rabbinic paragon of self-control.³¹

The very beautiful women's words, "Turn toward me!" [חזור אצלי], are an important clue to elucidating Rabbi Aqiba's explanation for his actions. Again, Kraemer reminds us to listen to ancient women's voices with our scholarly ears attuned to their gendered implications. Ancient Mediterranean male authors used their full literary prowess to craft women's voices in order to articulate their own fears, hopes, and ideals. We should read the rabbinic testimony of these women through this theoretical lens. Keeping in mind the fact that the women's words teach us more about the male authors and their gendered assumptions than about the women who purportedly uttered them, the women's words are significant. The root for the Hebrew word for "turn" (חזר) is morphologically similar to the word for "ig" [חזיר]. Only one vowel sound, represented by the *matres lectionis* *waw* (ו) and *yod* (י), respectively, distinguishes them.³² The women's words reinforce the scent that Rabbi Aqiba attributes to them: that of pig meat. The association between Roman women and pig is not random. It is part of a long tradition in which pig serves as a metonym for Rome, Romans, and Romanness.³³ Thus, when Rabbi Aqiba says that they smell of various non-kosher foods, it is quite important that pig appears on this list: it has become the non-kosher beast par excellence due to its association with Roman identity.³⁴ The very words that these very beautiful women use to

0 . See n. 14 above. On the notion that Torah study leads to self-restraint, see Satlow, "Try to be a Man." On the ethical transformations brought about by proper Torah study, see Schofer, *Making of a Sage*.

3 . The verb מתנפלות is the reflexive conjugation of the common root נפל, "to fall." When נפל is conjugated as such, it usually means "to prostrate oneself" or "to bow" (see Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* [1903; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005], 924). One could thus read into this verb an allusion to idolatry, a common rabbinic connection between having intercourse with non-Jews and the slippery slope toward idolatry (as I have argued elsewhere in regard to commensality; see Jordan D. Rosenblum, "From Their Bread to Their Bed: Commensality, Intermarriage, and Idolatry in Tannaitic Literature," *JJS* 61 [2010]: 18–29). I believe that this allusion lurks in the background but decided to render the phrase with an English idiom that shares the root meaning of "fall" and conveys the larger point. Unfortunately, the act of translating from one language to another requires the translator to make a decision that sometimes cuts off other interpretative possibilities.

2 . This pun proved popular in rabbinic literature; see, e.g., *Lev. Rab.* 13:5; twice in *Eccl. Rab.* 1.9.1.

3 . I have written on this association elsewhere; see esp. Jordan D. Rosenblum, "Why do you refuse to eat pork? Jews, Food, and Identity in Roman Palestine," *JQR* 100 (2010): 95–110.

34. To my knowledge, this point is missed by every commentator on this text. This omission, however, might be due to the fact that most exegetes focus on the 'Abot R. Nat.

seduce him are reminders of their non-Jewish—and *treyf*, or non-kosher—identity. One can actually use an American English vulgarism for coitus to render this term exactly how it sounded to Rabbi Aqiba's ears: each woman was imploring him "Pork me!"³⁵

Further, as this English vulgarism reminds us, there is a cross-cultural connection between the verbs for consumption that satisfies the appetite for both food and sex.³⁶ Thus, when Rabbi Aqiba imagines the women as pigs, he is referring not only to the metonym of Rome but also to the connection between consuming these women as sexual and culinary objects. Partaking of metonymic pigs in the bedroom would lead to his partaking of literal pigs in the dining room. This direct connection is actually made elsewhere in rabbinic literature. In another tale of Rabbi Šadok being tempted by a Roman matron, he uses hunger as an excuse to delay engaging in sexual intercourse with her. When he discovers that the only food she has to offer for a *nosh* is not kosher, he replies, "he one who does this, eats this"—thus equating sex with a non-Jewish woman with ingesting non-kosher food. It is best to leave pig, whether literal or figurative, off the rabbinic plate.³⁷

Rabbi Aqiba's auditory and olfactory senses both remind him that these women, no matter how tempting, are taboo.³⁸ It is for this reason that he describes himself to the Roman general as being overcome, and hence unable to engage in sexual congress. In a pun too perfect to be coincidental, the Hebrew phrase for "overcame me" (בא עלי), which literally means "entered into/upon me," is a common rabbinic phrase for sexual intercourse. Thus, Rabbi Aqiba is literally saying that their body odor prevented him from having sex. Despite the fact that they have bathed and anointed themselves, their Roman/pig scent overcomes Rabbi Aqiba and prevents him from having sex with them—both of which events can be described using the same words!

This subtle argument is advanced to a Roman general. It is for this reason that euphemism makes sense. After all, he is rejecting the women for being Romans to a Roman general. Unlike with Rabbi Šadok, we do

version, which omits the pig. The inclusion of the pig in the *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* version is intentional, in my opinion, so as to subtly make the same point that I make above.

35. On this slang term, see "Pork," *Urban Dictionary*, n.p., <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Pork>.

36. I have briefly discussed this elsewhere. See Jordan D. Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 133–34.

37. B. Qidd. 40a. Herr comments on this text, as well ("Jewish Sages and Roman Dignitaries," 136 n. 58). Either this text refers to the same events, or Rabbi Šadok finds himself in this situation quite often!

38. On the sense of smell and temptation in rabbinic literature in general, see Deborah A. Green, *The Aroma of Righteousness: Scent and Seduction in Rabbinic Life and Literature* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011).

not learn the Roman general's reaction.³⁹ Did the general see through the thinly veiled references to Rome? Did he respect Rabbi Aqiba's act of self-control? Or was he baffled by Rabbi Aqiba's reason for not doing "with these women what men usually do?"

However Rabbi Aqiba's response was received, what mattered to the rabbinic audience were his actions in the face of fantastic temptation. Rabbi Aqiba proved himself to be the rabbinic paragon of self-control. The women in this tale serve the role of seducers. Whether they actually smelled of pork or even ate pork was irrelevant. As Roman women they were metonyms for Rome and, hence, were not to be consumed to satisfy either appetite. By paying close attention to the wording and gender constructions in this tale, readers learn the lesson about how a rabbinic man must act at all times: with self-control. Failure to act accordingly leads down a slippery slope of sin, from sexual to culinary improprieties. After spending the night with two women, the legends told about Rabbi Aqiba are not ribald tales of sexual prowess, but chaste tales of rabbinic prowess.

9 . *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* expresses approval for Joseph, Rabbi Šadok, and Rabbi Aqiba's actions as a whole by ending this narrative with a quotation from Ps 103:20. Based on other evidence, it would seem that Rabbi Aqiba survives this encounter, only to suffer a gruesome martyr's death during the Hadrianic persecutions (see *b. Ber.* 61b).

The Social Formations of Paul and His Romans

Synagogues, Churches, and Ockham's Razor

STANLEY K. STOWERS

Brown University

In this effort, I discuss traditional conceptions of the social formations that scholars imagine to have been in Rome and as explanatory for understanding Paul's letter. I then outline an alternative scenario. I undertake this project as an experiment in what I take to be the best critical practices of the historian who works in the study of religion. Of course, "best practices of the historian" and "the study of religion" are rightly debated activities. I write in honor of my longtime colleague, Ross Kraemer, who has written eloquently and persuasively about the limitations and possibilities of our historical sources and methods.¹

Among the critical issues one could raise about scholarship that tries to argue for social formations in Rome that would partly explain Paul's letter, I want to focus on the issue of parsimony. Many people are familiar with the Rube Goldberg cartoons depicting extremely complex sets of gadgets, levers, pulleys, and so on, designed to perform some simple task. The drawings are amusing because a good mousetrap does not need eighty working parts. Given the varied constraints of different fields of knowledge—and the application of the principle does vary by field—among relatively plausible contenders, the more economical explanation is to be preferred. This is one of the bedrock principles of knowledge both in the academy and more generally.² The historian wants to explain particular relatively known outcomes in terms of antecedent processes (types of

1. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

2. Alan Baker, "Simplicity," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 1095.

causes including activities). The parsimony here is not reduction to some totalizing theory, for example, psychoanalytic, crude forms of Marxist ideology, Foucauldian Δ language, culture and practice is politically loaded," but preferring that which most fully explains the antecedent processes with the greatest economy, the fewest assumptions. In no way is this to deny the great complexity and multiple causes in history. Romantic historiography (e.g., R. G. Collingwood's) revels in "the irreducible complexity of the historical" and the intuitive understanding of the historical interpreter, but even these historians rather inconsistently use the principle of parsimony in their actual historical work.³ In the case before us, the relatively known to be explained is Paul's letter to the Romans. I will argue that numerous scholarly accounts taken as explanations resemble Rube Goldberg contraptions. The problem partly stems from confusing the necessary and important task of richly imagining historical hypotheses (often called "historical contexts") with the justification of such hypotheses as explanations.

The traditional approach places Paul writing his letter on one side and the church in Rome with the Jewish community understood in terms of synagogues on the other side. The latter two are in some way supposed to explain the former. But these large and complex social formations in Rome are tips of yet more massive conceptual icebergs, the religion Judaism, the Synagogue, worship, conversion, Christianity/the Christian religion, the church, house churches, Jewish Christians, the Jewish and the apostolic missions. These conceptions dominate commentaries on Romans and writing about "the church in Rome" and Paul's letter. Clearly, space allows only the briefest critical comments, but it is important to understand what I take to be the broader historical issues. I am convinced that the myth of Christian origins begun by Acts, Irenaeus, and others in the second century and developed by Eusebius and others in the fourth century, dominates scholarship on early Christianity. The critical counter-principle is simple. New social formations come into being by normal social processes out of already existing social formations and cognitive processes. Accounts with *sui generis* social formations that have little fit with the wider social world are mythic and not critical history. The powerful impulse to find justifying antecedents for later Christian and Jewish institutions, practices, and denominations in the enchanted time of origins has built a large and unwieldy edifice. In addition to this stress on the process of contextually understandable social formation, my

3. Robert Jervis, "International History and International Politics: Why Are They Studied Differently?" and Paul W. Schroeder, "International History: Why Historians Do It Differently Than Political Scientists," in *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations* (ed. C. Elman and M. F. Elman; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 385–402 and 405.

scenario depends on reinterpreting two key pieces of evidence central to dominant interpretations of the letter's historical setting, namely, the supposed expulsion of Jews under Claudius and the greetings in Romans 16.

The following is a synthetic summary of the standard account that has many variations.⁴ The Judeans in first-century CE Rome adhered to the religion of Judaism that centered on meetings of synagogues where the chief activity was monotheistic worship.⁵ This Judaism with monotheistic worship attracted large numbers of non-Jews, some of whom converted to the Jewish religion. Such attraction and conversion of gentiles were the likely source of much Roman anti-Jewish feeling and the chief reason for the periodic expulsions of the Jews from Rome. Christianity began as a natural correction and perfection of Judaism so that the first Christians were ethnically Judeans but their religion was Christianity. The new religion began in Rome when Jewish Christians came there and converted other Jews and gentiles to Christianity. The church may have begun in synagogues, but became mostly gentile in house churches after Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome in 49 CE. The churches offered a highly attractive alternative to Jewish worship in synagogues and the Jewish religious system, because they lacked the ethnic limitations of Judaism but still offered monotheism. When Paul wrote Romans, he envisioned this fluid situation of emergence from the synagogue and competition over the attraction and conversion of gentiles and lack of clarity about the rules of membership in the two religions. Above all, the letter was shaped by the stresses between Jews and gentiles in the several house churches (or synagogues) of which Christianity in Rome consisted.

Almost everything about this account is either wrong or without good evidence, and a great deal of excellent recent scholarship has persuasively criticized one aspect or another of the picture without challenging the overall picture and providing an alternative. Judeans were an ethnic people like Greeks, Phrygians, and Egyptians and not a religion in the sense that Christianity became a religion, and that Buddhism and Islam

4. Almost all commentaries give a version of my summary.

5. A few scholars hold to a likely less-anachronistic view of synagogues as primarily school-like rather than liturgical, a case argued by Peter Wick, *Die urchristlichen Gottesdienste: Entstehung und Entwicklung im Rahmen der frühjüdischen Tempel-, Synagogen- und Hausfrömmigkeit* (BWANT 150; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2002). The actual evidence for Rome is for Judean *collegia*, voluntary associations that should not be taken as a Roman outward manifestation of a Jewish liturgical churchlike essence. See, among others, Peter Richardson, "Augustan Era Synagogues in Rome," in *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* (ed. Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 17–29; Richardson, "Early Synagogues as Collegia in the Diaspora and in Palestine," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* (ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson; London: Routledge, 1996); L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture*, vol. 1, *Building God's House in the Roman World* (HTS 42; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996).

are religions. Much has been written about the history and limitations of the concept of “religion” and “a religion,” but it is just now beginning to have an impact on the study of ancient Christianity and Judaism.⁶ Judean religion was not separable from Judean ethnicity and certainly not a semi-autonomous sphere, as in modernist conceptions of religion and as often imagined in scholarly ideas about synagogues. The recent book by Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, is another blow to the idea that Judaism was a religion that one could normally convert to, much less one that had a mission to the gentiles.⁷ The idea that first-century Judaism was a religion goes hand in hand with the idea that this religion centered on Sabbath-day worship in synagogues. Obviously this enormous topic is controversial, and I can only suggest a case. Joseph A. Fitzmyer evokes the standard picture when he writes that the Jewish population in Rome has been estimated at about fifty thousand “grouped into several synagogues.”⁸ But there is no evidence that the Jewish population of Rome was organized by synagogues in this time. A survey of scholarship on synagogues shows two things clearly.⁹ First, traditional scholarship, especially using evidence from periods after Paul, wants to depict a rather uniform institution across the Roman empire for which Sabbath worship is a version of “going to church on Sunday,” like what is known from much later evidence of synagogue services. But this raises questions about several things, including the origins of the “great synagogue” that emerges in the fifth–seventh centuries. Second, there is no evidence for this scenario in the Rome of Paul’s time, and scholarship on synagogues is far from agreeing on even what a synagogue was, much less that there was a common churchlike institution rather than great regional variety in Jewish meetings and meeting places.¹⁰ The other rather startling fact is that Paul’s letters never mention synagogues or anything like them, as one would surely expect from the premises of traditional scholarship and the book of Acts. We hear of households and non-Jewish temples and feasts, but nothing that can be identified as a reference to a synagogue apart from the wildest conjecture. The appeal to synagogues is an argument from the

6. Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of the Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

7. Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

8. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 27.

9. For a helpful recent survey of scholarship, see Anders Runesson, Donald D. Binder, and Birger Olsson, *The Ancient Synagogue from Its Origins to 200 C.E.: A Source Book* (AGJU 72; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1–15.

10. For the evidence, see Runesson, *Ancient Synagogue*, 230–37. It is not clear that any of the catacomb inscriptions that mention Jewish groups are earlier than the second century.

unknown to the unknown in claiming that synagogues in Rome explain the processes and events that led to Paul's letter.

The most common explanatory argument goes like this. Christianity was first established in the synagogues of Rome and included some gentile Godfearers. When Claudius expelled the Jews in 49, gentiles had to meet in houses, and the church became predominantly gentile, even after Jews started to return to the city. Scholars present this scenario as an explanation for why Romans supposes "a predominantly Gentile audience," yet why the letter is very Jewish.¹¹ In this account, Paul cryptically alludes to this situation when he mentions the weak (Jews) and the strong (gentiles) in 14:1–15:6. This explanation contains a very large number of unsupported or poorly supported assumptions, one linked to another. There is no evidence for Christianity first being in synagogues in Rome, not even in Acts, much less good evidence for what being a Christian in a synagogue would even mean.

My alternative scenario, requires understanding the greetings in Romans 16 in a way that differs greatly from standard scholarly treatments. Scholars widely understand the individuals greeted there as direct evidence for the composition of Paul's addressees and of Christianity in Rome with clusters of names often taken as evidence of house churches. Many scholars find four house churches in the chapter, but others find seven to ten, and one contemplates possibly fifteen.¹² The imagination is essential for historians, but in this case it has run wild in service of creating a useful but anachronistic picture of a fully developed form of the Christian religion in Rome in the mid to late 50s.

In their enthusiasm, commentators on Romans have misunderstood the nature of greetings in letters, and in Romans. I find it bizarre that scholars have consistently ignored what those specializing in epistolography have said, including Terence Mullins, whose work is well known in the field. He writes of the second person greeting, "In this way, the writer of the letter becomes the principal and the addressee becomes his agent in establishing a communication with a third party who is not intended to be among the immediate readership of the letter."¹³ Paul's words in Romans 16:14–16 make it clear that those named to be greeted are not among the audience toward whom the letter was aimed. The people

11. Romans describes its audience as only gentile, a fact widely ignored by scholars. See Runar M. Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography* (ConBNT 40; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003), 34–37.

12. Again the scholarship is wide-ranging. An extensive treatment based on the idea of five house churches in ch. 16 is Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 951–94, esp. 955–74, with an excellent discussion of other positions. For the possibility of fifteen house churches, see Thomas H. Tobin S.J., *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 37–39.

13. Terence Mullins, "Greeting as a New Testament Form," *JBL* 87 (1968): 420.

greeted are distinctly not that particular group whom Paul addresses in an uncharacteristically indefinite way as “all of those in Rome loved by God who are called to be holy ones” and as fruit he wants to obtain from among the gentiles (1:7, 11–13). As every commentator notices, Paul does not describe these people as a Christ assembly, a church or churches, even though there is one in the residence of Prisca and Aquila that he mentions in asking that his audience relay greetings to the couple. It would be very strange for Paul to mention only one church if the groups of people in ch. 16 were also churches.

Any ancient reader would have understood the people addressed by Paul as a group quite distinct from those mentioned in ch. 16. The epistolary opening of Romans is unique among the letters in the way that it foregrounds “God’s good news” foretold in the holy writings by God’s prophets and relates this to his audience of certain gentiles in Rome who are loved by God and called by Christ to be holy ones. The audience of the letter consists of non-Jews who have an interest in prophecy, the ancient holy writings and whom Paul treats as chosen by God and brothers.¹⁴

Discussion of the supposed expulsion of the Jews from Rome under Claudius leads directly to the first alternative social formation. Critique of the highly dubious case for an expulsion of the Jewish population or a large part of it in the year 49 has been laboriously detailed several times.¹⁵ But that thesis tied to texts about the weak and the strong, supposedly Jews and gentiles, has proven irresistible. Now a historically plausible interpretation of the texts about the expulsions has appeared in the work of Heidi Wendt. In a book on freelance religious experts at Rome and a journal article on the Jewish expulsion texts, Wendt shows that *Ioudaioi* or *Iudaei* is used in those texts like Chaldeans, Magoi, and sometimes Egyptians as a term for an ethnic subset of freelance religious experts.¹⁶ She studies the anxieties on the part of the Roman rulers about this class of specialists in certain kinds of religious knowledge and practices and the developing legal and administrative policies toward them. These were individuals who acted on the basis of their own skills instead of a temple, city, or some official capacity. They had expertise in such things as healing and especially all sorts of divinatory activities, including prophecies and signs from sacred books. There was a great demand for this sort of thing in Rome and elsewhere. Rome was the city of the *Sibylline Oracles*. Augustus,

14. Thorsteinsson, *Paul’s Interlocutor*, 34–37.

15. Most extensively, H. Dixon Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking and the Early Imperial Repression of Judaism at Rome* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 160; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

16. Heidi Wendt, *The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Roman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming); Wendt, “*Iudaica Romana*: A Re-Reading of Judean Expulsions from Rome,” *JAJ* 6 (2015); Wendt, “At the Temple Gates: The Religion of Freelance Experts in Early Imperial Rome” (PhD diss., Brown University, 2013).

Tiberius, and later emperors from time to time banned and collected all kinds of books used for prophecy and divination. Livy (39.16.8-9) has a magistrate say that one of his jobs included searching for and burning prophetic books. Wendt points out that Juvenal tells the story of the woman who interpreted the Jewish laws in a list of other experts such as a eunuch of Bellona, one who dressed as an Egyptian god, Armenian and Comma-genian *haruspices* (entrail diviners), and Chaldean astrologers. The satirist says that Judeans will interpret a dream for a fee. Wendt shows that such specialists appear each time that writers mention Jewish expulsions. So in 19 BCE *Chaldaei* and *Iudaei* are expelled together, and in 19 CE people performing particular Judean and Egyptian religious practices along with *mathematici*, that is, astrologers (Suetonius, *Tib.* 36; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.85.11-17).

When Suetonius writes that *Iudaei* constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he is talking not about fights between Jews and Christians over Christ but about freelance Judean religious specialists and a particularly prominent one named Chrestus. Both Wendt and Pauline Ripat, who writes about *magoi*, astrologers, and various diviners, show clearly that the Roman authorities did not oppose the astrology or divination or ethnic versions of these practices as such, much less the ethnicities themselves, but rather a certain class of freelance practitioner.¹⁷ Paul clearly belongs to this class of freelance religious experts. Claudius did not expel the estimated fifteen to sixty thousand Jews from Rome, but rather such independent and often itinerant practitioners who popularly often went under the name of their ethnicities.

Understanding Paul within this social formation of freelance experts, places him in a broader and well-known historical phenomenon that cuts across ethnic formations like “Judaism” and that can be known confidently as a social fact.¹⁸ Understanding this social formation requires something like a field of social competition and self-definition. Pierre Bourdieu and others have widely used this metaphor of a field.¹⁹ A field is a particular sort of social arena where, instead of control by patrons or official institutions, players contend over what the rules are and thereby set these norms themselves. To play, one has to be educated or socialized into the particular skills that give one more or less prestige and thus power in the game

17. Pauline Ripat, “Expelling Misconceptions: Astrologers at Rome,” *CPh* 106 (2011): 115–54.

18. See Wendt, “At the Temple Gates,” ch. 4; Jennifer Eyl, “‘By the Power of Signs and Wonders’: Paul, Divinatory Practices and Symbolic Capital” (PhD diss., Brown University, 2011); and my “Kinds of Myth, Meals and Power: Paul and the Corinthians,” in *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians* (ed. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller; ECL 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 105–49, 219–43.

19. For one helpful account, see Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (trans. S. Emanuel; Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996).

or the ability to use the specialist's products. In societies where only a tiny portion of the population was fluently literate, those who were highly literate tended to have similar kinds of educations, and to read and interpret writings that circulated widely, but among a relatively few and in smaller niches related to social strata and ethnicity. Moreover such writers wrote and speakers spoke in relation to other writers and competed with positions on topics that claimed to be truer or more just than the positions in the writings of others. Paul's competition with opponents is well known. He certainly had specialist's skills that were not primarily literate practices such as prophecy, tongues, healing practices, and performing wonders, but his literate skills with the Judean holy writings placed him in such a social field and made him attractive to people who desired the products of such niches of literate knowledge.²⁰

The addressees targeted in Paul's extremely learned and complex letter were such people. Romans can in no way be explained as a writing for a supposed general Christian or Jewish population, something that could be read publicly to the "everyperson" with any hope of comprehension.²¹ The letter can be explained only by a scenario in which Paul aims at a much more educated and specialized audience, a writing requiring intensive study and designed to challenge the reader. Regardless of whether that audience understood and desired Paul's message of salvation, they would have recognized him as a social type of one who had knowledge about prophecy from ancient writings and the special wisdom of an ancient people and taught their relevance to the present. This self-selected and small population of people interested in types like Paul and with skills to interact might be conceived as a part of the field of literate specialists, namely, the consumers of their services. Being one of these consumers required certain social and educational conditions that historians can investigate. This is an argument from the known to unknown.

The other social formations necessary for explaining Romans can be approached by way of the concept of social networks, although I am not following network theory. I do not think that a network describes an analytically distinct social formation, but only tracks connections between

20. For Paul's nonliterate practices, see Eyl, "Signs and Wonders." For this small percentage and varied niches of such literate people, see, with bibliography, William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (CCS; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). For a topography of writing related to literacy and Judean and ethnic minorities, see Paul Robertson, "Paul's Letters and Contemporary Greco-Roman Literature: Theorizing a New Taxonomy" (PhD diss., Brown University, 2012).

21. For important arguments on this point and a critique of the scriptural-allusion school of biblical theologians, see Christopher Stanley, "Paul's 'Use' of Scripture: Why the Audience Matters," in *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley; SBLSymS 50; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 125–56.

social formations. We can assume, and Paul's letters provide much evidence, that households and families constituted another key social formation in addition to a field of specialists. Paul belongs to networks that connected him with at least some in the audience and also connected him to the people that he asks the audience to greet in ch. 16. Indeed, Paul indicates that a number of those greeted have connected with him and his mission in the East. There is a substantial overlap, however, between households and various kinds of economic activity, since most business activity was located in households. Aquila and Prisca might have formed a household and also have been artisans working from their home as well as literate specialists. The key connection, however, is between members of households, especially *kyrioi*, heads, and the field of literate experts in ancient books. Households would then be connected with other households at the level of power by way of the friendships between heads of different households. Women might sometimes, at least, be *de facto* heads of households, as Phoebe perhaps was. Other members of households and families might also connect to a field in virtue of the approval granted by the *kyrios*—or tolerance—and certain qualifications of education and socialization to the skills and knowledge of the field. In spite of our often naïve ideas about the universal power and attraction of Paul's message, the appeal of messages and messengers required certain sociocultural conditions. Our near universal literacy and education, massive access to information, capitalistic consumer economy, and practices of individualistic autonomy should not be projected back as they constantly are by scholars.

With this bare-bones sketch and explanatory framework in view, one could make up a number of possible scenarios that would not invoke the often blatant historical anachronisms of the traditional religions, the synagogue, the church, universal interest, education-literacy, and so on. Here is one scenario that these historically known social formations might allow. One *kyrios* of a moderately well-to-do household had a decent Greek education and a long-standing interest in ancient books, ancient wisdom, and the interpretation of prophetic writings. He may have studied some of the numerous collections of oracles that circulated in Rome, consulted experts in the *disciplina Etrusca* (Etruscan divinatory arts), or Chaldean and Egyptian books in the past. But he had come to have a major interest in ancient Judean writings, perhaps by way a Judean expert. In the recent past, he had also studied with an itinerant Judean expert who taught the idea that the Judean writings focused on the figure of a Judean martyr, Jesus Christ. And this freelance interpreter was networked somehow with Paul or one of Paul's associates and was able to convey some of the teachings for which Paul was known. At any rate, someone had communicated to Paul that the circle around this *kyrios* had found Paul's version of the Christ myth persuasive or at least of strong interest. It seems that some in

the circle had been baptized or had baptized themselves (one interpretation of the first person plural in Rom 6:1–14).

This *kyrios*, let us call him Demetrius, had a grown son and two slaves whom he had educated, and all three were part of a long-standing study circle. Other members of the rather large household may have listened in the shadows from time to time and understood a little of what was said. Further, Demetrius had a close friend, head of a similar household who was a sometimes-dedicated participant of the study circle and brought with him auditors and discussants from time to time, especially when various Judean freelance experts might be willing to expound on topics of interest. Through his network, perhaps by way of Prisca and Aquila who had a Pauline *ekklēsia* in their house in Rome, Paul may have heard about Demetrius and his circle and his acceptance of or openness to his Christ interpretation of the Judean writings. He saw this study circle as a tremendous opportunity for his work in Rome and beyond. Paul then wrote Romans, a dense letter intensely interpreting the Scriptures in complex ways that would have impressed and challenged just this sort of circle and would have made Paul stand out from other freelance specialists. Paul knew that they were not fully indoctrinated followers of his Christ message, but he sought by way of the letter to mold them into followers, to describe and address them as fellow travelers so as to evoke a Pauline self-understanding.²² Indeed, the letter was made to be so challenging that it would have begged for expert interpretation, which Paul was quite willing to supply. The letter's rather open-ended address to chosen gentiles in Rome aimed to make them into committed Pauline Christ-people. The message about the future of Jews and gentiles in God's prophetic plans for world history aimed at the interests of people like Demetrius—so also the teachings about sin, self-mastery and self-transformation by way of Christ and his *pneuma*. Paul, at the end of the letter, also tried to encourage Demetrius and his circle to connect with Paul's own network in Rome by asking people in the circle to carry his greetings to these Pauline associates of various sort.

Why is this a more plausible historical scenario and explanation than the traditional church or churches in Rome, Christians in synagogues, Jewish expulsion, and so on? First, I invoke Ockham's razor. The approach involves many many fewer assumptions and still explains the letter. Second, this economy relates to the approach's principle of social formation, from what is known to exist socially to what is in the process of being formed. Third, the explanation allows scenarios that have plausibly earlier and less-complex forms of social formation without the Christianity, church, and Judaism that we know from much later evidence and that are

22. See my "The Concept of Community and the History of Early Christianity," *MTSR* 23 (2011): 242–45.

always already present in some way for traditional scholarship. Fourth, the explanation makes Paul and the social formations to which he was connected fit what we know of society and culture in the Roman empire instead of being a *sui generis* alien implant. The specifics of my scenario are just speculation, but the social and cultural formations and processes are well known and plausible. Fifth, the approach employs categories such as fields of social activity, social networks, freelance religious specialist, literate consumers of specialist's products, literate intellectual practices, divinatory practices, households, and so on, that cut across the concepts of Christianity and Judaism and thus do not continually reinscribe historically implausible uniqueness, *sui generis* social formation, and a completely implausible boundedness and purity to Judaism and Christianity. Instead, the relative unknowns, "Christianity" and "Judaism," get re-described in terms that make them understandable in the ancient historical context. Sixth, the scenario avoids the myth of the apostolic gospel seen in Acts and Eusebius, but also in Paul's letters. In this myth, the message automatically produced communities of fully agreeing and committed believers rather than the humanly plausible degrees of acceptance, rejection and appropriation of the message to one's own understandings and interests.

Fashioning Witnesses

“Hebrews” and “Jews” in Early Christian Art

ARTHUR P. URBANO

Providence College

Ross Kraemer asks questions that stay with you. When I was writing my dissertation at Brown University on the role of biographical literature in the construction of intellectual identity and authority in late antiquity,¹ Ross repeatedly asked where I thought Jews fit into the picture. Focused on Christian and Neoplatonist intellectuals and daunted by the prospect of tackling rabbinic literature, I put the question to one side but it has remained with me. Ten years on, I am happy to have the opportunity to attempt a response to her question in a chapter written in honor and gratitude.

Imaging Jews

Medieval Christian art is replete with stereotyped and disparaging images of Jews. Clothing, physical features, and devious acts visually mark the Jew as other and antagonist. Following Augustine of Hippo, medieval Christians saw Jews as spiritually blind but necessary witnesses to the Christian faith, and they populated their visual culture with representations that reinforced and perpetuated this understanding.² But this type of “visually distinct Jew” is rare in Christian art before the eleventh century.³ The “contemporary Jew” is nonexistent in early Christian art. Instead the patriarchs

1. Recently revised and published as Arthur P. Urbano, *The Philosophical Life: Biography and the Crafting of Intellectual Identity in Late Antiquity* (Patristic Monograph Series 21; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013).

2. Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).

3. Sara Lipton, “Unfeigned Witness: Jews, Matter, and Vision in Twelfth-Century Christian Art,” in *Judaism and Christian Art: Aesthetic Anxieties from the Catacombs to Colonial-*

and matriarchs of ancient Israel and the priests and scribes of the New Testament populate catacomb frescoes, sarcophagi, and mosaic panels. Considering the representation of these figures in the context of late antique discussions of identity, philosophical origins, and cultural competition, I argue that imaged clothing created a visual association between biblical “Hebrews” and “Christians” that reinforced theological, historical, and exegetical claims to continuity between these categories. This was accomplished through a visual vocabulary centered on the “philosopher’s look,” which included the robe (Latin: *pallium*; Greek: *tribōn*) and various gestures.⁴ When “Jews” began to appear in Christian art of the late fourth and fifth centuries, clothing served to distinguish Jews from Hebrews while also excluding Jews from the intellectual and moral values that the *pallium* as image-clothing signified.⁵ This development in the artistic tradition intersects with trends in the literary tradition and historical Christian–Jewish relations. The mosaics of the Roman basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore exemplify these trajectories and also exhibit parallels with earlier Jewish art.

Hebrew Philosophers on the Walls

The basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore was commissioned by Pope Sixtus III in the 430s. Its nave was lined with a series of forty-two mosaic panels below the clerestory windows (of which twenty-seven remain) depicting scenes from the biblical history of ancient Israel. The arch at the entrance to the sanctuary is decorated with scenes from the infancy of Christ drawn from canonical and apocryphal traditions. Studies of the iconographic program of the basilica have produced various interpretations. Suzanne Spain argued that the program as a whole communicates the fulfillment of God’s covenant promises.⁶ Margaret Miles saw the theological agenda of the mosaics as twofold: the glorification of the Virgin Mary as *theotokos* (as proclaimed by the Council of Ephesus in 431) and a systematic and comprehensive articulation of the relationship of the Hebrew Bible and the Christian scriptures as one in which the Hebrew Bible foreshadows Christianity.⁷ Joanne Sieger regarded the program as

ism (ed. Herbert L. Kessler and David Nirenberg; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 45–73.

4. For a full treatment, see Paul Zanker, *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (Sather Classical Lectures 59; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

5. Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (French original, 1967; repr., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 13.

6. Suzanne Spain, “‘The Promised Blessing’: The Iconography of the Mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore,” *Art Bulletin* 61, no. 4 (1979): 518–40.

7. Margaret R. Miles, “Santa Maria Maggiore’s Fifth-Century Mosaics: Triumphal Christianity and the Jews,” *HTR* 86 (1993): 155–75.

a series of “visual metaphors” that expressed Leo the Great’s (ca. 400–461) Christology.⁸ The suggestion that Leo, archdeacon under Pope Sixtus, was the theological mastermind behind the design of the mosaic program and worked closely with the artists is tempting but unprovable.⁹ Nevertheless his sermons are useful both for understanding the general theological currents surrounding the iconography and for gauging the influence of the thought of Augustine and others, namely, Eusebius of Caesarea, in terms of the relation between exegetical methods and attitudes toward Jews in fifth-century Rome. This was a period that saw increased oppression of and violence against Jews in the Christian empire¹⁰—the destruction of synagogues, the barring of Jews from public service, the abolition of the Jewish patriarch, and forced conversions, such as the episode at Minorca, on which Ross has recently written.¹¹ This period also saw the increased visualization of textual and rhetorical Hebrews and Jews, who acted as witnesses of various kinds.

The nave mosaics feature representations of accounts from the Torah and the book of Joshua. The cycle on the left wall focuses on the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the cycle on the right focuses on Moses and Joshua. For the most part, these figures are depicted wearing the philosopher’s *pallium*.¹² One panel shows the visit of the three messengers to the tent of Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18:1–15) divided into a series of three episodes (**fig. 1**). While the panel is unique in its combination of scenes,¹³ Abraham and the three messengers are also found in a fresco in the Via Latina catacomb (fourth century, Rome). In both examples, a striking visual association is made among the four male figures. Abraham and his otherworldly visitors all wear the *pallium* over a striped tunic. In the Via Latina example they also gesture toward each other with the index and middle fingers of the right hand, an oratorical gesture indicating speech. In the Santa Maria Maggiore version, only the central messenger, circumscribed by an aureole, gestures in this way, while Abraham bows (Gen 18:2) with his right hand extended in an act of acclamation. Some Chris-

8. Joanne Deane Sieger, “Visual Metaphor as Theology: Leo the Great’s Sermons on the Incarnation and the Arch Mosaics at S. Maria Maggiore,” *Gesta* 26, no. 2 (1987): 83–91.

9. Richard Krautheimer, *Rome, Profile of a City*, 312–1308 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 51.

10. Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire, 135–425* (trans. H. McKeating; Littman Library of Jewish Civilization; New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 125–32.

11. See ch. 5 of Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

12. There are exceptions. Joshua, for example, appears in the *pallium* before the death of Moses and in military garb after.

13. Beat Brenk, *Die frühchristlichen Mosaiken in S. Maria Maggiore zu Rom* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1975), 58.



Figure 1. Mosaic panel depicting Abraham greeting the three messengers at the oak of Mamre (above) and Sarah and Abraham's hospitality (below). Nave, Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome. Photo: Arthur P. Urbano.

tian interpreters read the biblical episode either as a theophany, with one of the figures possibly the Logos (Eusebius), or as a figurative foreshadowing of the revelation of the Trinity (Ambrose).¹⁴ Suggesting (and rightly, I think) that the narrative panels should be interpreted not only through the biblical texts but also alongside fourth- and fifth-century exegetical traditions, Beat Brenk saw an intentional representation of the Trinity here.¹⁵

Attention to image-clothing opens broader cultural implications. While Christians had largely abandoned the garment by the fifth century, it was still a marker of identity for Platonists in Athens and Gaul.¹⁶ A century earlier, Eusebius established interesting connections between Greek

14. See Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 1.2.8; Ambrose, *Exc.* 2.96. Augustine denied that one of the visitors was Christ and asserted that they were simply angels (*Civ.* 16.29).

15. Brenk, *Die frühchristlichen Mosaiken*, 57, 107–8.

16. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 4.11.1; Damascius, *Vit. Is.* 59B (Ath.). For a description of the ritual bestowing of the *tribwv* on students at Athens, see Olympiodorus of Thebes, fragment 28 (= Photius, *Cod.* 80). On Christians and the *tribwv*, see Arthur P. Urbano, "Dressing a Christian': The Philosopher's Mantle as Signifier of Pedagogical and Moral Authority," *Studia Patristica* 62, no. 10 (2013): 213–29.

philosophers and Hebrew patriarchs and prophets.¹⁷ He included Abraham among the “Hebrews” whom he described as “divinely loved men” (τῶν . . . θεοφιλῶν ἀνδρῶν) who lived according to a “most ancient philosophy” (ἀρχαιοτάτη μὲν τις φιλοσοφία) that predated both the Mosaic law and Greek philosophy.¹⁸ Guided by a pure, rational illumination toward an intimate knowledge of God, they proved themselves “just” (δίκαιοι) and “pious” (εὐσεβεῖς).¹⁹ In this respect the pre-Mosaic Hebrews are reminiscent of the Platonic wise man.²⁰ Eusebius could point to the Scriptures to show that Abraham was a “friend of God” and fulfilled the philosophic ideal.²¹ Eusebius claimed that Moses wrote Genesis in the style of a philosophical biography, delineating as in painted likenesses the peculiar virtue of each patriarch allegorically, to serve as mimetic instruction for their wayward descendants.²² Augustine articulated an exegetical method that would have longlasting influence in the West. Rejecting a hyperallegorization of the Hebrew Scriptures, Augustine adopted a philosophical approach that distinguished and related “things” and their signifiers to produce “literal” (*proprie*) and “figurative” (*figurate*) readings.²³ The actions of the patriarchs were to be read historically, but they were also signifiers of virtues and doctrines. In all of these readings, Abraham receives knowledge of the Christian trinitarian God, making him an ancient witness to Christian doctrine. Eusebius had argued that the patriarchs received unmediated knowledge of God through theophanies of the Word.²⁴ With the Christian faith often understood as “philosophy,” in its literal sense—the love of wisdom (= the Logos)—it should not be surprising to see the patriarch dressed as a contemporary philosopher would dress.

The patriarch–philosopher association was not unique to Christianity but appears also in Jewish literary and artistic contexts. Eusebius followed Aristobulus in the accusation that the Greeks plagiarized the teachings of the chronologically prior Hebrews.²⁵ Like Philo and Josephus, Eusebius cast the patriarchs and prophets in a philosophical model that placed Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian histories, cultures, and identities in a compet-

17. Aryeh Kofsky, *Eusebius of Caesarea against Paganism* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 3; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 103–7.

18. Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 1.2.10 (PG 22:25a). He also includes Enoch, Noah, Seth, Japheth, Isaac, Jacob, and, interestingly, Job, in this group.

19. Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 1.2.8.

20. Plato, *Phil.* 39e: Δίκαιος ἀνὴρ καὶ εὐσεβὴς καὶ ἀγαθὸς πάντως ἅρ’ οὐ θεοφιλὴς ἐστίν;

21. James 2:23: καὶ φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη; cf. 2 Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 7.8.22: πλὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ οὗτος δίκαιος καὶ εὐσεβής. (PG 21:524c)

22. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 7.7 (NPNF trans.). On philosophical biographies in late antiquity, see Urbano, *Philosophical Life*.

23. Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 1.2–7; 3.22. (PL 34:78).

24. Eusebius, *Ecl. proph.* PG 22:1041c.

25. Daniel Ridings, *The Attic Moses: The Dependency Theme in Some Early Christian Writers* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1995).

itive relation.²⁶ This occurs also in depictions of biblical figures in the style of the philosopher found in the third-century synagogue at Dura Europos. In several episodes, Moses is seen in an off-white *pallium* with *tsitsit* hanging from its edges, a “Judaized” Greek garment.²⁷ C. H. Kraeling had interpreted the garment as simply everyday clothing,²⁸ and textile finds at Dura confirm that the garments in the paintings reflected actual garments worn in Dura.²⁹ Nevertheless, despite the quirks of his interpretations, Erwin R. Goodenough was right to recognize that the various styles of clothing in the Dura paintings provided a “crucial” interpretive code.³⁰ Put in other terms, when real clothing is imaged, the resulting “image-clothing” is infused with meaning through associations with other visual cues and in the context of a cultural “vestimentary code,” which provides an array of significations that can be ascribed to garments and their wearers.³¹

In the Dura paintings, the *pallium*-wearers are often distinguished from other figures by dress and stature. For example, in the panel depicting Moses giving water to the Israelites in the desert (Exod 17:1–7; Num 20:1–13), a very large Moses wearing the *pallium* towers over the “ordinary” Israelites, who wear Persian trousers and coats. In the Santa Maria Maggiore mosaics, a similar technique is observed. Moses is always the philosopher. In the scene showing Moses presenting the law to the Israelites, he stands elevated wearing a *pallium* and holding an open codex (fig. 2). The Israelites he addresses, on the other hand, are not dressed like him, but in the “more recent” late antique fashion of *paenula* (a long hooded cape) and wide tunic. This, in fact, was “ordinary” male clothing in the fourth and fifth centuries. Similarly, in the panel depicting the grumbling Israelites of Exod 16:1–15, clothing distinguishes the wise and enlightened Moses from the rebellious and closely huddled crowd of ordinary folk.

26. See Philo, *Mos.* 2.2; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.18–26.

27. Steven Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World: Toward a New Jewish Archaeology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 179.

28. As in the representation of Moses, see Carl H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue* (New York: Ktav, 1979), 81.

29. Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, vol. 9 (Bollingen Series 37; New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), 127–29. It has been argued that for the most part Jews did not dress differently than non-Jews in the Roman world. See Steven Fine, “How Do You Know a Jew When You See One? Reflections on Jewish Costume in the Roman World,” in *Fashioning Jews: Clothing, Culture, and Commerce* (ed. Leonard Greenspoon; Studies in Jewish Civilization 24; West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2013), 20; Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 30–34.

30. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 9:124. Chapter 7 is devoted entirely to dress.

31. Barthes, *Fashion System*, 98. For discussion of the various religious, social, and cultural functions of clothing in ancient Judaism and Christianity, see Kristi Upson-Saia, Carly Daniel-Hughes, and Alicia J. Batten, *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).



Figure 2. Mosaic panel depicting Moses presenting the law to the Israelites (above), and Levites and priests with the ark of the covenant (below). Nave, Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome. Photo: Arthur P. Urbano.

Our Figures in Their Books

Early Christian theologians often distinguished between the Hebrew patriarchs and prophets on the one hand and the ordinary Hebrew or Jewish people on the other. Eusebius articulated this in a carefully conceived distinction between the categories “Hebrews” and “Jews” in an “ethnic-argumentation” that defined Jewish–Christian relations on the basis of ethnic identities construed according to physical kinship, moral comportment, religious practices, and intellectual perspicacity.³² Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι) were a corrupted race of Hebrews (Ἑβραῖοι) who deviated from their ancestors’ way of life in Egypt.³³ The Hebrews were neither called (οὐτ’ ἐχρημάτιζον) nor were (οὐτ’ ἡσάν) Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι); “Judaism” did not exist before Moses (ὁ Ἰουδαϊσμός οὐκ ἦν πω τότε).³⁴ The Hebrews’ corrupted descendants required a law to keep them in check. Thus “Judaism” (ὁ Ἰουδαϊσμός) was born, as was a categorical (though permeable) distinction between Hebrews and Jews.³⁵ Similarly, Augustine distinguished between the “Judaism” put

32 . Aaron P. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius’ Praeparatio Evangelica* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 10.

33 . Ibid., 94.

34 . See Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 7.6.1–2 (PG 21:516a).

35 . Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument*, 123; Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews: The Holy*



Figure 3. Detail of scene of the presentation of Jesus depicting priests flanking the Jerusalem Temple, the offerings of pigeons and turtledoves shown at the Temple entrance. To the right, an angel speaks to a sleeping Joseph. Sanctuary arch, Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome. Photo: Arthur P. Urbano.

aside by the apostle Paul, to which *℥* he carnal and impious people of the Jews" (*carnalis et impius populus Iudaeorum*) continued to adhere, and the "root of the olive tree," identified as "the lineage of the holy Hebrews" (*origine sanctorum Hebraeorum*).³⁶

This distinction becomes visually concrete both in the nave panels and in the depiction of Jews in the sanctuary arch. Two scenes show bearded men with long hair wearing capes of various styles. A tight group of eight appears at the right end of the upper register in the scene of the presentation of the infant Christ (Luke 2:22–38; **fig. 3**). They emerge into a courtyard alongside a temple structure. Two wear a purple robe clasped at the breast by a brooch. Of the remaining six, only two are fully visible and wear a short striped tunic with the edge of a blue cape visible. Two registers down in the scene of the magi before Herod (Matt 2:4–6), two more of these long-haired bearded men appear, now with large brooches clasping blue and white striped capes. Parallels are found in the nave mosaics. The very first panel at the right front nave depicts Abraham and Melchizedek (Gen 14:18–20). Melchizedek bears an uncanny resemblance to the caped figure in the foreground of the temple scene. Another panel on the left nave shows long-haired male figures in blue and white capes walking alongside the ark of the covenant (**fig. 2**).

Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity (Divinations; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 28–29.

6 . Augustine, *Faust*. 9.2 (PL 42:241–242).

These are priests.³⁷ Their long hair is likely based on a reading of Lev 21:5. Those with the purple robe, being positioned in front of the group, are likely high priests.³⁸ Mosaic representations of the passion narrative in the early-sixth-century church of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna similarly identify Caiaphas with long white hair, beard, and clasped cape. A labeled portrait of Aaron in the Dura synagogue portrays him as high priest standing before a temple and wearing a similar long, jewel-encrusted cape clasped by a large oval brooch at his chest.³⁹ This costume does not match the description of the high priestly robes in Exodus 38. Based on Sassanian parallels, Goodenough surmised that the cape was of Persian origin (as are Aaron's trousers and coat beneath) and may have been similar to the robes worn by the priests of Dura's pagan temples (which ones, he did not specify). The image presented Aaron as a "priest with all the dignity and prerogatives of Persian divinity, royalty, and priesthood."⁴⁰

Despite a tradition of Jewish allegorical understandings of the priesthood and temple cult, Christian authors associated the temple cult with a Jewish clinging to material realities.⁴¹ Unwilling and unable to see intelligible truths, the Jews were and remained blind to the true identity of Jesus. Augustine wrote that the Hebrew prophets prophesied this blindness and the apostle Paul decried it: *¶* When the Jews do not believe in our Scriptures, their own Scriptures are fulfilled in them, while they read them with darkened eyes."⁴² In the Santa Maria Maggiore mosaic, the attention of the priestly group is divided: the robed priests gesture toward the temple, while the rest of the group variously gestures toward the temple or the Christ child. In this detail, there are hints of the typological associations made between Christ, the temple, and the priesthood. The bordering image of Melchizedek in the nave, understood as a type of the priesthood of Christ (Hebrews 7) and "bishop" (*antistes*) by Leo, also suggests this.⁴³ The gestures may also visualize what Christians perceived as obstinate Jewish clinging to the ritual law.⁴⁴

In several works, Augustine conjures the image of the *Iudaeus* as book-

37. Brenk, *Die frühchristlichen Mosaiken*, 94.

8 . Perhaps Annas and Caiaphas on the basis of Luke 3:2. Discussion of the designer's knowledge of Second Temple Judaism must be left for another time.

9 . See Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. Jacob Neusner, abr. ed.; ed. Jacob Neusner; Bollingen Series; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 209. Joseph Gutmann, *The Dura-Europos Synagogue: A Re-Evaluation (1932-1972)* (Religion and the Arts 1; Chambersburg, PA: American Academy of Religion, 1973), 62-64.

40. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols* (abr.), 210-11.

41. See Josephus, *Ant.* 3.181-186; and Philo, *Mos.* 2.117. Simon, *Verus Israel*, 163-73.

42. Augustine, *Civ.* 18.46 (trans. Dyson).

43. Leo, *Serm.* 5.3 (PL 54:154b): Melchizedek is *antistes*, which is used elsewhere of bishops. See Augustine, *Conf.* 6.2.2 and *Cod. Just.* 1.3.

44. The discussion of the priests by Brenk and others tends to focus on the Roman characteristics of the temple. See Brenk, *Die frühchristlichen Mosaiken*, 23-24.

bearer, expanding the earlier Christian theme that “Jews are particularly connected to and represented by their holy books.”⁴⁵ Defending the Christian reception of the Hebrew Scriptures, Augustine argued that the book-bearing Jews attested, on the one hand, to the ancient and divine truth they contained, and, on the other, to the distorted witness of the Jews who failed to understand them properly: “The Jew carries the book (*codicem*) from which the Christian believes. They have been made our book holders (*librarii*), even as slaves are accustomed to carry books behind their masters.”⁴⁶ Their continued possession of the ancient Scriptures bears witness to the truth of the Christian faith that has superseded theirs. In the Herod scene on the right side of the basilica’s sanctuary arch, one of the priests holds open a scroll, revealing its otherwise unintelligible scribble. The other gestures, as if explaining. This represents the scene where the “chief priests and scribes” consult the Hebrew Scriptures regarding the Messiah’s birthplace (Matt 2:4–6). They are visual expressions of Augustine’s Jews who witness to the truth of the messianic prophecies by (literally) holding open their writings, while at the same time being “spiritually blind” to the true meaning.⁴⁷ The consequence is supersession. Leo the Great echoed this view in a more acerbic tone in an exegesis of this episode:

Carnal Israel understands not what it reads, sees not what it points out; refers to the pages, whose utterances it does not believe. Where is your boasting, O Jew? Where your noble birth drawn from the stem of Abraham? Is not your circumcision become uncircumcision? Behold, the greater serves the less, and by the reading of that covenant which you keep in the letter only, you become the slave of strangers born, who enter into the lot of your heritage. (*Serm.* 33.3 [NPNF trans.])

Christians in Fact if Not in Name

A further visual association is made between the clothing of the “Hebrews” in the nave panels and the angels and young Christ on the arch. All are depicted in the style of the philosopher. Early Christian art also regularly depicted the adult Christ, the apostles, and other saints in this robe. Such images, found on sarcophagi and in frescoes, would no doubt have been familiar to fifth-century Roman viewers. Thus, these enlightened Hebrews reflect the image of divine Wisdom and its messengers. The visual language equates the Hebrews with Christ and Christians. Eusebius had

45. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 323.

46. Augustine, *Enarrat. Ps.* 56.9 (PL 36:666; my translation).

47. Sieger, “Visual Metaphor,” 86–87.

argued that Christians were “a restored Hebrew *ethnos*.”⁴⁸ Enlightened by the Logos who reintroduced the pristine life of the Hebrews, Christians recaptured and perpetuated the faith and life that had been lost to contemporary Jews.⁴⁹ For Eusebius “Hebrews” remained a religiously positive category, the historico-theological, spiritual progenitor of the Christian.”⁵⁰ Thus, Christians were both a new and the oldest people.⁵¹

That the Hebrew nation is not new, but is universally honored on account of its antiquity, is known to all. The books and writings of this people contain accounts of ancient men, rare indeed and few in number, but nevertheless distinguished for piety and righteousness and every other virtue. . . . If anyone should assert that all those who have enjoyed the testimony of righteousness, from Abraham himself back to the first man, were Christians in fact if not in name, he would not go beyond the truth. (*Hist. eccl.* 1.4.5–6 [NPNF trans.])

Eusebius and others also thought of themselves as Greeks who rejected their ancestral religion and discovered the roots of their philosophical thought among the Hebrews. Christians were thus the best of both worlds, but neither one nor the other.⁵² As a mirror of Christians, the Hebrews emerge from Eusebius’s writings as ideal Greek philosophers in Christian garb.”⁵³ Similarly in the Santa Maria Maggiore mosaics, they are ideal Roman Christians in Greek garb.

In a study of an early Christian sarcophagus from Arles, Jaś Elsner argued that the full-front depiction of the crossing of the Red Sea revealed a “clash of paternities,” as Christians in the late empire attempted to reconcile their “Israelite” and Roman genealogies.⁵⁴ The visual served as a “site of Christian exegetic and interpretive investment,” where Roman Christians rooted their identity in an Israelite past, but where “Judaism” remained an “empty figure into which and around which a series of entirely Christian meanings must inevitably resonate.”⁵⁵

In this contribution, I have highlighted the intersection among tex-

48. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument*, 210.

49. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 1.2; Eugene Gallagher, “Eusebius the Apologist: The Evidence of the *Preparation* and the *Proof*,” *Studia Patristica* 26 (1993): 251–60.

50. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews*, 29.

51. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument*, 219.

52. Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

53. Sabrina Inowlocki, *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors: His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context* (AGJU 64; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 110.

54. Jaś Elsner, “Pharaoh’s Army Got Drowned: Some Reflections on Jewish Narrative and Christian Meaning in Late Antiquity,” in Kessler and Nirenberg, *Judaism and Christian Art*, 10–44.

55. Elsner, “Pharaoh’s Army,” 32.

tual, rhetorical, and visual representations of Hebrews and Jews. As many scholars remind us, when early Christian writers wrote about Jews (and I would add “Hebrews”), these were often rhetorical (Fredriksen) or hermeneutical (Leonard V. Rutgers) categories through which Christian identity was conceptualized.⁵⁶ Discussions about Jews were more often directed at other interlocutors (Greek intellectuals, Manicheans, or other Christians) than at real Jews.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, as Rutgers has noted, textual Jews and real Jews congealed in the Christian imagination.⁵⁸ When we consider the imaging of clothing as part of this process, what we see is the visualization of a vestimentary code surrounding a well-known article of clothing whose “proper custody” was often disputed.⁵⁹ Its associations with wisdom, Greekness, virtue, and pedagogical authority are deployed in a way that creates a visual analog to typological understandings of Hebrews and Jews. The clothing worn by Hebrews and Jews in early Christian art measures the witness each category bears toward the Christian faith: the witness of ancient knowledge and the witness of otherness.

6 . Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 74; Leonard V. Rutgers, *Making Myths: Jews in Early Christian Identity Formation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 110. See also Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews*, 12.

57. Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews*, 226–27.

8 . Rutgers, *Making Myths*, 11.

9 . Arthur P. Urbano, “Tailoring Rhetoric: Verbalizing Philosophical Dress in the Second Sophistic,” in *“The One Who Sows Bountifully”: Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers* (ed. Caroline E. Johnson Hodge et al.; BJS 356; Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2013).

“Entrusted with the Oracles of God”

The Fate of the Judean Writings in Flavian Rome

HEIDI WENDT

Wright State University

In *Unreliable Witnesses*, Ross Kraemer examines two narratives about punitive events at Rome involving enthusiasm for religious rites and teachings perceived as novel or exotic.¹ Unreliable though these accounts may be as plain assessments of women’s religiosity, both are notable for another feature they share, namely, the prominence of individual religious experts in what had transpired: in Livy’s account of the Bacchanalia affair (39.8.3–4), a Greek sacrificer and seer (*sacrificulus et vates*) who first transplanted Bacchic initiations to Italian soil, and in Justin Martyr’s *Second Apology* (2.1–20), Ptolemy, a Christian teacher unjustly executed after the former husband of a female student reported him to the urban prefect. In these and numerous other imperial-period sources, such experts are inculpated for introducing foreign religion and other cultural practices into the capital, where, as Tacitus remarks, all shameful things in the world converge and are celebrated (*Ann.* 15.44.12–17).

Although I will return to the subject of foreign religious experts, my primary goal in this essay is narrower in scope and involves them only indirectly. I would like to entertain the idea that, in the wake of the Flavian triumph, the copy of the law (ὁ νόμος ὁ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) that Josephus describes being paraded on a *ferculum* as the culmination of items despoiled from Jerusalem temple (*J.W.* 7.150) was either incorporated into the civic collection of prophetic corpora that also included the *Sibylline Oracles*, or at least might have been thought to be part of this collection. In particular, I will argue that, despite the grave consequences of the Judean War, the prominence of literary oracles and interpreters in its principal events created a

1. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9–34, 46–54.

pretext both for interest in Judean religion and also for anyone claiming expertise therein. Thus, the fate of the Judean writings at Rome may hold important implications for theorizing dynamics of recognition and attraction first to Judaic texts and practices in the last quarter of the first century, and then to Christian outgrowths thereof in subsequent decades.

Few scholars dispute the significance of the Judean War for the Flavian dynasty. Martin Goodman argued in his recent book that the war the Flavians “waged on Judaism” was a permanent feature of their propaganda, while Mary Beard has made a compelling case for viewing the triumph over Judea as an inaugural moment that transformed Vespasian and his sons from successful usurpers into an established imperial dynasty.² Regarding the narration of the occasion in book 7 of the *Jewish War*, Beard writes, “Josephus repeatedly hints that Titus’ royal progress around the cities of the East is to be seen as a leg of a single journey that started at Jerusalem itself and ended up, triumphantly, on the Capitoline Hill.”³

For its prominent display of *sacra*, including the aforementioned copy of the law, the Flavian triumph is often read as a symbolic statement about the status of Judaism in the wake of the Jerusalem temple’s destruction. In this context the law is understood by scholars to have functioned either as a piece of war booty, or else a proxy for the Judean god, whose aniconic worship thwarted the inclusion of his image in the procession, per triumphal convention.⁴ Both interpretations have unmistakable overtones of clashing religions or religious systems. Goodman, for example, writes, “There was no mistaking the symbolic significance of the last of all the spoils of victory: ‘a copy of the Jewish law,’ that is, a scroll of the Torah. There could not be a clearer demonstration that the conquest was being celebrated not just over Judaea but over Judaism. . . . Josephus reports, but does not explain, that the Torah scroll (‘their law’) and the purple hangings of the Temple sanctuary Vespasian kept safeguarded in the imperial palace.”⁵

Regardless of the precise intended meaning of the gesture, the inclusion of Judean writings in the Flavians’ dynastic acclamation is evaluated foremost as an act of conquest, even if no specific explanation can be sup-

2. Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 432; Mary Beard, “The Triumph of Flavius Josephus,” in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Images, Text* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 541–58.

3. Beard, “Triumph of Flavius Josephus,” 552–53.

4. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 431–32; Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 152–53; Fergus Millar, “Last Year in Jerusalem: Monuments of the Jewish War in Rome,” in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. Jonathan Edmondson, Steve Mason, and James Rives; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 101–28, here 109.

5. For the law as war booty, see Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 152–53; Millar, “Monuments of the Jewish War,” 109; Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 431–32.

plied for Vespasian's decision to deposit the law on the Palatine rather than in the Templum Pacis, where other items from the temple would later be installed. I will return to this passage momentarily, but would like to propose another lens through which to view it: as a tangible reminder that multiple foreign gods and their priests had acknowledged Vespasian as the new emperor before his return from the East.

I am not the first to note the prominence of foreign religion in Flavian ideology. As Albert Henrichs argued in his classic article on Vespasian's visit to the Serapeion of Alexandria en route to Rome, the affirmation that the general-turned-emperor received in response to a question posed to Sarapis about the stability of his position was unmistakably communicated both by the miraculous healings that Vespasian was enabled to perform and by confirmation of the Egyptian priest Basilides.⁶ Of the event, Beard writes, "Someone must have taken care to disseminate 'news' of Vespasian's Egyptian miracles, with all their allure of divinity that would have gone down well in some quarters. They also have good reason—in addition to all the triumphal factors I have already stressed—to hammer home Flavian victory against the Jews, in particular."⁷ And yet, consider the distinction being drawn between the respective roles of Egypt and Judea in Flavian ideology: Whereas Egypt, and Vespasian's visit to the Serapeion, supplies *religious* legitimacy, Judea supplies legitimacy through *military* conquest. Moreover, the same distinction lurks in the background of commentaries on the triumph, if understandably so given the militaristic impetus for the ritual, and in this instance at Judea's expense.

At the same time, religious versus military legitimacy is a false dichotomy and one rooted, I suspect, in the assumption that "Judaism" could not serve to legitimate a "pagan" emperor. However, not only did Josephus, a Judean elite of priestly ancestry, proclaim Vespasian's acclamation through dream interpretation, but he also insists that this outcome was likewise predicted by Judean priestly texts. In other words, Judea lent as much religious legitimacy to the new dynasty as Egypt did, even if the exact mechanisms of legitimation were apropos of the ethnic idioms in question: dream interpretation, literary divination, and a Judean priest (Josephus), on the one hand, and miracles enabled at an oracular healing sanctuary and the proclamation of an Egyptian priest (Basilides), on the other. Vespasian's employment of foreign experts for such purposes also harks back to Augustus's embrace of astrology and Egyptian knowledge at the advent of his reign. On this reading, then, the prominence of Judean religious items in the triumph might parallel the staging of the Flavian emperors and their armies at the temple of Isis Campenses on the eve of

6. Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.82; Suetonius, *Vesp.* 7.1. Albert Henrichs, "Vespasian's Visit to Alexandria," *ZPE* 3 (1968): 51–80.

7. Beard, "Triumph of Flavius Josephus," 557.

their reentry into Rome. Both details underscore the universal recognition that Vespasian received from foreign peoples and their gods, while also affirming the prominence of these particular regions in his new imperial scheme.

While the role of Egyptian religion in Flavian ideology has received ample attention in scholarly literature, the role of Judean *religion*—that is, the relationship between the Flavian dynasty, the Judean god, and Josephus as priestly interpreter of his revelations and prophetic writings—has gone largely unnoticed.⁸ I suspect that the oversight stems largely from anachronistic assumptions about Judaism in the first century, namely, that it was a bounded entity more akin to modern religions than comparable in its diversity to the various forms of religion—religion of the civic and household spheres, of voluntary associations, of self-authorized experts—amply and consistently attested for other peoples and regions of the Roman empire. In the absence of a differentiated picture of Judean religiosity, it is inevitable that the decisive actions undertaken by the Flavians to dismantle Judean civic religious institutions are equivalent to a dismantling of Judaism as a whole.⁹ Both their intentions and the effects of these actions, however, stand to be enriched by consideration of a more complex landscape of Judean religion, one that includes the activities of freelance experts as well as the widespread recognition of Judean texts as sources of religious wisdom and prophecies.

That the famed writings of the Judeans were mined for prophecies of contemporary relevance in the first century is evident from various authors, Judeans and non-Judeans alike. The most obvious examples appear in Josephus's account of the war, where he speaks both to the use of these texts by Judean rebels and their specialized interpreters, and also to his own divinatory skills, which enabled him to recognize prophecies and other signs heralding Vespasian's illustrious future. In book 6, for example, Josephus reports that Judean rebels had been stirred to revolt in part by interpreting an "ambiguous oracle in their holy writings" (χρησμός ἀμφίβολος ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐρηγμένος γράμμασιν) to the effect that at that time one

8. See Carlos Noreña, "Medium and Message in Vespasian's Templum Pacis," *MAAR* 48 (2003): 25–43; Molly Swetnam-Burland, "Egyptian Objects, Roman Contexts: A Taste for Aegyptiaca in Italy," in *Nile into Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World. Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies, Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, May 11–14, 2005* (ed. Laurent Bricault, Miguel John Versluys, and Paul G. P. Meyboom; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 159; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 113–36. A notable exception is John S. Kloppenborg, who does not deal with Judean writings but whose arguments for the date of Mark are compatible with my own regarding the favorable post-70 reception of Judaica among Roman audiences (Kloppenborg, "Evocatio Deorum and the Date of Mark," *JBL* 124 [2005]: 419–50, esp. 441–49).

9. See James Rives, "Flavian Religious Policy and the Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple," in Edmondson et al., *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, 145–66.

from their country would become the king of the world (*J.W.* 6.310–313). Many Judean wise men were led astray in their interpretation, he continues, since the oracle referred not to a Judean leader but to Vespasian, who would be proclaimed emperor on Judean soil.

Recognition of the oracular character of Judean writings is not limited to Judean authors. Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.13) and Suetonius (*Vesp.* 4.5–6) also note a mysterious prophecy from the ancient priestly writings of the Judeans that was being read variously in the context of the Judean war and pre-saged a time when the East would grow strong and men beginning from Judea should possess the world. When Cassius Dio recalls the series of portents and dreams that pointed to Vespasian's sovereignty (66.1.1–4), he credits Josephus directly: "These portents needed interpretation; but not so the saying of a Judean named Josephus. He, having earlier been captured by Vespasian and imprisoned, laughed and said: 'You may imprison me now, but a year from now, when you have become emperor, you will release me.'" In Appian's version of events the dream disappears in favor of strict textual divination: "For Josephus, as he related himself, found in the sacred writings some oracle which revealed that one from their country would become ruler of the world."¹⁰

The Flavian Prophecy is one of many confirmations that Judean texts, which Josephus, Philo, and Paul alike refer to as oracles, were thought to contain pertinent predictions. Even on the matter of revelatory dreams, Josephus attributes his interpretive success to the fact that he was "not ignorant of the prophecies in the sacred books" (Josephus, *J.W.* 3.352–356). As Steve Mason has argued, for Josephus, intimate knowledge of these writings is inseparable from priestly authority, which is ultimately the source of his own wisdom and mysterious power, as it is for others of priestly lineage who also possess prophetic abilities.¹¹ In regard to the question of which texts were ascribed predictive value, Josephus appears to impute prophetic authorship and possibilities to the majority of the writings that he considers to be authoritative, including the books (or law) of Moses (see, e.g., *C. Ap.* 1.37–40). And, although he speaks to multiple applications of these texts—knowledge of the future, the proper conduct of human life, effective governance, and so on—he is not dogmatic about labeling writings on the basis of how they are read.¹² To the contrary, his use of inexact, collective terms—law(s) (νόμος, νόμοι), oracles (λόγιοι), holy books (ιερά βιβλία), and prophecies in the holy writings (χρησμοί ἐν τοῖς

10. *Apud* Zonaras, *Epitome Historiarum* 11.16.

11. Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 49.

12. For these characterizations of the law, see Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 42–82.

ἱεροῖς γράμμασιν)—suggests that these labels were largely interchangeable and that the same text(s) could support assorted exegetical aims.

For their prophetic value, I would suggest that the Judean writings were on a par with Rome's Sibylline books and other prophetic corpora that the Romans had amassed in their state collection, which was rumored to include books of the Etruscan seer Vegoia, the oracles of the Marcii, and those of Albunea of Tibur.¹³ Aelian seems to presume as much when he includes a Judean Sibyl among those of Erythraea, Samos, Egypt, Sardinia, and Cumae (*VH* 12.35), while Pausanias also posits a Judean Sibyl (10.12.9). In like fashion, Celsus equates "the predictions, whether they were actually spoken or not, made by the people of Judea after their usual manner" with "the predictions of the Pythian priestess or of the priestesses of Dodona or of the Clarian Apollo or at Branchidae or at the shrine of Zeus Ammon, and of countless other prophets" (Origen, *Cels.* 7.3; trans. Henry Chadwick), although he does so in order to disprove the connection between prophecies in the Judean writings and claims that Christians make about Jesus.

These varied sources confirm that Judean writings, not to mention their specialized interpreters, were at home in a broader phenomenon of literary divination that flourished in the imperial period. Tellingly, Justin Martyr notes that, by the second century, death had been decreed for anyone caught possessing books of the Persian sage Hystaspes, the Sibyl, or the Judean prophets, a statement that recalls incidents in the early principate when Augustus and Tiberius confiscated and destroyed prophetic texts circulating privately in the name of the Sibyl and other authors of ill repute (Suetonius, *Aug.* 31.1; Cassius Dio 57.18.3-5). It is not inconceivable that Judean texts were included in the scope of earlier legislation, but it stands to reason that they enjoyed a boost in popularity in the Flavian period on account of their much-touted predictive potency.

The latter point could not be overemphasized, since over the course of the Judean War the famed writings of the Judeans received copious attention as a catalyst for the revolt, as a source of legitimation for a new imperial dynasty that arose during this conflict, and as the parade item of *spolia* exhibited in the Flavian triumph. Although this final display has been read in largely and understandably negative terms as a statement of Rome's victory over *Iudaea capta*, such interpretations diminish the instrumental role of Judean religion and religious texts in confirming Vespasian as Rome's new emperor. The considerable attention drawn to Judea in Flavian ideology, monuments, and even romantic entanglements likely amplified interest in Judaica among Roman audiences, even as the negative consequences of the war—the destruction and despoliation of the

13. Servius on *Aen.* 6.72; Livy, 25.23; Lactantius, *Div. Instit.* 1.6.12.

temples in Jerusalem and Leontopolis, local conflicts, the *fiscus iudaicus*—exacted considerable tolls on provincial and diaspora Judean populations.

For the same reasons, I suspect that the triumphal introduction of Judean writings to Rome resulted not in their removal to the imperial palace as war booty but rather in their incorporation into the amalgam of prophecies curated within the temple of Apollo Palatinus. In his famous description of the Flavian triumph over Judea, Josephus reports that Vespasian ordered that the copy of the law featured in the procession be deposited and kept in the palaces (*ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις*), by which he must mean the ensemble of houses, porticos, and temples on the Palatine hill (Josephus, *J.W.* 7.150). The precise configuration of this imperial complex has been the subject of recent debate, but for present purposes it matters only that the Apollo temple was incorporated within it, architecturally and conceptually. Augustus's decision to build a temple for his patron god on a site within the interior of his residential property after the spot was struck by lightening was well known, as was his decision to relocate the *Sibylline Oracles* from the Capitoline temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus to an enclosure at the base of Apollo's cult statue.

In light of the Palatine temple's integral relationship to the palaces—the terrace of the sanctuary was connected to Augustus's house by a frescoed corridor—the phrase *ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις* might be read as shorthand for *in the imperial complex where the Romans kept the Sibylline Oracles and other prophetic texts they had amassed*, as opposed to the conventional reading "in the imperial residences." Josephus seems to use the same shorthand when he notes that, on the night before the triumph, the militaries had been drawn up around the gates not of the imperial complex atop [the Palatine] (*οὐ τῶν ἄνω βασιλείων*), but of the temple of Isis on the Campus Martius. In contrast, he uses the singular form of "palace" when he reports that the Flavian family withdrew *εἰς τὸ βασιλεῖον* after the triumph, that is, they retired to their personal residence (*J.W.* 7.123, 155). Though the syntactical difference is slight, it allows for the deposition of the law and the temple veil to have occurred anywhere in the palatial complex, possibly in the Apollo temple where the Sibylline books resided, or else in its adjacent library.

This idea captures the twofold scheme of religious legitimacy that I proposed above and also matches other Flavian efforts to establish continuity with Augustus, in this case, by installing Judean alongside Sibylline oracles in the spot that he had chosen. Given the important role of prophecies in the Judean writings in predicting and legitimating Rome's new dynastic arrangement, it seems unlikely that Vespasian would have treated them as mere war booty, the conclusion drawn implicitly or explicitly in most scholarship on the Judean triumph. Instead, all signs point to these texts enjoying a special status in Flavian ideology, akin to the renewed fervor for Egyptian iconography and cult sites that characterizes the period.

While allusions to Judea are not as obvious as the Egyptian-themed material attested so amply at Rome, the importance of this province and its religious influences ought not be discounted for subtlety. The public displays of the Flavian triumph, the permanent installation of *sacra* from the Jerusalem temple, and the stories that circulated about the Flavian Prophecy were palpable reminders of Judea that would have stimulated interest and a demand for expertise in its distinctive religious practices.

These arguments set the stage for thinking about how the climate of Flavian Rome might have accrued value to Judean religious offerings, thus contributing to the momentum that Christian teachers seem to have gathered around the same period. While the notion that Judean writings were replete with hidden prophecies about Christ and his eschatological significance certainly predates the Judean War, the credibility of such claims must have enjoyed a considerable bump in the Flavian period. Indeed, the fervent insistence of second-century authors that Christ fulfilled all prophecies in the Judean writings might capitalize deliberately on the intrigue surrounding these texts. By way of illustration, Justin writes,

For when [the poets] heard through the prophets that the future coming of Christ was proclaimed and that the impious among human beings were going to be punished by fire, they threw many so-called sons of Zeus into the discussion. . . . And these things were said both among the Greeks and among all the nations, where—as the demons overheard the prophets proclaiming in advance—Christ would be more believed in. And they also did not accurately understand the things they heard through the prophets, but imitated in erring fashion the things concerning our Christ, we shall make clear. Thus Moses the prophet, as we said before, was older than all the writers, and it was prophesied through him, as we mentioned before, thus: “A ruler shall not fail from Judah and a leader from his thighs until he should come for whom it is laid up. And he shall be the expectation of the nations, binding his foal to the vine, washing his garment in the blood of the grape.” (1 *Apol.* 54.2–6; trans. Dennis Minns and Paul Parvis)

Echoes of the oracle about Vespasian are hard to miss in this passage, as is Justin’s deft appropriation of Josephus’s former role as skilled interpreter; the knowledgeable reader is left to adduce that *many*, many Judean (and now Greek) wise men were led astray in its explication, for it referred neither to Judean rebels, nor to Vespasian, nor to Zeus, but instead to Jesus Christ.

Justin’s remarks also betray interactions between recognizably Greek and Judean texts or stories for the purpose of contemporary mythmaking, a characterization that extends equally to the extant *Sibylline Oracles*. Although an adequate treatment of these complicated texts would be well beyond the scope of this paper, knowledge that Sibylline and Judean ora-

cles jointly constituted the Roman prophetic collection may hold explanatory potential for making sense of their distinctive blends of Greek and biblical motifs.¹⁴ To be clear, I am not making any statement about the integrity of these texts vis-à-vis the civic collection, quite the opposite. **W**hat I am suggesting is that an author of pseudo-Sibylline verses working from notional expectations about that collection might arrive at the conclusion that Greek and Judean prophecies were mutually entailing on the basis of the scenario that I proposed in the preceding section.

As to who might have produced such texts, we return full circle to the pesky experts with whom I began. Elsewhere I have argued that the first century witnessed an expansion and diversification of self-authorized purveyors of ethnically coded religious practices, wisdom traditions, texts, and forms of expertise.¹⁵ There are many indications that the Sibyl was a popular putative author for oracular compositions written and interpreted by these actors, as were Orpheus, Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Solomon, all of whom lent their imprimatur to pseudepigraphic writings or otherwise figured into the genealogies of sought-after religious skills. So, too, do some Judeans crop up in this wider field of exotic specialists, not as "proselytizers" soliciting converts on behalf of Rome's Jewish community" but as freelance experts in a range of services for which Judeans were renowned: exorcism, dream interpretation, prophecy, and self-mastery, among others. It is no accident that many of these experts—instructors in Mosaic wisdom, a priestess and law interpreter, dream interpreters, Paul, Eleazar the exorcist—all derived authority from the Judean writings, as would their later Christian counterparts.¹⁶

14. See John J. Collins, "The Jewish Transformation of the Sibylline Oracles," in *Sibille e Linguaggi Oracolari: Atti del Convegno Macerata-Norcia—Settembre 1994* (ed. Ileana Chirassi Colombo and Tullio Seppilli; Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 1998), 369–87; J. L. Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 219–53.

15. Heidi Wendt, *The Religion of Freelance Experts in the Roman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2016).

16. See Heidi Wendt, "Judaica Romana: A Rereading of Judean Expulsions from Rome," *JAJ* 6 (2015): 97–126.

Cultural Creativity in Egyptian Judaism

BENJAMIN G. WRIGHT

Lehigh University

By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. . . . How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy. (Ps 137:1, 4–6)

As epitomized in this Psalm, diaspora has been a fact of Jewish life and reflection for millennia and a central component of Jewish identity for as long as Jews have lived outside of their traditional, ancient homeland.¹ Yet many ancient Jews did not feel the pangs of longing for the homeland expressed so beautifully in the Psalm. In many locales, such as Rome and Alexandria, diaspora Jewish communities were thoroughly integrated into their local environments.

Diaspora Jews in the Second Temple period took different approaches to their distance from the homeland. The literary remains suggest that many Jews lived contentedly away from Jerusalem, and even in cases where we see evidence of social or cultural friction between Jews and gentiles, the solution did not involve a new exodus from the current place of dispersion to the ancestral land. Rather most often whatever result was envisioned, ranging from cultural and social assimilation to isolationist purity,² assumes that it would happen *in situ*.²

Living as a minority community within a majority social and cultural world sometimes produced tensions, and even outright clashes. Jews

*I am delighted to write in a volume honoring Ross Kraemer, who has been a mentor, colleague, and friend for many years.

1. Diaspora was not an experience unique to Jews in antiquity. See Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

2. The phrase comes from Gruen, *Diaspora*, 5.

had to negotiate observance of their “ancestral customs” and adoption of Greek and later Roman values. Today ancient Jews often are romanticized as the epitome of a people continually fighting for their traditional ways against a universally hostile and militant gentile world. Yet, to think that they either fell into assimilation and “apostasy” or retreated into separation and ghettoization creates a false dichotomy; the ancient reality was much more complicated.³ Many ancient Jews, like many modern ones, felt at home wherever they lived and did not view their gentile environment in hostile terms. In the ways in which they constructed their lives and identities, they were more creative than they are often given credit for being. In this essay, I want to look at how two Egyptian Jews in the Ptolemaic period, Artapanus and the author of the *Letter of Aristeas*, negotiated their Judaism vis-à-vis their Hellenistic cultural environment in an attempt to find ways to live as Jews within a majority culture. Although there are hints of cultural competition, these writers imaginatively and creatively constructed a *Hellenistic-Jewish* identity that incorporated the full range of hybridity that this adjective implies.

Artapanus

We know almost nothing about the Egyptian Jew named Artapanus. His literary output survives only in fragments, thanks to Alexander Polyhistor (ca. 50 BCE), who excerpted several Jewish works for his *On the Jews*, which itself is not extant but is quoted extensively by Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Praeparatio evangelica*. Despite third-hand knowledge of Artapanus’s work, we gain important insights about Egyptian Judaism from this idiosyncratic author. Eusebius preserves three fragments of Artapanus’s *On the Jews*.⁴ Two short fragments treat Abraham and Joseph. A third, more extensive fragment (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.1–37) narrates events from the life of Moses. Scholars generally agree that Artapanus was an Egyptian Jew—whether from Alexandria or elsewhere remains a matter of dispute.⁵ His

3. On the complexities and permutations, see John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996); and Barclay, “Singing and Refusing: Jewish Identity Strategies under the Hegemony of Hellenism,” in *Ethos und Identität: Einheit und Vielfalt des Judentums in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* (ed. Matthias Konradt and Ulrike Steinert; Studien zu Judentum und Christentum; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2002), 13–25.

4. See Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 1, *Historians* (SBLTT 20, Pseudepigrapha Series 10; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 189–243; and John J. Collins, “Artapanus,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1985), 2:889–903.

5. Although see Howard Jacobson, “Artapanus Judaeus,” *JSJ* 57 (2006): 210–21, who argues that Artapanus was not Jewish, and a critical assessment of his position by Patricia D.

date is less certain, predating Alexander Polyhistor and postdating the Septuagint, which was translated in the early third century BCE and which he uses. Many scholars argue that at least one of Artapanus's motives was to counter anti-Jewish accounts such as that of the Egyptian writer Manetho (third century BCE). Thus, we arrive at a date somewhere between 200 BCE and 100 BCE.

While the title of Artapanus's work might suggest the sort of serious and considered historiography to which Alexander Polyhistor aspired or which Herodotus produced, Artapanus's content and style indicate something different. Whereas Artapanus knows the biblical story of Moses, it forms the barest skeleton for his narrative, into and around which we encounter some of the most unique claims about this Jewish hero. According to Artapanus, Moses was adopted—minus the biblical story of the attempted destruction of the Hebrew children—into the house of Pharaoh Chenephres (otherwise an unknown name) and his wife Merris, who was barren. When he grew up, Moses “was called Mousaios by the Greeks” and became the teacher of Orpheus (27.3–4). He gave many benefits to humankind: the invention of ships, machines for lifting stones, various “Egyptian” weapons, implements for drawing water and for fighting and philosophy. But he did not stop there: “[T]o each of the nomes he assigned the god to be worshipped; in addition he assigned the sacred writings to the priests. The gods he assigned were cats, dogs and ibises” (27.4).⁶ As a result, Moses was loved by the masses, and being deemed worthy of divine honor by the priests, he was called Hermes because of his ability to interpret the sacred writings” (27.6).

Chenephres became jealous of Moses and sent him with an inadequate military force to fight the Ethiopians, hoping his rival would die. Yet Moses' army of Egyptian farmers won every battle, subduing the Ethiopians, after which he founded a city, called, after himself, Hermopolis. Even the conquered Ethiopians came to love Moses and began to practice circumcision, which they learned from him. In the aftermath, Moses suggested to Chenephres a particular breed of oxen for tilling and thus, originated the bull-cult of Apis. Chenephres ordered the animals consecrated by Moses to be buried so that no one would know that these ideas came from him.⁷ He then hatched a plot to assassinate Moses. After Moses' adoptive mother, Merris, died, Chenephres allowed Moses to bury her but

Ahearne-Kroll, “Constructing Jewish Identity in Ptolemaic Egypt: The Case of Artapanus,” in *The “Other” in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins* (ed. Daniel C. Harlow et al.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 434–56.

6. Translations come from Holladay, *Fragments*.

7. Ahearne-Kroll argues that this episode forms a critique of the Memphis cult as not authentically Egyptian, since it originated in opposition to Moses (“Constructing Jewish Identity,” 448–56).

assigned a certain Chanethothes to accompany him—and to kill him. On the way Moses discovered the plot. After burying Merris, Aaron encouraged his brother to flee. Chanethothes, hearing of Moses' flight, ambushed him, but Moses killed Chanethothes instead.

When he relates the exodus, Artapanus follows only the outline of the biblical story. Moses fled to Arabia and married the daughter of Raguel, who encouraged him to invade Egypt, but Moses refused. In the burning bush, God commanded Moses to wage war against the Egyptians. Before battle ensued, however, Pharaoh inquired about the purpose for Moses' return. Moses admitted that he had come to liberate the Jews, whereupon Pharaoh threw him into prison; the prison doors miraculously opened by themselves, the guards' weapons broke into pieces, and Moses strode into the court. When asked the name of the god who did this, Moses whispered God's name into Pharaoh's ear, and he fell into a dead faint. Moses revived him. Artapanus relates various plagues, all accomplished by the use of Moses' rod, which is dedicated in every Egyptian temple, and similarly they dedicate it to Isis, since the earth is Isis, and when it was struck with the rod, it produced the marvels" (27.32). Finally, Pharaoh released the Jews. Conspicuously, however, the Passover is absent from Artapanus's story.

Artapanus offers two versions of the sea crossing: a scientific explanation attributed to the Memphians, in which Moses waited for the ebb tide and when the tide came back in, the Egyptians drowned, and a version ascribed to the Heliopolitans, in which the sea miraculously dried up and then collapsed on the Egyptians (27.35). The Jews spent forty years in the wilderness, where God gave them food. Moses died at about eighty-nine years old.

Within this often strange account of Moses' accomplishments, Artapanus ascribes to him deeds attributed elsewhere to Egyptian deities like Isis and Osiris, but especially to the cultural hero Sesostris. Moses is practically equated with Hermes, but in his Egyptian guise of Thoth.⁸ Artapanus betrays no obvious unhappiness with Egyptian religion, not even Egyptian animal worship, which he lists among the benefactions that Moses gave to humanity. What to make of this extraordinary and entertaining Jewish text? What does Artapanus hope to achieve?

In elevating Moses above these deities and heroes, he ends up being superior to them. Artapanus inverts the usual relationship between

8. Holger M. Zellentin, "The End of Jewish Egypt: Artapanus and the Second Exodus," in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World* (ed. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh; TSAJ 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 27–73, esp. 33–35; and Sara Raup Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity: Third Maccabees in Its Cultural Context* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 43; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 99–100.

Orpheus and his student Musaeus, exploiting the onomastic similarity in order to claim implicitly that Moses was the founder of Hellenic song and poetry.⁹ Moses also supplants the Egyptian Sesostris and confers on humankind all sorts of helpful inventions; as a *theios anēr*, he approaches divine status as Hermes, and he is exalted above Isis, since in his striking of the earth, identified with Isis in Egyptian tradition, he compels her to act.¹⁰

Whereas scholars have suggested differing motivations for Artapanus's inventive story, from a point-by-point refutation of Manetho's critical account to a syncretistic accommodation of Jewish and Egyptian culture to an entertaining and mischievously comedic account,¹¹ one theme emerges: Egyptians owe the benefits and advantages of civilization to a culture hero of Jewish origin and divine man who devised them.

Artapanus recasts the biblical stories in ways that ultimately favor *Egyptian* Jews. In the fragment on Joseph (9.23.1–4), he is not taken to Egypt unwillingly as a slave. As a clever device for foiling his brothers' murderous intentions, he asks Arabs to take him to Egypt, where he becomes Pharaoh's right-hand man without all the fuss about Potiphar's wife and imprisonment found in Genesis. Moses is unfailingly loyal to Pharaoh, and only when God tells him to wage war and lead the Jews to their "ancient homeland" does he return to Egypt. Yet the emphasis of Artapanus's story becomes the *release* of the Jews, not their flight from Egypt. Artapanus emphasizes Moses' popularity with the Egyptian people, and the priests consider him worthy of divine honors.

Each of these claims addresses Artapanus's third- to second-century Jewish audience. His recasting of the exodus story attempts to construct a Jewish identity in a community where the story stood as a focal point but which had no intention of abandoning its "homeland," Egypt—no contemporary exodus is envisioned.¹² Artapanus § ought to balance the Jewish tradition of the Exodus and the contemporary reality of life in the Egyptian diaspora. His audience was encouraged to adhere to Jewish tradition by revering Moses and celebrating the Exodus, while at the same time regarding the culture of their Egyptian neighbors with a benevolent tolerance.¹³ In a delightful irony, Artapanus redeploys the exodus story in order to create an *Egyptian-Jewish diaspora identity*. A story about leaving Egypt provides a rationale for living *in* Egypt.

9. Gruen, *Diaspora*, 208.

10. Zellentin, "End of Jewish Egypt," 69.

11. See Collins, "Artapanus," 892; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 129–30; Gruen, *Diaspora*, 201–11.

12. Johnson, *Historical Fictions*, 107–8. Zellentin ("End of Jewish Egypt") argues that Artapanus wrote for a Jewish military elite encouraging them to leave Egypt for "Syria." The elaborate historical background he theorizes I find unconvincing.

13. Johnson, *Historical Fictions*, 108.

While it is impossible to know the degree to which Artapanus represents a widespread approach to Jewish-Egyptian relations, he does not seem particularly threatened by Greek and Egyptian culture. His paternalistic views of Egyptians and their admiration for Moses could have separated Jews from Egyptians and drawn them closer to Greeks, who also admired Moses but who did not have the same relationship with him.¹⁴ Artapanus was not a syncretist, however. That is, I do not imagine that he would have approved of Jews worshiping in Egyptian temples. After all, Moses instituted animal worship for *Egyptians*. Whether he advocated a “benevolent tolerance” or refuted anti-Jewish claims, he moved easily as a Jew in his Greek/Egyptian world, adapting both Jewish and Hellenistic sources to construct a Moses who met his and (presumably) his co-ethnics’/religionists’ needs. Based on the extant fragments, I imagine that his social boundaries were porous, enabling free social intercourse with Egyptians and Greeks.¹⁵ As many questions and uncertainties as remain for modern scholars to answer, one thing is certain: Artapanus brought a creative energy to bear on a problem that has occupied Jews in diaspora for centuries.

The Letter of Aristeas

Toward the end of the second century BCE an anonymous Alexandrian Jew composed a work now known as the *Letter of Aristeas*.¹⁶ Written in the persona of a gentile courtier of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, *Aristeas* is most famous for its legend of the translation of the Hebrew Pentateuch into Greek, the so-called Septuagint. Although the author frames his narrative with the details of the translation, the story of translation occupies only a small portion of the book, which includes events that set the stage for or lead up to the translation itself. Whereas Artapanus wrote in a competent koine Greek, Ps.-Aristeas clearly had received a decent Greek education. He writes in a higher style than Artapanus and employs rhetorical forms and literary devices, including descriptions of works of art (the *accoutrements* of the Jerusalem temple), descriptions of far-off locales (Jerusalem, its environs and its temple) and symposia at which Jewish philosophers converse about proper kingship.

14. See Erkki Koskeniemi, “Greeks, Egyptians and Jews in the Fragments of Artapanus,” *JSP* 13 (2002): 17–31.

15. On relationships between Jews, Greeks, and Egyptians, see also Stewart Moore, “Walls of Iron: Judean Ethnic Identity in Hellenistic Egypt” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2014), esp. chs. 2–3. Unfortunately Moore does not treat Artapanus.

16. See Benjamin G. Wright, *The Letter of Aristeas: “Aristeas to Philocrates” or “On the Translation of the Law of the Jews”* (CEJL; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015).

Aristeas begins with a dedication to the narrator's brother, Philocrates (§§1–8). After this preface, Ps.-Aristeas recounts the origins of the translation project. As part of the royal librarian's progress report about his acquisition of all the world's books, he notes that he had not acquired the "laws of the Jews," because they required translation. Ptolemy authorizes the project and writes to the high priest Eleazar in Jerusalem requesting learned men to do the work in Alexandria. "Aristeas," through whom our Jewish author speaks, belongs to the deputation sent to fetch them. While he has the king's ear, "Aristeas" notes the many Jewish slaves in the kingdom and reasons, "[W]hat rationale do we have for our mission when a considerable multitude exists in servitude in your realm?" (§15). This argument convinces Ptolemy, who decrees the manumission of all Jewish slaves. "Official" documents, including the king's manumission decree, a memorandum from Demetrius the librarian, the text of Ptolemy's letter to Eleazar and Eleazar's reply enhance the story's credibility.

The author follows the manumission episode with a detailed description of items for the Jewish temple produced in lavish style and sent as royal gifts to Eleazar. The author relates a utopian description of Jerusalem, its surroundings, the temple (especially its water system for washing away sacrificial blood), the priests' service, and the high priest's vestments. As Eleazar bids farewell to the seventy-two translators, "Aristeas" asks him why the Jews regard some animals as unclean for food and others clean. Eleazar responds with an allegorical explanation of Jewish food laws, the first such interpretation known.

When the translators arrive in Alexandria, the king enthusiastically receives them. Ptolemy first hosts a series of banquets at which he questions each translator about ideal kingship. He approves of each response, and even Ptolemy's philosophers acknowledge the superior learning of these Jewish translator-scholar-philosophers. The seventy-two translate, compare their work and finish in seventy-two days "as if this circumstance happened according to some plan" (§307). Demetrius, the librarian, assembles the Jewish community and reads the translation, whereupon the Jews accept it. Finally, Ptolemy, after hearing the translation, "marveled greatly at the mind of the lawgiver" (§312). The king sends the translators home with many gifts, and a short epilogue ends the work.

While a wonderful story, *Aristeas* does not have real historical value.¹⁷ A gentile did not write it, and its Jewish author lived long after its purported events. Many of its historical details, which were included to confer credibility, are untrue. To give one example, Demetrius of Phalerum, who is named as Ptolemy II's librarian, actually served under Ptolemy I.

17. See Benjamin G. Wright, "The *Letter of Aristeas* and the Reception History of the Septuagint," *BIOCS* 39 (2006): 47–67

Yet our author shows evidence of having some knowledge of the workings of Ptolemaic bureaucracy, at least in his own time.

As to the book's objectives, there is no scholarly consensus.¹⁸ Throughout *Aristeas*, the author emphasizes the harmony that exists between the Jews and elite gentiles, including Ptolemy. Ps.-Aristeas portrays Ptolemy as a patron and friend of the Jews, from freeing slaves to sponsoring the translation of the Law to providing sumptuous gifts for the temple. He prizes the learning of the translators, who have much to teach, and he appears ready to learn: "The greatest of good things has happened to me because you have come here. For I have benefited greatly by the teaching that you have set down about kingship" (§§293–294). Ps.-Aristeas emphasizes throughout the values that Jews and gentiles share. In one of *Aristeas*'s most famous passages, "Aristeas" explains to the king, "These people revere God, the overseer and creator of all things, whom all also, even we worship, O King, using different names, Zeus and Dis" (§16). Ps.-Aristeas is not arguing the syncretistic point that Jews and gentiles worship the same god. Rather we hear the author's Jewish voice insisting that gentiles actually worship the *Jewish* God, even if by a different name.

Such harmony does not erase Jewish difference, however. Universalism is balanced with Jewish distinctiveness in Eleazar's speech. In response to "Aristeas's" question about Jewish food laws and after reiterating God's oneness and sovereignty over creation, Eleazar begins with a standard Jewish critique of Greek and Egyptian religion, resorting to a euhemeristic explanation of Greek religion. He then takes on the Egyptians, whom he calls vain and who make their reliance upon wild beasts and most serpents and animals, and they worship these, and they sacrifice to them, both alive and dead" (§138).

When he explains the food laws, Eleazar offers an allegorical interpretation: "Do not come to the exploded conclusion that Moses legislated these matters on account of a curiosity with mice and weasels or similar creatures. But everything has been set in order solemnly for pure investigation and the outfitting of character for the sake of justice" (§144). So, for example, the clean birds are tame and distinguished by extreme cleanliness." The proscribed fowl are wild and carnivorous, acquiring their food through oppression. Moses, "the lawgiver," enjoined the eating of clean birds as a sign that Jews should live justly without oppressing anyone. The command to eat animals that divide the hoof" signals that Jews must "separate each of our actions that they might turn out well" (§150). The cud-chewing animals symbolize memory and the recollection of God's benefits to Jews. Thus, Eleazar's interpretation justifies practices that

18. On the various suggestions, see Wright, *The Letter of Aristeas*.

might separate Jews from gentiles. In fact, Moses “fenced us around with unbroken palisades and with iron walls so that we might not intermingle at all with any other nations . . . revering the only powerful God above all of the entire creation” (§139). Here we gain an important insight into Jewish practice. Eleazar’s interpretations point to Jews actually keeping the food laws, which had not become disembodied philosophical principles. The very act of obeying them reinforced both their symbolic value and the Jews’ faithfulness to God, but they also could produce a degree of separation from gentiles.

In §§308–311, Ps.-Aristeas establishes the Septuagint as the Scriptures for Alexandrian Jews. The Greek translation replaces the Hebrew original. Ps.-Aristeas describes acceptance of the Law in Greek as similar to Israel’s reception of the Hebrew Torah in the Bible.¹⁹ The Septuagint is executed “well, piously and accurately in every respect” (§310) and possesses the philosophical and flawless character of the original Hebrew, as Demetrius earlier characterized it (§31). The diaspora Jewish community now possesses Scriptures fit for a diaspora existence.

Like Artapanus, Ps.-Aristeas reconfigures the traditional exodus story. In a work that veritably oozes Jewish-Greek harmony, we encounter no hint of desire to leave this particular Jewish “homeland.”²⁰ Ptolemy is transformed into a benevolent pharaoh from whom the Jews need not escape, who understands that Jews and enlightened, elite Greeks celebrate the same moral values, and who gets that Moses, like Solon and Lycurgus, gave his people their own laws.

In *Aristeas*, the author applies his Greek education to the task of negotiating the relationship of Jewish and Hellenistic culture. He defends a degree of separation for Jews, but as full participants in their Hellenistic environment. He does not advocate withdrawal from social and cultural intercourse with gentiles—the narrative world that he creates suggests the opposite case, that Jews and elite Greeks can easily practice commensality. Such contact is tempered by Jewish distinctiveness, however. Faithfulness to God requires attention to the “unbroken palisades and iron walls,” that is, proper observance of Jewish law. Otherwise Jews might fall prey to the pernicious aspects of gentile behavior, especially idolatry. Ps.-Aristeas imagines living comfortably within a Hellenistic world that welcomed Jews and benefited them, but he seems more aware than Artapanus of the potential risk involved.

19. Harry M. Orlinsky, “The Septuagint as Holy Writ and the Philosophy of the Translators,” *HUCA* 46 (1975): 89–114; and Wright, “Letter of Aristeas.”

20. Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (London: Routledge, 2003). She calls this the “Exodus paradigm.”

Conclusion: Cultural Creativity

Although some Jews likely expressed a desire to return to the traditional homeland and some texts, such as the third *Sybilline Oracle* or the *Wisdom of Solomon*, do exude greater levels of cultural antagonism, our two authors seem more typical than atypical of Egyptian Jews in that they do not advocate a Jewish return to that homeland. They seem quite content with life away from Jerusalem and Judea, although Ps.-Aristeas explicitly recognizes their importance. Yet he idealizes Jerusalem without suggesting that the proper course is for Jews to return there. In fact, Jews come *from* Jerusalem *to* the diaspora to translate the Scriptures, providing warrant and authorization for the Scriptures in Greek and a *Jewish* life outside the ancestral homeland. For his part, Artapanus places no emphasis on Jerusalem or Judea except in an almost offhanded comment about Moses leading the Jews to their homeland—a comment that he never develops.

Even within the Alexandrian/Egyptian cultural context, like most Hellenes and Egyptians, most Jews lived without the full range of benefits afforded by this thriving Hellenistic center. Ps.-Aristeas (and perhaps Artapanus) numbered among the lucky few who had access to Greek education and thus entrée into a fuller range of Hellenistic cultural possibilities. Yet even these circumstances do not seem to have deterred most Jews from constructing *Jewish* lives, wherever they resided. In their individual, creative approaches, Artapanus and Ps.-Aristeas sought to reconcile their Hellenistic environment(s) with those aspects of Jewish life that they saw as distinctive. They thus built a foundation on which to erect a rationale for their own and their readers' places within that world.

II

Women in Judaism and Christianity

Mothers, Martyrs, and Manly Courage

The Female Martyr in 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, and the Acts of Paul and Thecla

LYNN H. COHICK

Wheaton College

Introduction

In her book *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean*, Ross Kraemer examines the figure of Thecla from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and rightly notes the complex theme of mother-daughter relations that pervades the text, a theme that has received relatively little attention.¹ Kraemer goes some distance in developing this theme, and I hope to build on her observations by exploring connections between the portraits of the Maccabean martyrs' mother (2 Macc 6:8–7:42 and 4 Maccabees) and that of Thecla's mother and surrogate mother (see esp. 4 Macc 8:1–29; 12:1–19; 14:10–18:24). Special attention is given to the gendered rhetoric in Jewish and Christian martyrdom accounts and to the wider Greco-Roman assessment of the virtue of endurance—a key virtue for martyrs. As Kraemer notes, Christians used “gender inversion” to critique their wider Greco-Roman context.² She notes that one of the most effective strategies was to portray Christian women as “true exemplars of

* My title is a nod to Ross Kraemer's book, *Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, Monastics: A Sourcebook on Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988); later expanded and revised as *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). My debt to Ross Kraemer both for her outstanding scholarship and for her patient mentoring over the years cannot be repaid. I happily continue to be further in her debt with each new work she produces.

1. Ross S. Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 133.

2. *Ibid.*, 136.

masculine virtues.”³ This observation holds true overall but is nuanced in the portrayal of Thecla and her surrogate mother, Tryphaena. I will comment on Seneca’s views of endurance (as representative of the wider Greco-Roman view), and endurance represented in 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Having established their views on endurance, I will note how the portraits of mothers in the Jewish martyrdom texts threaten the broader culture’s views and will discuss the more complicated situation surrounding the presentation of Thecla’s two mothers relative to Thecla’s martyrdom story. While 2 Maccabees and especially 4 Maccabees argue that endurance is a demonstration of courage shown most clearly by the mother, Thecla’s endurance is paired with Tryphaena’s typical feminine behavior as she is overcome by emotions. By combining Thecla’s endurance with Tryphaena’s actions and her elite status in her city, the author of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* creates a complex critique of traditional values as the work promotes its vision of the Christian faith.

Endurance and Courage in Greco-Roman Philosophy

Martyrdom stories create space for identity formation by groups of Jews and later Christians. Competing theories testify to the complexity of understanding identity and martyrdom. For example, some scholars focus on the memory-shaping capacity of the martyr’s story; others conclude that a martyr’s identity is rooted in suffering; and still others argue that individuals inhabit multiple social identities.⁴ I will focus on how martyrdom stories elevate the virtue of endurance and, in so doing, reconfigure the pattern of gendered virtues. In the Greco-Roman world, passive (feminine) endurance stands opposite bravery or manly courage. Virtues were mapped across a gendered, hierarchical terrain, which assigned a masculine label to those traits and qualities that involved freedom of choice and assigned a feminine label to those traits that were deemed reactive.⁵ Virtue was seen as right reason, as living in harmony with Nature (Seneca, *Ep.* 66.32; 66.12). To demonstrate reason’s power over the body, the elite male

3. Ibid.

4. For a discussion of each position, respectively, see Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (Gender, Theory, and Religion; New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (New York: Routledge, 1995); L. Stephanie Cobb, *Dying to Be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts* (Gender, Theory, Religion; New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

5. Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson write, “Mastery—of others and/or of oneself—is the definitive masculine trait in most of the Greek and Latin literary and philosophical texts that survive from antiquity” (“Taking It like a Man: Masculinity in 4 Maccabees,” *JBL* 117 [1998]: 250).

strove to control his own passions and physically dominate other bodies through his superior control of will.

Greco-Roman sages struggled with the problem presented by endurance relative to accepted virtues for an elite free male because of the ever-present threats of torturous death or incapacitating illness. Seneca and Epictetus, for example, allow for the possibility that at times men must endure suffering, but this is acceptable only if endurance was in the service of a greater virtue. Thus, an athlete might endure difficult training, because this will lead to the greater good of an honorable victory. Seneca spends much time discussing proper actions in situations of pain wherein it is most difficult to maintain *ἀπάθεια*. He mocks Maecenas's prayer to keep his life even if it is one incapacitated by ill health or the torture of crucifixion.⁶ Life is not merely about having breath, says Seneca, for a fear of death robs the living of real life. Accepting torture simply to live another day is for Seneca "womanish" (*effeminatus*) (*Ep.* 101.13). He points to childbirth as a ready example of what endurance is—passive acceptance of pain as forces over which one has little control consume the body (*Ep.* 24.14). Self-control and courage, public voice and action—these defined masculinity. Representations of wounded, silenced, and passive figures were feminine images suitable only for women and slaves.

Endurance and Courage in 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees

In both 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees we read the horrific description of martyrdoms under Antiochus IV.⁷ My interests lie not in determining the relative verisimilitude of these accounts but in examining how the mothers are portrayed. In these texts we find endurance linked with the hope of resurrection or immortality and with national victory over gentile oppressors. The Jewish martyrs see their patience under torture as demonstrating supreme virtue. This elevation of endurance as a preeminent virtue is something new: *§* *heer endurance was now lauded both as a behavioral practice and as a high moral ideal.*"⁸

In 2 Maccabees, a Jew named Eleazer defies Antiochus's call to eat pork as a sign of fidelity to the new regime. The author uses the verb

6. Gaius Maecenas (ca. 70–8 BCE) was counselor to Octavian Augustus and patron of Virgil and Horace. See Seneca, *Ep.* 101.10–13.

7. Daniel Boyarin argues that martyrdom is best understood as a discourse, not an event, "as a practice of dying for God and of talking about it" (*Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* [Figuræ; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999], 94).

8. Brent D. Shaw, "Body/Power/Identity: Passions of the Martyrs," *J ECS* 4 (1996): 278.

ὑπομένω ("to endure") in establishing the elderly man's utter faithfulness to the ancestral law (2 Macc 6:20). After the king fails to break Eleazer, despite all manner of torture, the king turns upon seven brothers and their mother, demanding that they eat sacrificial pig meat. Each son in his turn refuses to eat and is subjected to gruesome tortures, while the siblings and mother look on.

The author introduces the mother's speech to her sons as representing manly courage alongside her woman's reasoning (2 Macc 7:20–21). The mother focuses on how she bore her sons, nursed them, raised and cared for them. The ancient reader, hearing an allusion to childbirth and knowing that the mother has indeed endured seven births, might intuit that the passive endurance exemplified by childbirth was now required in upholding their ancestral law. The author describes the mother as exhibiting a man's mind, suggesting that she embodies endurance as a fundamental virtue for those who follow ancestral laws faithfully.

Fourth Maccabees speaks of endurance on several occasions, including in the *exordium* (1:1–12). The author states his goal to show that "devout reason" (εὐσεβὴς λογισμός) rules the passions (τῶν παθῶν). Notice the focus is not simply on reason itself, but pious reason, which looks to Jewish ancestral customs and the Law of Moses for supreme guidance. David A. DeSilva notes that the author "will seek to establish that piety (to be linked with Torah-observance) is itself the path to virtue."⁹ The argument's structure is similar to a Stoic claim that reason should govern emotions. Based on the content of devout reason, however, the virtues are reassembled such that courage is exemplified by passive endurance, and honorable death is defined as being killed by one's oppressors. The martyrs' courage through devout reason proves their self-control (7:18–23).

As in 2 Maccabees, so too in 4 Maccabees, the author draws attention to the mother's experience in bearing children (15:5, 7). This mother suffered even greater torment than birth pains in seeing her sons tortured to death before her eyes (15:16). The author explains that the mother endured the unendurable because her devout reason enabled her to exhibit manly courage (15:23; 16:1–14).¹⁰ Indeed she is lauded as "more noble than males in steadfastness, and more courageous than men in endurance" (15:30). She is the "mother of the nation" (15:29) and "guardian of the law" (15:32) because she endured the painful trial of watching her sons tortured to death. For this she is extolled as a soldier of God, for with her endur-

9. David A. DeSilva, *4 Maccabees* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 54.

10. Moore and Anderson argue, however, that devout reason is "twin" to prudence ("Taking It like a Man," 257 n. 22). I suggest that this insight does not take full account of the Maccabean martyrs' self-control, which advocates not suicide (a noble death) but passive endurance unto death, in part because of the hope of immortality or resurrection of the body.

ance (*καρτερία*) she conquered a tyrant, proving more powerful than a man (16:14). Her nobility is based on a reordering of virtue such that endurance is no longer a feminine virtue but a first-order virtue esteemed by men and women who follow devout reason. The Christian virgin, Thecla, follows this Jewish mother's example of endurance, embracing martyrdom even as she rejects marriage.

Endurance and Courage in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*

Thecla is betrothed to a leading figure in the city of Iconium. She hears Paul's gospel and embraces it by forgoing her marriage. Her mother denounces her to the city's governor and calls for her to be burned at the stake. Thecla is miraculously saved and leaves the city in search of Paul, who was banished earlier because of his role in her conversion. Upon finding Paul, she desires baptism, but he refuses, worrying that "another trial [may] not leave you worse than the first, and you might not endure (*υπομείνης*) but you might be cowardly (*δειλανδρήσης*)" (3.25). She does not have long to wait before the test comes.

She travels with Paul to Antioch, and upon entering the city she is accosted by Alexander, a leading man in the city. She rejects his advances, so he hauls her before the governor. She is condemned to the beasts but weathers this, as well as the threat of being drawn and quartered, and survives a pool filled with deadly seals. After she has endured all this, the governor releases her, amazed at her power. She declares that she is a "slave" of the "living God." She points to the resurrection as her sure hope (3.37). The narrative highlights Thecla's endurance; she has fulfilled the requirement for baptism set out by Paul earlier in the story.

In these Jewish and Christian martyrdom stories, women display endurance, and endurance is viewed as a superior virtue for men and women. However, the texts' presentations of the mothers at times seem to align with prevailing gender norms. This invites us to take a closer look at how the category of martyrdom helps us understand the role these mothers play in the narrative.

Martyrdom and the Making of Identity

The virtue of endurance shone brightest amid the tortures of martyrdom, at least for the authors of Jewish and Christian martyrdom texts. Martyr stories function to shape community identities and self-understandings; thus, the mothers' endurance in our texts carries additional importance.

Daniel Boyarin puts it adroitly, that “for the ‘Romans,’ it didn’t matter much whether the lions were eating a robber or a bishop, and it probably didn’t make much of a difference to the lions, either, but the robber’s friends and the bishop’s friends told different stories about those leonine meals.”¹¹ The bishop was memorialized, and the criminal forgotten. Jan Willem van Henten argues that a martyr is a person who, in an extremely hostile situation, preferred a violent death to compliance with a decree or demand of the (usually) pagan authorities.¹² The complexity in defining a martyr is evident in our sources, for we have mothers who die but are not physically tortured; additionally, we have the “martyr” Thecla, who does not die, and her “other” Tryphaena, who dies, at least for a literary moment. As these mothers’ speech and actions are compared with the typical expectations of feminine behavior, including cowardliness and irrational emotional reactions, we discover how the Jewish and Christian authors challenge the gendered virtues and definitions of masculinity and femininity of their day. Moreover, we find in these texts that the authors use expected feminine behavior in surprising ways to further their case, perhaps most markedly in the portrait of Tryphaena, Thecla’s surrogate mother. Exploring the juxtaposition of the complex categories of martyr and mother in these texts will shed more light on the construction of gender in the ancient world.

Martyrdom and Motherhood in 2 and 4 Maccabees

Turning first to 2 Maccabees, the accounts of mothers’ martyrdoms book-end the martyrdom unit of chs. 6 and 7. The reader learns of Antiochus IV’s cruel insistence on pagan practices and elimination of Jewish rites such as circumcision and Sabbath. Two mothers resist the new orders and circumcise their sons.¹³ When this is discovered, their babies are hung about their necks and the mothers are paraded through the streets, and then tossed to their deaths from the city wall. These women were not publicly tortured, and their acts of circumcising their infant sons might be viewed

11. Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 94–95.

12. Jan Willem van Henten, “Jewish and Christian Martyrs,” in *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Marcel Poorthuis and Joshua Schwartz; Jewish and Christian Perspectives 7; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 165.

13. Susan Haber notes that the female participle ἀνήχθησαν (2 Macc 6:10; see also 4 Macc 4:25) implies that the women “were responsible for circumcising their sons” (see also 4 Macc 4:25). In 1 Macc 1:60–61, the masculine participle περιτεμνόμενος is used, and the mothers, their families, and the men who did the circumcision were executed (Haber, “Living and Dying for the Law: The Mother-Martyrs of 2 Maccabees,” *Women in Judaism: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 4.1 [2006]: 3–4, <http://wjudaism.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/wjudaism/article/view/247/320>).

as merely disobeying the civic law, which they knew carried the death sentence. Yet their public procession through the streets, their violent end, the religious and ethnic centrality of circumcision within Judaism, and the literary placement of the story, all suggest that the author of 2 Maccabees viewed these mothers as martyrs.¹⁴

Second Maccabees concludes its section on the martyrs with the simple statement, "last of all, the mother died, after her seven sons" (7:41). In 4 Maccabees, we find a similar presentation of the mother's death. She is not tortured physically, and she leaps into the fire herself to avoid being touched by the gentile soldier (17:1). In both texts, although she has encouraged her seven sons to endure unto death, she does not herself feel the scourge or the sword. Or perhaps she does, for the author of 4 Maccabees indicates that, as a mother, she would be emotionally connected to her sons in such a manner that their pain would be her pain (15:13–17). It is interesting that men face torture in these stories, although mothers are put to death. The attention to female bodies is at the level of birthing and nursing, not dismembering and flaying. The mother's body is not violated by the scourge, but the fruit of her womb is destroyed before her eyes.

In the narrative, not only is the mother's body kept from public view, but also her voice is private, heard only by her sons. In this regard, both 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees seemingly reinforce typical gender patterns. Further buttressing common gender expectations, 4 Maccabees has the mother declare that it was her husband who taught religion to their sons (18:10–19), although her earlier encouragement to remain steadfast highlights some of the same biblical heroes (16:16–23). The mother's knowledge of devout reason might in principle be supported by Musonius Rufus, who promoted philosophy for wives as a defense against the fear of torture, death, or even a tyrant's advances.¹⁵ Yet M. Rufus advocated women's pursuit of virtue not because the woman's innate human dignity merited it but because a virtuous woman performed her wifely duties better.¹⁶

In the Maccabees texts, however, the expression of standard gender behavior is more apparent than real. The mother's voice acts as covert

14. Ibid., 3.

15. Musonius Rufus, *Dissertationes* 3 ("That Women Too Should Study Philosophy"); see Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, eds., *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Source Book in Translation* (3rd ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 50–52.

16. Martha C. Nussbaum notes that M. Rufus fails "to understand the extent to which human dignity and self-respect require support from the social world." She adds that he fails to acknowledge the extent to which female virtue may be undermined by the very fact of social hierarchy" (Nussbaum, "The Incomplete Feminism of Musonius Rufus, Platonist, Stoic, and Roman," in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece* [ed. Martha C. Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004], 302–3).

resistance against the tyrant. The authors note that she speaks in her ancestral language, which is unknown to the Seleucid overlords (2 Macc 7:21; 4 Macc 12:6–7). She understands Greek, for Antiochus speaks to her in this language, but she refuses to use it (2 Macc 7:25–27), thereby undermining his control of the situation. In both books, the authors fill the mother's private speech with rich religious content that supports the authors' goals. Overall, the gendered expectations of the Greco-Roman world are challenged directly or subverted covertly in the mother's character, as we might expect given the elevated view of endurance expressed in these texts.

Mothers and Martyrs in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*

The mother in 4 Maccabees speaks of her pure virginity and sequestered upbringing (18:7–8). Thecla too is portrayed as a pure virgin, cloistered in her home. But in several important ways, their stories diverge. Key among the differences is the fact that in Thecla's story, women's voices speak loudly and publicly throughout the story and mothers of *daughters* (not sons) take center stage, serving as models for different community ideals. A second important difference is that Thecla refuses the promise of motherhood by rejecting her fiancé. This opens up alternative visions for society and women's influence within the culture.

First, we note the public voices of women, which include the crowds in Antioch, as well as Thecla's mother, Theocleia, and her stand-in mother, Tryphaena. At the beginning of the story, Thecla remains mute before the governor of Iconium and his question concerning her refusal to marry. Her mother Theocleia fills the silence by denouncing Thecla as a lawless one (3.20). This assessment is later explicitly and loudly rejected by the crowd of women in Antioch, the city to which Thecla travels after escaping her fate in Iconium. These women with their children declare Thecla's punishment of facing beasts in the arena to be an evil and godless judgment (3.27–28; see also 3.32). When she enters the stadium, they shout and mourn (3.33), they weep (3.34), and they throw petals, nard, and spices in a successful plot to subdue the beasts (3.35). When the governor calls an end to the spectacle, the women declare so loudly that the city shook, "O ne is God, who has delivered Thecla!" (3.38). The women's voices heighten the tension in the narrative and represent a sympathetic reader's response to Thecla's plight. They also express the proper evaluation of Thecla's situation as unjust and her deliverance as from her God. This contrasts sharply with the governor's disregard for justice.

Second, not only are women's voices heard, but also the portrait of Thecla's mothers serve to promote opposite visions of society. Theocleia

declares her daughter in violation of cardinal civic ideals, which place a premium on marriage between social elites (3.20). At the end of the story, Thecla returns to her mother and declares that if she needed money, Thecla could provide it. And if she wanted to see her daughter, Thecla was standing before her (3.43). This suggests that her mother considered wealth, both gaining and keeping it, central to the marriage institution.

Tryphaena, Thecla's surrogate mother in Antioch, shelters Thecla before she faces beasts in the arena (3.27). Tryphaena's social standing and wealth place her in the elite culture-building category. Tryphaena serves as a counterweight to Alexander, the dishonored suitor whose charges send Thecla to the stadium. Tryphaena will shout him out of her house when he comes to take Thecla to the arena (3.30). And her increasing support of Thecla, along with Alexander's eventual demise, serves as a new model of elite behavior on behalf of the city.

Yet the more noteworthy aspects of Tryphaena's character for our purposes are the connections between Thecla and the deceased daughter Falconilla. The latter speaks to her mother in a dream telling her to ask Thecla for prayer. Tryphaena requests this of Thecla, who immediately prays that Falconilla might live forever. But Tryphaena mourns the impending loss of her "child" as she leads Thecla to the arena, much as she mourned Falconilla as she trudged to her tomb (3.28–30). It is not until Thecla survives the beasts that Tryphaena declares her belief in the resurrection and her joy that her daughter also lives (3.39). The author likely creates the ambiguity in speaking about "child" and "daughter" to connect Thecla's present deliverance from the beasts and Falconilla's resurrection from the dead—in both cases, those who were thought to be dead are in fact alive.

Mothers and Manly Courage

In an ironic twist, the martyr Thecla does not die, while her surrogate mother is declared to have died. In fact, it is the latter's death that halts the spectacle; Alexander begs the governor to stop for fear that Tryphaena's death would bring Rome's condemnation of the city. As it turns out, Tryphaena has only fainted, and she quickly revives (3.36). One wonders whether Tryphaena took matters into her own hands and collapsed with the hope that events would unfold as they did. The reader senses Tryphaena's increasing fear juxtaposed to Thecla's growing confidence in God's protection. Thecla's "mother" is overcome with emotion, which saves her child Thecla. Her display of typical feminine behavior, namely, excessive emotion, fits the cultural norm. This story line does not work at all in the portrait of mothers in 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees, but here Tryphaena's grief unto death leads to the present deliverance of her child

Thecla. Moreover, Tryphaena's actions result in her confession of belief in Thecla's message of resurrection, including the resurrection of her own daughter Falconilla.

The mothers in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* are dissimilar to those described by 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees, largely due to the former playing roles in the text's presentation about conversion to Christianity. In Thecla's story, we have a mother who turns over her daughter to authorities for a torturous death, and a surrogate mother who faints dead away at the sight of her child's ongoing tortures in the arena. In the first case, the mother speaks against the beliefs promoted in the story, and in the second, emotions overtake the mother, leading to her acceptance of Thecla's teaching. Interestingly, the martyr does not die but is saved by God, and another dead daughter is raised up to eternal life.

Despite these differences, all three texts promote endurance as the exemplar virtue. By focusing on the category of mother, these texts assert a new vision for community and critique existing familial expectations. Devout reason reveals its remarkable power in providing mothers with manly courage. Thecla and her surrogate mother demonstrate a radical reconfiguring of the family, rooted in a Christian call for endurance unto death in hope of resurrection. Women's stories confirm the strength of the texts' new worldviews that redefine endurance and challenge their wider culture's enforcement of gendered status quo. The Maccabean mothers and the virgin Thecla prove worthy of their communities' honor as examples of endurance against all odds.

Susanna's Choice

MARY R. D'ANGELO

University of Notre Dame

Stories seemingly about women may rather be particularly reflective of ancient conversations about gender, that is meanings ascribed to the categories male and female, meanings that are neither fixed nor uniform, but are themselves the products of cultural activity and therefore variable.

—Ross Shepard Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*¹

When I first encountered Ross Kraemer at the Philadelphia Seminar for Christian Origins, her pursuit of questions of method conspicuously enlivened discussion. Can ancient texts admit of feminist reading? For instance, can they yield a glimpse of women's resistance to gender norms? Are there women in history? What can the surviving texts tell us about the lives of "real" women in antiquity? What does Ἰουδαῖος/a mean in any given context? Can texts mediated through generations of rereaders be securely dated? When narratives are passed on in multiple versions, what is the "text"? How should gender be read in any given narrative? What work does it do, and for whom? These queries and others have driven Kraemer's work and sustained our long conversation. Her study of the complex history and functions of the ancient fiction *Aseneth* provides a model for addressing these and other methodological questions in fictional narratives.

Susanna, a Greek addition to Daniel, is a miniature of biblical fiction to which all these questions apply much as they to *Aseneth*. As feminist concerns emerged in the interpretation of ancient Jewish and Christian texts over the last forty years, the role of Susanna in her own story became a topic of debate. Interpreters looked to her, as to other female figures of

1. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 192.

ancient texts for a feminist heroine, but most were disappointed, finding instead a reassertion of patriarchal control of women and sexuality.²

This article will contribute to the discussion in two ways. First, rather than arguing for or against a feminist message in Susanna, I pattern my questions on Kraemer's, asking, "Why is Susanna a woman?" What work does her gender do in this narrative?³ Second, feminist and conventional readings alike have compared Susanna to other heroines and even heroes from antiquity; Judith, Esther, and Joseph are especially prominent in the list, but David, Eve, Persephone, and still more exotic figures like Phryne, the sun goddess, and the swan maiden have also been invoked.⁴ Surprisingly little attention has been bestowed on two other figures: Aseneth and Lucretia, hailed by Valerius Maximus as *dux Romanae pudicitiae* (6.1.1).

Like *Aseneth*, Susanna has two versions, both of uncertain date and each with its own textual difficulties, as well as a female heroine whose feminist potential is at best contested. Like *Aseneth*, Susanna is saturated with verbal echoes of earlier Scriptures.⁵ Like *Aseneth*, Susanna is set in a distant time and an exotic locale.⁶ Susanna's private garden and flotillas of male and female slaves bring her close to Aseneth's fairy-tale princess status.

The tales of Susanna and Lucretia also offer some striking similarities. Both appear in multiple versions; both are stories about rape, the threat of rape, and false accusations of adultery; both focus on the dilemma presented to the heroine and the choice she must make; both women are *matronae* and married; both rapists (the elder-judges, Sextus Tarquinius) possess social and political power; both husbands (Joakim, Collatinus) are rather exiguous figures; both fathers (Helkiah, Lucretius) play at least as important a role as the women's husbands. Both women are celebrated

2. Amy-Jill Levine gives an account of her own journey with Susanna in "Hemmed on Every Side: Jews and *W* men in the Book of Susanna," in *A Feminist Companion to Esther, Judith and Susanna* (ed. Athalya Brenner; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 303–23.

3. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*; more recently, see Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

4. See Carey A. Moore's account of the history of interpretation in *Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah, the Additions: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 44; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 84–85; on Persephone, see Barbara J. Dilly, "Persephone and Susanna in the Garden: Patriarchal Seductions of Nature and Virtue," in *Women, Gender, and Religion* (ed. Susan Calef and Ronald A. Simkins; Journal of Religion and Society Supplement Series 5, 2009), 62–75, <http://moses.creighton.edu/JRS/2009/2009-7.pdf>.

5. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 19–85; Sarah Pearce, "Echoes of Eden in the Old Greek of Susanna," *Feminist Theology* 11 (1996): 10–31; Catherine Tcaacz, "A Biblical Woman's Paraphrase of King David: Susanna's Refusal of the Elders," *Downside Review* 28 (2010): 39–51.

6. Kraemer questions Egypt as *Aseneth*'s place of composition (*When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 286–93).

for choosing when they have no choice. In both stories, sexual predation is an index of political corruption; both women become *exempla* of chastity. Both women are championed by a hitherto untried youth (Daniel, Brutus) who is not the woman's husband; both narratives endorse the youth's emerging career and signal (or imply) the passing of leadership to a new generation. The political significance of Lucretia's fate is explicit in the text and widely recognized.⁷ The political implications of Susanna's story are less explicit and more disputed. There is, of course, a radical difference in their denouements; Lucretia's story requires that she suffer both rape and death, while Susanna's makes its point through her resistance, survival and vindication. This contrast might invite a feminist claim for Susanna; in fact, both stories remain texts of terror.

As I mentioned above, Greek Daniel survives in two versions, the Septuagint (henceforth OG) and a version known as Theodotion (henceforth θ'), both known to the writers of the NT. Susanna opens the θ' text of Daniel and appears at the end of the OG, the Vulgate, and other versions. The two Greek versions differ more in the Susanna story than is usual in the rest of the book. Most scholars read both accounts as translations from a Hebrew or Aramaic original and θ' as also dependent on OG, although neither assumption can be demonstrated with certitude. Susanna OG is frequently attributed to the late second or early first century BCE, θ' to the early to mid-first century—that is, the reign of Salome Alexandra (74–67 BCE). But the substantial differences between the two versions of Susanna and the variations in later adaptations of the story attest to the story's malleability and suggest a long and diverse transmission. An origin in the Persian period is possible. On the other hand, the relation of Susanna to the rest of Daniel is not entirely stable, and the first clear reference to her story is in Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 4.26.3). A date in the Roman era, and even a Christian origin (as with Aseneth), cannot be excluded.⁸

Lucretia's story appears in five works of the period of the civil wars and

7. Melissa M. Mathes, *The Rape of Lucretia and the Founding of Republics: Readings in Livy, Maciavelli and Rousseau* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000); Patricia Klindienst, "Ritual Work on Human Flesh: Livy's Lucretia and the Rape of the Body Politic," *Helios* 17 (1990): 51–70; Sandra Joshel, "The Body Female and the Body Politic: Livy's Lucretia and Verginia," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* (ed. Amy Richlin; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 112–30.

8. For full discussion of the issues of the origin of the texts, see John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 2–12, 426–28, 435–38; Moore, *Additions*, 78–92; Helmut Engel, *Die Susanna-Erzählung: Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar zum Septuaginta-Text und zur Theodotion-Bearbeitung* (OBO 61; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), 175–83; Marti J. Steussy, *Gardens in Babylon: Narrative and Faith in the Greek Legends of Daniel* (SBLDS 141; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 25–37. Dating Theodotion to the Roman period are Engel, *Susanna-Erzählung*, 181–83 and Michael Tilly, "Die Rezeption des Danielbuches im hellenischen Judentum," in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Daniel-*

the early empire, three in Latin and two in Greek. Only the fragmentary text of Diodorus Siculus 10.20–22 (between 60 and 30 BCE) does not connect the expulsion of the kings directly to the rape and death of Lucretia. In Livy's nearly canonical account (27–25 BCE), her dead and exposed body is the catalyst for the founding of the republic.⁹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus's expanded Greek account (7 BCE) incorporates the negotiation of the three-part constitution.¹⁰ Ovid's highly colored dramatization of the story commemorates the *Regifugium* (*Fasti* 2.721–852, after 8 CE). Valerius Maximus offers Lucretia as the first of his examples of *pudicitia* (6.1.1; 14–37 CE). The tale itself may well be older; it seems to have appeared in the (lost) history of Rome by Fabius, written in the third century BCE and in Greek.¹¹ If so, influence on our versions of the Susanna story is not impossible, nor is the reverse. My interest is in juxtaposing Lucretia to Susanna to clarify the role of gender in the story. I begin with the shorter, perhaps earlier, Susanna OG, then make a few points about Susanna 0'.

“The Youth Are Beloved in Jacob in Their Simplicity” (OG 63)¹²

At one level, “why is Susanna a woman?” is easier to answer than is the case with Aseneth. Susanna (like Lucretia) is a woman so that the story can be told, so that she can be threatened with rape and accusations of adultery. Joseph was subjected to similar accusations only after losing his masculine status through enslavement (Genesis 39). Biblical texts are aware that men can be threatened with rape (Gen 19:5–9; Judg 19:22), but the revelation of the elders' previous rapes of “the daughters of Israel” (57) shows that the narrator sees Susanna's predicament as a female predicament and uses it in multiple ways both to exploit assumptions about femininity and masculinity and to renegotiate them.

Susanna OG appears to have opened with the unidentifiable citation, “lawlessness came out of Babylon, from elder judges who seemed (ἐδόκουν) to govern the people.” The duplicity hinted at in “seemed” is justified

buches in Literatur und Kunst (ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. Du Toit; BZAW 371; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 31–54.

9. Livy, *AUC* (*Ab urbe condita libri*) 1.57–60. For dating, see 1.19.3 and 4.20.

10. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 4.64.1–85.4; Dionysius expands with an account of the negotiation of the three-part constitution.

11. Widely assumed, but far from certain. The evidence is Dionysius's reference to Fabius's genealogy of Collatinus (*Ant. rom.* 4.64.2).

12. Numbering differs slightly between Rahlfs and the Göttingen LXX; I use the more widely accessible Rahlfs.

by their deceitful dealings with each other (10–14), by their assault on Susanna (19) and by the charges they fabricate against her (28–29, 36–41).

For Susanna, to do as they ask is death, but neither will refusing enable her to escape them. Faced with death on either hand, she chooses not “to sin before the Lord.” As she articulates the unappetizing options and makes her choice, Susanna is designated the Judean/Jewish woman (ἡ Ἰουδαία), an odd epithet in a context in which all the parties are meant to be Judahites in exile. Its impact emerges when Daniel castigates the second elder as “having corrupted your seed as of Sidon and not of Judah” (56). Susanna, a “daughter of Judah” displays moral superiority not only to the elders but also to the “daughters of Israel” who had presumably submitted to the elders in the past (57). This double contrast played a significant role in raising the question of the meaning of Ἰουδαῖος/α, which clearly has both geographic and moral import in this context.¹³ Similarly, when Dionysius describes Lucretia as a Roman woman (γυνὴ Ῥωμαία), the designation is both ethnic and moral. “Roman” contrasts her origin to that of her husband (from Collatia) and her behavior as well as her origin to that of her rapist, a Tarquin presumably of Etruscan descent.¹⁴

Silence and revelation characterize both female protagonists. The Susanna of OG is almost entirely silent; she speaks only to enunciate the horns of the dilemma and make her choice (22–23). Faced with the alternative of dishonor on either hand, Lucretia chooses to submit at first, in order to exact an ultimate vengeance. While she could have sustained the appearance of honor, she chooses the risk of revealing her shame in order to denounce her rapist, but *in camera*, in a council carefully selected by her father and husband. Susanna chooses resistance, “not to sin before the Lord” (23), over both life and honor. But she tells no one. Summoned by the elder-judges, she appears with her impressive retinue but does not speak in her own defense. Her prayer is uttered “in herself,” and her silence underlines its content: she prays to the God who knows all things before their origin,” stressing “you know that I have not done the things” the elders have falsely charged against her.

Like Aseneth, Susanna is unveiled. But the function of her unveiling is the opposite of Aseneth's. Aseneth unveils herself at the angelic command: “you are a pure virgin today and your head is like a young man's” (15.1–2). Susanna's uncovering is done to her, at the command and for the pleasure of her tormentors, to make her vulnerable to their gaze and allow them to put their hands on her head to make their accusations (32, 34, 36–44). Rather than transcending her female status, she

13. Shaye Cohen, “Ioudaios: ‘Judean’ and ‘Jew’ in Susanna, First Maccabees and Second Maccabees,” in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70 Geburtstag*, vol. 1, *Judentum* (ed. Peter Schäfer; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1996), 211–20.

14. Collatinus is also a Tarquinius.

is deprived of womanly honor, so that all her household and acquaintances weep (33).¹⁵ Jennifer Glancy suggests that the reader shares the voyeuristic stance of the elder-judges, so that Susanna is the object of the elders' and the readers' gaze, an observation amply borne out by the lengthy history of Susanna's visual exploitation in Western art.¹⁶ In this position, she is Other. But like every narrative this one offers the reader multiple perspectives. Readers also stand beside Susanna's almost fabulously large and complex household; patriarchs, mother, children, and slaves view her exposure with empathy and grief, prompting, even dictating, the readers' emotions.

Lucretia also is exposed after her rape and suicide: in a scene that evokes first-century funerary practice, Livy relates that her paterfamilias took her body to the forum where as a spectacle (*miraculo*) it inspired the people to rehearse the kings' depredations and renounce monarchy (1.59.3). In Dionysius's account, the Romans summoned to her father's house witness him cradling her dead body and are spurred to the extirpation of tyranny (*Ant. rom.* 4.67.2); Ovid stresses the exposure of the lethal wound (*Fasti* 2.849). Determined to be remembered, she refuses to be an *exemplum* of unchastity, but rather offers herself as a warrant for the death of any wife who dares adultery. Note that this penalty was ideologically rather than legally imposed; Roman law did not prescribe the death penalty for adultery, although it countenanced some forms of honor killing.¹⁷

The final verses of Susanna OG explicate the contrast between the duplicitous elders and the simplicity (*ἀπλότης*) of youth, who will act piously (*εὐσεβήσουσι*). The narrative reverses the commonplace conviction that youth are more subject to desire than their elders. "Beauty has deceived you, polluted desire (*ἐπιθυμία*)," Daniel declares (56), phrasing that evokes the deceiving and accursed serpent of Genesis (3:14–15). Aristotle articulates traits commonly assigned to masculinity according to age (Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.12.1–13.4). Youth were viewed as liable to be driven by desire (*ἐπιθυμία*, 12.3–5), careless of reputation, "simple" (*εὐήθεις*, 12.7), that is, not ambivalent or duplicitous, but trusting and hopeful (*εὐπιστοι*, *εὐέλπιδες*, 12.8, 9). The corollary to their passion was courage (12.9–11). The

15. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 196–98.

16. Jennifer Glancy, "Susanna 1," in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (ed. Carol Meyers, Toni Craven, and Ross Kraemer; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 158; Glancy, "The Accused: Susanna and Her Readers," *JSOT* 58 (1993): 103–16; also Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 202. On Susanna as visual subject, see Mieke Bal, "The Elders and Susanna," *Biblical Interpretation* 1 (1993): 1–19; Ellen Spolsky, "Law or the Garden: The Betrayal of Susanna in Pastoral Painting," in *The Judgment of Susanna: Authority and Witness* (ed. Ellen Spolsky; EJL 11; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 101–17.

17. Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 264–84.

elderly were less subject to desire, ambivalent, concerned with reputation, prey to cowardice. Men in their prime were able to moderate these qualities. The martyrdoms of Eleazar, the seven sons, and their mother in 2 and 4 Maccabees invokes these categories to show the power of allegiance to the law, which enables even the frail elderly, the hot-headed young, and the woman to overcome the defects of their age and gender.¹⁸ As old man, youths, and woman, the martyrs also fit the category defined by Susan Sered and Samuel Cooper for Daniel and Susanna: they are structurally weak (weak in social power) but morally strong.¹⁹

Sered and Cooper suggest that to avoid rape, Susanna (presumably meaning the narrator) must forgo the trickster role, the most effective of tactics allowed to biblical women who uphold the moral order.²⁰ Although they discern the trickster in Daniel, he fits it poorly; he effects her acquittal not by deceiving the elders but by undeceiving the people and exposing the elders' lies. In Susanna, trickery and deceit rest entirely with the elders, whose duplicity provides the contrast to the simplicity and single-heartedness of both Daniel the youth and Susanna the wronged and innocent wife. The narrator not only tells the readers that Susanna's "heart was trusting in the Lord" (35), but also warns that the congregation believed her accusers, because they were elders and judges of the people (41). Thus, the narrative has produced a revaluation of the traits assigned to young and old men, as well as to women. Lustful, deceitful, and ultimately foolish in their willingness to turn their eyes from heaven (9), the villains violate the expectations for elders and judges; while Daniel, inspired by a holy spirit from God, displays the wisdom that ought to have been an ornament of age. At the same time, the attributes of youth are reaffirmed: both Daniel and Susanna display simplicity and single-heartedness, accepting the risk and acting out of piety with trust. And the last word from the narrator affirms the value of this simplicity and piety for Jacob (63). In other words, what is needed for Jacob in this moment is the simplicity and trust in God that both Daniel and Susanna exemplify.

Collins's judgment that, in Susanna, "[w]hat is at issue is not Jewish identity but personal morality" reads the narrative through a distinction that is foreign to the text.²¹ The designations of Lucretia as *Ῥωμαία* and Susanna as *Ἰουδαία* undermine the interpretations of the actions of Susanna and Lucretia as private. Lucretia has been read as the body pol-

18. See Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, "Taking It like a Man: Masculinity in 4 Maccabees," *JBL* 117 (1998): 249–73.

19. Susan Sered and Samuel Cooper, "Sexuality and Social Control: Anthropological Reflections on the Books of Susanna," in Spolsky, *Judgment of Susanna*, 43–55.

20. Ibid., "Sexuality and Social Control," 49.

21. Collins, *Daniel*, 437.

itic plundered by the rapacity of tyrants.²² Her dead and displayed body creates the republic; Brutus, her avenger, and her husband, Collatinus, are elected as the first two consuls, while her father becomes *interrex* to validate their imperium. In the first century BCE and early first century CE her story was repeated to inculcate the necessity of female chastity as an antidote to civil war and the basis of a secure and peaceful public good (*res publica*). Similarly, Susanna has been identified as the “covenant community,” vulnerable and trusting.²³ By rescuing her, Daniel wins the authority lost by the duplicitous and lustful elders for himself and for the other pious youths of the wisdom tales. But Susanna herself is not the object of exchange, and there is no new role for her father or husband.

Personification does not adequately account for the exemplary function of either woman. Lucretia’s choice is explicitly presented as an example; indeed she so presents herself, and the example she presents is specifically for women as wives: Dionysius calls her not *Ῥωμαία* but *γυνή Ῥωμαία* (*Ant. rom.* 4.64.4). Though less explicitly, Susanna also is exemplary. While her straits are specifically female and Christian texts would later make her a martyr for chastity,²⁴ her choice and her virtue can be practiced by any daughter or son of Judah: she chooses “not to sin before God” and her virtue is her trust in God. In contrast to Lucretia, she does not represent women as the internal Other whose sexuality must be controlled by chastity. Rather she models the Judean self needed for the time of trial, a self characterized by simplicity, single-heartedness and courage, vulnerable but risking all for trust in the deity—that is, the self also displayed by the youths of the wisdom tales and appropriate for the terrors and hopes of the visions. Like the rest of the Daniel narrative, Susanna’s message can be applied in any situation in which new or potential leadership must be defended. Does the need for simplicity and trust in God, the exchange of old judges for young, arise from resistance to the Hasmoneans?²⁵ Is the exemplary status of the chaste and pious matron and mother of children a defense of the reign of Salome

22. See Klindienst, “Ritual Work,” 51–70; Joshel, “Body Female,” 112–30.

23. Adele Reinhartz, “Better Homes and Gardens: Women and Domestic Space in the Books of Judith and Susanna,” in *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Peter Richardson* (ed. Stephen G. Wilson and Michel Desjardins; Studies in Christianity and Judaism 9; Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), 325–39. Ulrike Mittmann-Richert sees her as all Israel (“Why Has Daniel’s Prophecy Not Been Fulfilled? The Question of Political Peace and Independence in the Additions to Daniel,” in *Reading the Present in the Qumran Library: The Perception of the Contemporary by Means of Scriptural Interpretations* (ed. Armin Lange and Kristin De Troyer; SBLSymS 30; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 121.

24. Betsy Halpern-Amaru, “The Journey of Susanna among the Church Fathers,” in Spolsky, *Judgment of Susanna*, 21–41.

25. Engel, *Susanna-Erzählung*, 181–83; Tilly, “Rezeption,” 40–43.

Alexandra, who unseated the Sadducees from influence and installed the Pharisees as her counselors?²⁶

"All the Synagogue . . . Blessed the God Who Saves Those Who Hope in Him" (θ' 60)

Many differences between Susanna OG and θ' serve significant literary functions; for instance, the opening six verses offer the reader appropriate introductions of the main characters. The bath both increases Susanna's vulnerability and enhances the visual (and perhaps voyeuristic) aspects of the narrative. But the substantive differences do not change but supplement the bent of the OG version. Three aspects of θ' increase the resonances between Susanna's story and Lucretia's and enhance Susanna's exemplary function. These features are among those that have led to the description of θ' as a wisdom tale focused on instruction in virtue and uninterested in the political import of the OG.²⁷

First, in contrast to OG, θ' puts repetitive emphasis on the desire (ἐπιθυμία) of the elder-judges; they desire her on sight (8; cf. OG), dissimulate their desire from each other (11), then confess it (14), and proclaim it to Susanna (20). Finally, Daniel diagnoses the source of their evil: "beauty deceived you and desire has led your heart astray" (56). The same passion motivated Tarquinius in Livy; he is seized by *libidino* (1.57.10), which becomes *victrix* over Lucretia's "stubborn chastity" (1.58.5), and the topic of Brutus's stirring speech (1.59.8). Diodorus (10.20.2) and Dionysius likewise assign his deed to ἐπιθυμία (*Ant. rom.* 4.66.1). In addition, in threatening Susanna, the elder-judges warn her that they (judges that they are) will testify falsely against her; they articulate the alternatives to her as Tarquinius does to Lucretia.

Second, θ' interprets her deed as a moral choice. This account depicts the elders as presenting the alternatives to Susanna (19–20); they threaten to bear testimony against her in a speech much like Tarquinius's threats of both death and dishonor (Livy, *AUC* 1.58.3–4). In response, Susanna explicitly identifies her resistance as choice (αἰρετόν μοί ἐστιν—"I choose" 23). The language of choice is also used to underline the actions (and abstentions) of Lucretia; according to Diodorus Siculus, Tarquinius told Lucretia what she ought prefer (αἰρετωτέρον) and the writer declares his own obligation to celebrate the nobility of her actual choice (τὸ γενναῖον τῆς προαιρέσεως). Dionysius also describes her straits as a choice; that the terms

26. Tal Ilan, *Integrating Women into Second Temple History* (TSAJ 76; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 127–53.

27. Engel, *Susanna-Erzählung*, 181–83; Tilly, "Rezeption" 43.

are placed in the mouth of Tarquinius emphasized the coercion involved (*Ant. rom.* 4.65.2–4). The terms that are used here are frequent in moral discourse, especially in the first centuries BCE and CE.

Third, in comparison with OG, θ' involves a great deal of shouting, some of it from Susanna. The crucial instance is the moment when Susanna refuses the rapists. She cries out ($\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\beta\acute{o}\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \phi\omega\nu\tilde{\eta}\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta$), and they match her cry ($\acute{\epsilon}\beta\acute{o}\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$, 24), perhaps in an attempt to cover it. Commentators read her cry in the light of Deut 22:23–24, which judges an engaged virgin assaulted in the city guilty if she does not cry out.²⁸ Apparently Susanna extends this stipulation to her own rather different circumstances. Lucretia attests to a wider view that shouting is a means to avert rape; Tarquinius specifically demands her silence and forbids an outcry (Diodorus 10.20.2–3; Livy 1.58.2. “*si emisericis vocem*”; Dionysius, *Ant. rom.* 4.65.1 $\beta\omicron\tilde{\alpha}\nu$). And shouting does avert Susanna’s rape, though at great cost. Nor is she silent under condemnation; when the death sentence is passed, she cries out again ($\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\beta\acute{o}\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \phi\omega\nu\tilde{\eta}\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta$), voicing her prayer before the assembled people; the immediate divine response inspires Daniel to “cry out with a loud voice ($\acute{\epsilon}\beta\acute{o}\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \phi\omega\nu\tilde{\eta}\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta$). When Daniel convicts the elder-judges, the whole assembly cries out with a loud voice ($\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\beta\acute{o}\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\ \eta\ \sigma\upsilon\nu\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\eta\ \phi\omega\nu\tilde{\eta}\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\tilde{\eta}$, 60). All this uproar signals the public and communal character of Susanna’s deed and vindication, as well as displaying her knowledge of the law.

Together these three features of θ' collaborate with an aspect of its introduction of Susanna: the description of her parents as f' ust people ($\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$) who taught their daughter according to the law of Moses.” Susanna vindicates her education; their daughter is a true daughter of Israel and daughter of Judah (57). While the elders “turned their eyes so as not to see heaven, nor to remember just judgments” (9), she chose “not to sin before the Lord” (24), and when the elders laid their hands on her, “she looked up to heaven, because her heart was trusting in the Lord” (35). The congregation errs, believing the accusers because they were elders of the people and judges (41). As in OG, Daniel’s inspiration teaches them how to fulfill the demand of Exod 23:7 by properly conducting the examination of witnesses.

Thus, the renegotiation of gender protocols in Susanna OG also characterizes the version of θ' . But I suggest that here it is joined by a concern that emerges more clearly in the first century CE. Both Philo and Josephus attest to an ambitious boast that Jewish life is organized around learning and specifically, learning the laws; all Jews are educated in their own laws and are able not only to act in accord with them but also to answer questions about them. The motive is clearly apologetic. Philo invokes it

28. See, e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 431.

to defend the Sabbath rest and synagogue service, and he is careful to sustain a patriarchal hierarchy in making this claim (*Hyp.* 7.11–14). Josephus makes it in a more general defense of Jewish moral philosophy and is more insistent on the inclusion of women and slaves (*C. Ap.* 2.175–181, 204).²⁹ This claim derives its apologetic power from increasing interest in women's capacity for virtue and education as productive of virtue.³⁰

Conclusion

Comparing Susanna and Aseneth leads the reader into the multiple difficulties of dealing with ancient Jewish fictions whose date, form, and very text seem to disappear under examination. Juxtaposing Susanna and Lucretia reveals the two stories as surprisingly similar in their representation of the common dilemma faced by the two women; Susanna *θ'* in particular is rich in shared detail, and reading them together sharpens perceptions of the functions of gender in each. Lucretia underlines the political character of the Susanna story, while Susanna highlights the investment of the first-century Roman writers in marital morality, in particular the stringent control of women's sexuality. Required to choose when they have no choice, the two women become emblematic by their very different fates. Susanna embodies the hope for divine deliverance that is the motif of Daniel; Lucretia enacts the familial piety that the creation or *l' estoration* of the *res publica* requires. The unwary might be tempted to proclaim a feminist advantage for Susanna, who at least survives. But the memory of her choice casts a shadow of unease over her victory, and terror underlies the hope she represents.

29. He also emphasizes the presence of women and children at the lawgiving (*Ant.* 3.78, 89).

θ . Musonius Rufus, *Discourses* 3 and 4; Seneca, *Ad Helviam* 17.3–5

What Is Her Word Worth?

Oath Taking and Women in the Mediterranean World

NATHANIEL P. DESROSIERS

Stonehill College

Classicists have long emphasized the agonistic nature of Greek culture, which spawned a prevalent spirit of aristocratic competition for honor.¹ While this cultural norm may be true for men, Ross Kraemer has argued persuasively that ancient women largely were prevented from competing in society. Specifically she demonstrates that all traditional areas of competition, including athletics and war, were dominated by men. Even women's public speech was controlled because verbal contestation was reserved for men alone.² One type of speech that was seen as particularly powerful and potentially dangerous was oath taking, since it was so closely connected to competitive masculine constructions of society. While our sources provide limited evidence for the actual practice of oath taking among women, what the extant texts do reveal is the ways that swearing was intimately linked to ancient constructions of gender. In this paper I will examine classical Greek texts that discuss the swearing of oaths and I will demonstrate how Greek men intentionally controlled and limited women's use of oaths because such oaths were construed as a threat to masculinity and order.

1. Arthur Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 6; cf. 30–85; Anthony Long, "Morals and Values in Homer," *JHS* 90 (1970): 121–39.

2. Ross Kraemer, "Gendering the Competition," in *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE: Jews, Christians, and the Greco-Roman World* (ed. Jordan Rosenblum, Lily Vuong, and Nathaniel DesRosiers; *JAJSup* 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 204–5.

Constructing Gendered Religious Oath Practices

In the ancient Mediterranean, open participation in civic affairs, public discourse, or avenues of communal piety (offering sacrifice, participation in sacred games, etc.) was usually cut off from women. Furthermore, women's religious practices were typically viewed as inferior, distorted, and even dangerous in the eyes of the men who wrote about them. Using the introduction of the Bacchanalia in Rome as an instructive example, Ross Kraemer has illustrated why such a picture of women's religions was constructed. In male dominated Mediterranean society, "proper religion affirms the authority of the state and a gendered moral order." Alternatively, the introduction of "false religion" (i.e., religion not sanctioned by the male leadership) results in gender inversion that undermines male authority and weakens the state.³

While our ancient sources may tell us little about actual women's practices, these accounts are important because they demonstrate how ancient authors used gender to advance their own positive (masculine) viewpoints while defaming those of others who are presented as feminine and flawed. Whether legal, historical, or mythical, all literary works reflect a male gendered religious framework. Therefore, most literary evidence of women's religious practice serves as a polemical, cautionary tale" whether these opponents are biologically gendered as feminine or not. Accordingly, ancient authors often depicted the competition as "feminine and feminized." At the same time, all practices and beliefs attached to these opponents were threats to masculinity, order, and hierarchy.⁴

Ancient sources describing women's oaths function in very much the same way. Since oaths were so intricately linked to the masculine domain of public life and religion, women were rarely allowed to participate. Furthermore, most representations of women swearing were produced by men, and in many cases, women's oaths are described as a dangerous perversion of the ritual that threatens order. Given the power of oaths and their implicit masculinity, it is little wonder that few references to women's oaths survive in inscriptions, papyri, or other literature.

Strategic Practices and Gender

Ancient religious practitioners were particularly skilled at adapting their rituals whenever circumstances dictated the need for modifications. As

3. Ross Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 32.

4. *Ibid.*, 33.

Stanley Stowers has suggested, rank-and-file religious practitioners in the Greek world had a practical know-how when it came to interacting with their divinities. If one could perform timely and appropriate rituals to appease a god, a beneficial exchange could develop. Therefore, ancients adapted rituals to maximize the chances of success in any given situation.⁵ Stowers's insightful observation also can help to explain the mutability of the oath, enlightening how and why different individuals or groups chose to swear certain kinds of formulae. Nationality, rank, setting, or circumstance could create limitless possibilities for oath language and extra-verbal gestures. Gender also influenced this religious "practical know-how" in classical Athens, creating a clear disparity between the proper effectual oaths of men and the less potent oaths of women.

Greek men often performed sacrifices alongside major oaths as a way of marking the seriousness of the occasion. These rituals also were designed to encourage the gods to act, ensuring the success of the oath in return. Men also preferred to swear in the name of male divinities like Apollo, Herakles, and Zeus, the oath god who protected the pious and destroyed the perjurer.⁶ Furthermore, these deities were uniquely connected to the protection and propagation of potency, strength, and courage, along with other decidedly masculine characteristics. In addition, these beings were particularly effective for guaranteeing oaths because of their close bond to the state as guardians of the *polis* and its institutions. For example, the ephebic oath that marked the citizenship of eighteen-year-old males in Athens was sworn to a collection of male and female protectors including Zeus, Herakles, Ares, Athena, Enyo, and Aglauros. What all of the divinities have in common is their connections to definitively masculine arenas including war, the rule of law, and sacrifice for the city (Aglauros).⁷ The ephebic oath demonstrates that, from the very beginning of a male's civic life, powerful relationships with the gods and other citizens were built through oaths. Most of all, a reciprocal association was begun with gods who were proven wardens of both the city and the male-gendered institutions that uphold it.

Women's oaths in Athens represent a very different side of religious "practical know-how." As a general rule, oaths sworn by women were formulaically different from those of men. Women apparently could not perform the extra-verbal rituals such as the sacrifice that often attended oaths.

5. Stanley Stowers, "The Religion of Plant and Animal Offerings versus the Religion of Meanings, Essences, and Textual Mysteries," in *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice* (ed. Jennifer Wright Knust and Zsuzsanna Várhelyi; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 36.

6. Paul Cartledge, *After Thermopylae: The Oath of Plataea and the End of the Graeco-Persian Wars* (Emblems of Antiquity; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5–8.

7. For the ephebic oath, see Lycurgus 1.76–77. Interestingly, each of these divinities including the goddesses had male priests, not female priestesses, who supervised the cults.

Without the ritual killing of an animal, touching the entrails, and walking in gore, women's oaths were far less dramatic visually and weaker in binding power.⁸ Instead, women's oaths functioned more like prayers, which traditionally were encoded as feminine rituals associated with women's religious practices.⁹ Unlike men, women usually swore to goddesses such as Hera, Aphrodite, Artemis, or Demeter.¹⁰ These deities were generally not associated with the civic oaths, making them oath guarantors of secondary value and importance to men.¹¹ However, to women who did not have the same access to the civic oath gods, the opposite was true. These goddesses were connected to distinctly feminine concerns: the protection of girls and married women, fertility, marriage, and the household. Women had a better record of successful exchange with these goddesses, and therefore they were appropriate guarantors of their oaths.

From the male perspective, the success of the classical Athenian state was attributed to the unprecedented piety of the citizenry, and Athenians reaped the rewards of responsive gods.¹² While the temples, festivals, and sumptuous sacrifices garner the most scholarly attention, ancient sources point to the swearing and maintenance of oaths as a critical part of this reciprocal relationship.¹³ Successful oath practices began with consistent access to cults and sanctuaries as well as knowledge of the moods and dispositions of the gods. Men knew which gods to invoke, the words and rituals that worked, and the proper times to enact such rites. This meant that men could initiate and maintain a beneficial relationship with the divine that ensured the safety of the state. Since social and legal practice limited Greek women's public religious roles, these women had to find other alternatives drawn from their own practical religious experiences.

8. Judith Fletcher, *Performing Oaths in Classical Greek Drama* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 46–47. In *Lysistrata* 190–204 Aristophanes plays on women's inability to make an oath sacrifice by having them "ritually kill" a jug of wine.

9. Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses*, 248–9.

10. The plays of Aristophanes provide a comic portrait of the difference between men's and women's oaths. In *Thesmophoriazousae*, while Mnesilochus is dressed as a woman he consciously changes his speech to include women's oaths by Aphrodite, Demeter, and Artemis, but out of habit he reverts to swearing by Apollo (*Thesm.* 225, 254, 517, 519). Similarly, in *Ekklesiazousai* the women try to imitate male speech, but they are unable to curb their practice of swearing by goddesses (*Eccl.* 149–160).

11. In fact, when men took oaths by Aphrodite they were usually lover's vows, which were understood to be nonbinding, and perjurers did not fear retribution. Plato, *Symp.* 183B; cf. Aristophanes, *Lys.* 914–915.

12. Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 273–74; Kenneth J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1974), 246–47.

13. Isocrates 1.13; Demosthenes 45.58–61; 57.59; Isaeus 9.18;

Gender and the Oath: Social Commentary in Greek Plays

The most plentiful references to women's oaths in classical literature are found in the works of the playwrights of ancient Greece. These authors typically present women's oaths as a subversion of societal norms, using such events as a literary device driving the action of the play.¹⁴ Specifically, playwrights often used women's oaths to convey cautionary tales about deceptive uses of oaths that threaten the male domain.¹⁵ For example, in Aeschylus's *Oresteia* the most dramatic oath sworn is between Clytemnestra and Aegisthus who pledged to kill Agamemnon and then die together (*Cho.* 977–980). Paralleling this is the oath of her son Orestes who vowed to kill his mother and Aegisthus in revenge (*Ag.* 1285). While both oaths were fulfilled, Clytemnestra's oath is particularly inappropriate because it was motivated by jealousy over Cassandra and a grab for political power. Alternatively, Orestes' oath of matricide is not only successful but is actually sanctioned by the god Apollo. This is because it was the son's duty to avenge his father and guarantee that proper male-directed political order continued.¹⁶

Euripides frequently showed how dominant gender-based social structures could be overturned through oaths, allowing women to gain power and influence over men.¹⁷ In *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the heroine trapped Pylades into an oath barring his return and safe passage to Greece unless he swore to deliver a letter for him (736–737). While Pylades is not ultimately doomed by this oath, the fact that he will not be able to fulfill what he vowed creates tension and the sense of impending disaster throughout the play. In *Hippolytus* the title character who is the son of Theseus refused to honor Aphrodite, and she punished him by having his stepmother fall in love with him. The Nurse, who is a woman of low status, binds Hippolytus and the chorus to an oath of silence when she informs him of this development, sending him into a rage (575–600). Although he does not directly break his oath during the tirade, his overt reference to perjury “in y tongue swore, not my mind” unleashes a curse from the goddess

14. Fletcher, *Performing Oaths*, 177–202.

15. Ann Bergren, “Language and the Female in Early Greek Thought,” *Arethusa* 16 (1983): 69–95. See Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 270; *Lys.* 18–238; Euripides, *Med.* 316, 744–755. For other examples, see Homer, *Il.* 19.107–13; Demosthenes 39.3–4; Lysias 1.93.20.

16. For full discussion, see Fletcher, *Performing Oaths*, 39–45.

17. For discussion, see Arlene Allan, “Masters of Manipulation: Euripides' (and Medea's) Use of Oaths in *Medea*,” in *Horkos: The Oath in Greek Society* (ed. Alan Sommerstein and Judith Fletcher; Exeter: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2007), 113–124.

Aphrodite.¹⁸ In the end, his inability to defend himself leads to his loss of the throne of Troezen and his life.

Of all Greek plays, the *Medea* represents the most dramatic example of the subversion of oaths by a woman. On the surface, the *Medea* upholds conventional views of the oath and perjury,¹⁹ with Medea lamenting Jason's unfulfilled oath to her (20–23, 160–163, 492–495). Reading more deeply, one has to question Medea's honesty and motives, since she traps both Jason and Aegeus into coerced oaths.²⁰ According to Euripides, both Medea and Jason break or at least distort their marriage oath, demonstrating a "perversion" of important speech-acts including oath taking.²¹ Something that would have been shockingly unusual to Euripides' audience was Medea's insistence on an equal partnership between herself and her husband. At the outset of the play Jason and Medea pledge themselves to one another in the manner of the elite by offering mutual friendship oaths and clasping their right hands (20–23). Not only did this extraverbal act represent an undermining of traditional male aristocratic friendship; it ultimately led Medea herself to inflict the curse on Jason the perjurer. Acting inappropriately in the place of the gods as avenger, she slaughters her own children to punish Jason.

While one can debate how accurately real-life beliefs and practices are related through such sources, these works certainly do reflect the popular culture, mythology, and political climate of contemporary Greek life.²² In Athens, men's lives were bounded by a variety of public oaths,²³ and these were designed to guide their conduct and preserve the hierarchy of the *polis*. Alternatively, women were not full citizens and they did not participate in the political life of the city and the oaths that upheld it. Because of this, many ancient authors flatly stated that a woman's oath could not be binding under any circumstances.²⁴ The real threat was that a cleverly worded, deceptive oath—a skill that was generally esteemed among men in ancient Greece—could be used by a woman to bind a man and limit his authority. While the obvious warning was that men needed to be wary of

18. Euripides, *Hipp.* 612. Cf. Fletcher, "Women and Oaths in Euripides," in *Horkos* (ed. Alan Sommerstein and Judith Fletcher; Exeter: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2007), 36–41.

19. Euripides, *Med.* 21, 161, 168–70, 439–40, 492–95. See Allan, "Masters of Manipulation," 113–14; Fletcher, "Women and Oaths in Euripides," 32–36.

20. Fletcher, "Women and oaths in Euripides," 32–33. A coerced oath also appears in Euripides, *Or.* 1516–17.

21. Deborah Boedeker, "Euripides' Medea and the Vanity of *Λόγοι*," *CPh* 86 (1991): 97–98.

22. See Jon D. Mikalson, *Honor Thy Gods: Popular Religion in Greek Tragedy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 3–16.

23. For a full account of such oaths, see Peter John Rhodes, "Oaths in Political Life," in Sommerstein and Fletcher, *Horkos*, 1–25.

24. Perhaps the most famous statement is the Sophoclean fragment "I write a woman's oath in water" (Fr. 811). Cf. Catullus 70.

women's oaths, we can also detect an instructive subtext as well. Women may be deceptive or untruthful, but *real* men keep their oaths to the state, to each other, and to the gods. The very foundation of society depended on it.²⁵ Greek plays offered a glimpse into a chaotic society where men were not capable of fulfilling their basic requirements as sons, heirs, and pious members of the citizenry because women's speech and especially their oaths were not controlled.

Oaths Sworn by Real Women: Enacting the Limits

While Greek plays can provide insights into the mind-sets surrounding gender and the oath, it is also useful to search for real examples of women's oaths in Athenian life. The courtroom speeches of Athenian orators are often overlooked, but they are a tantalizing source for oaths among women in a civil setting. As Lin Foxhall has noted, "Athenian lawcourts undoubtedly belonged to the world of men," since women were not allowed to be physically present as witnesses or litigants in trials.²⁶ However, many women actually are mentioned in courtroom speeches, and on a handful of occasions they even participate in oath taking.

While women could provide supporting testimony in homicide trials, any proof had to be obtained through an oath taken before the trial and submitted as evidence. This form of evidence also was used rarely since the opposition could refuse to allow it.²⁷ In short, a woman had very little say in Athenian trials even if she was the defendant in a homicide trial. For example, in Antiphon's "Against the Stepmother," a young man accuses his stepmother of orchestrating the death of his father by poisoning. In this case one of her sons, a half-brother of the accuser, defends his mother. Interestingly, the woman accused of murder was not even allowed to be present in the court, and the entire plaintiff speech is directed against the half-brother, who stands in for the accused. Furthermore, all critical litigant oaths were sworn not by her but by her son as a secondary party, which would only weaken her case.

In civil disputes, litigants were required to take an oath before a trial

25. In addition, this "gendering of the competition" also extended to male opponents who, like women, abandoned oaths and otherwise did not deserve full citizenship because of their actions. The speeches of Attic logographers are particularly adept at doing this. See Demosthenes 57; Isaeus 2, 7, 8; Lycurgus 1; Andocides 4.

26. Lin Foxhall, "Law and the Lady: Women and Legal Proceedings in Classical Athens," in *Greek Law in Its Political Setting: Justifications Not Justice* (ed. Lin Foxhall and A. D. E. Lewis; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 133–52.

27. See Demosthenes 39.26. For discussion, see S. C. Todd, *The Shape of Athenian Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 96.

began in order to affirm claims.²⁸ Demosthenes confirms that a woman could take litigant oaths on her own behalf, although it is not entirely clear whether she needed a male guardian.²⁹ Somewhat unexpectedly, women were permitted to offer oaths and counter-oaths in the context of an oath challenge just as men could. If necessary, court cases could be settled via this test, where one party challenged another to swear an oath confirming testimony. In most cases litigants merely offered to take the challenge, but opponents on the other side rarely agreed to allow it since it could provoke juror sympathy for the swearer.³⁰ Isaeus relates the story of a woman who was prepared to swear an oath before private arbitrators as a way of providing evidence proving the legitimacy of her son.³¹ Demosthenes' first speech against Boeotus also indicates that, like men, women had the right to refuse an oath challenge in a case.³²

On the surface, a woman's right to participate in the oath challenge seems rather remarkable. Since the Homeric period, oaths and counter-oaths were a clear form of public contestation and a means of acquiring honor and possessions from others.³³ Such apparent concessions to women, however, may not be so positive. Oath challenges always privileged the wealthy, educated, and more honorable party in the Greek world. When a man took an oath challenge against a woman, it is difficult to envision that an all-male jury would find the woman more trustworthy. Because of this, a woman's ability to refuse an oath challenge was probably more of a necessity than a right. In fact, I would suggest that the "right" to take or refuse an oath challenge was less of a concession to a woman and more of a compulsory formality in trials that was held over from pre-democratic times. Finally, any visions of public competition between men and women in the courtroom must be tempered by the fact that women were not allowed to be physically present in the courtroom, even at their own trials. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that a woman's oath challenge would hold much weight if it were sworn privately before a court official and not publicly before the whole jury in a trial.

Outside of the courtroom another frequent locus for the swearing of

28. Joseph Plescia, *Oath and Perjury in Ancient Greece* (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 1970), 43, 46–47. This was common in Roman law as well. See Alan Watson, *Roman Law and Comparative Law* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 12.

29. See Demosthenes 29.26; 39.3, 26; 40.10–11; 55.27. The Law Code of Gortyn III.5–9 also preserves a law stating that women were obligated to swear an oath if property was disputed in a divorce case. On guardianship see Foxhall, "Law and the Lady," 149–52.

30. See Demosthenes 49.65; cf. 49.57; 54.40–41. According to Aristotle, the oath challenge could abruptly end a case and was used only as a last resort when no other evidence was available. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.15. See Plato, *Leg.* 948; Demosthenes 52.30; 54.40.

31. Isaeus 12.9; cf. 3 hypothesis.

32. Demosthenes 39.3.

33. David C. Mirhady, "The Oath-Challenge in Athens," *CIQ* 41 (1991): 78–83.

oaths was commerce. One could easily imagine that in conducting private business transactions, women would be prompted to affirm the quality or value of goods for sale just as their male counterparts did.³⁴ It is very likely that women publicly swore oaths in shops or markets, or in front of magistrates when verifying records relating to inheritance and property.³⁵ Athenian law stipulated, however, that a woman could conduct business independently only provided that the value of transactions did not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ *medimnus* of barley."³⁶ While the evidence is unclear about larger transactions, we can presume that anything above the limit became the domain of the woman's male guardian. In addition, one should not be surprised that women's businesses were so tightly controlled. The economic dependency of women on men ensured that gender order remained steady. Furthermore, most business was conducted in the agora, which was certainly a male-controlled public area of the city. Bartering and haggling represented a conspicuous form of competition that was not appropriate for any respectable woman.

Conclusion

In Athens, oaths became a dominant ritual that was employed in all areas of public life. The oaths one swore helped to define the social identity and status of the individual and one's relationship with particular deities. Most important oaths both created and perpetuated power for the swearer and bestowed honor on the swearer who kept his or her oath. Although there are very few instances of women taking oaths in Athens, those that do exist are informative, even if they do tell us more about men than women. Whether the examples are derived from actual practices or works of fiction, all sources indicate that women were at a decided disadvantage when it came to the realm of oath taking. In sum, women were not allowed to take many oaths because this ritual put power in their hands, allowing them the (limited) opportunity for some control. In other words, opening oath taking to women would have allowed them the opportunity to compete like men. Since women, however, had little experience with the serious oaths connected to the state and the military, few economic

34. Plato claims that merchants in the agora verified the value of their wares by swearing an oath (*Leg.* 917; see also Herodotus 1.153).

35. One excellent example survives from the second century CE Babatha Papyri. Here a Jewish woman accompanied by a male guardian registers her property before the Roman magistrate (P. Yadin 16). See Ross Kraemer, *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 143–48.

36. Isaeus 10.10; cf. Dio Chrysostom 74.9. See David M. Schaps, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece* (Edinburgh: Ediburgh University Press, 1979), 49–52.

resources, and little freedom to act independently of their husbands, the perception, if not the reality, was that they had limited ability to swear and uphold oaths at all.³⁷ Because of this, our male-produced sources state that even under oath a woman's word alone was not considered trustworthy enough. These factors meant that oaths further reified gender disparity in ancient Athens by allowing the established male social hierarchy to support their own position while also emphasizing that swearing was not the domain of women.

37. For expansion of this idea, see Susan Guettel Cole, "Oath Ritual and Male Community at Athens," in *Demokratia: A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern* (ed. Josiah Ober and Charles Hedrick; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 227–48.

Optatus's Account of Lucilla in *Against the Donatists*, or, Women Are Good to Undermine With

JENNIFER EYL

Tufts University

In his *Against the Donatists*,¹ Optatus describes the early-fourth-century origins of the schism² as deriving from Lucilla, an angry, vengeful Spanish woman living in Carthage. He tells us little about her, save that on one occasion she ritually kissed the bone of a martyr just before receiving the Eucharist. Her local deacon Caecilian reprimanded her for privileging the significance of the martyr bone over that of the Eucharist, and Lucilla did not take his reprimand lightly. Instead, she cultivated a healthy ten-year grudge and directed her financial and personal resources toward ensuring that Caecilian would never rise in rank. Thus, according to Optatus, she supported her “domestic” Majorinus, a competitor of Caecilian in the election for bishop in 311. Majorinus lost the election to Caecilian; Lucilla refused to acknowledge Caecilian as *her* bishop; Majorinus developed a following at her behest (via bribery); and the Donatist schism was off and running.³

1. Optatus, *Against the Donatists* (trans. Mark Edwards; Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997). All translations from the Edwards edition unless otherwise noted.

2. Optatus is quick to distinguish between schism and heresy: “A schism . . . is engendered when the bond of peace is shattered through discordant sentiments, nourished by bitterness, strengthened by rivalry and feuds.” Heretics, as he defines them, are “exiles from the truth who have deserted the sound and truest creed, fallen from the bosom of the church through their impious sentiments” (1.11–12). Vociferously defending his own position as doctrinally orthodox and *not* schismatic, he constructs both schism and heresy as equally threatening and alienating to God.

3. For a useful, albeit brief, assessment of the state of scholarship on Donatism and suggested future directions, see Maureen Tilley, “Redefining Donatism: Moving Forward,” *AugStud* 42 (2011): 21–32.

This essay explores the problem of how to read Optatus's account regarding Donatist origins. I argue that scholars should treat the story with great reservations, but, more importantly, I explore how difficult it is for scholars to piece together historical data involving women, given the polemical nature of so much of our evidence. Nodding to Claude Lévi-Strauss's oft-cited quip that "women are good to think with"⁴—an observation I first encountered under the tutelage of Ross Kraemer—I suggest that our largest impediment in reading this account in Optatus is that *women are also good to undermine with*.

The Claims

Optatus is vehemently opposed to the Donatists. His seven-book⁵ tractate explores the conflict in detail, but he mentions Lucilla only in book 1.⁶ He writes:

No one is unaware that this took place at Carthage after the ordination of Caecilian, and indeed through some factious woman or other called Lucilla (*per Lucillam scilicet, nescio quam feminam factiosam*), who, while the church was still tranquil and the peace had not yet been shattered by the whirlwinds of persecution, was unable to bear rebuke of the archdeacon Caecilian. She was said to kiss the bone of some martyr or other—if, that is, he was a martyr—before the spiritual food and drink, and, since she preferred to the saving cup the bone of some dead man, who if he was a martyr had not yet been confirmed as one, she was rebuked, and went away in angry humiliation. As she raged and grieved (*irascenti et dolenti*), a storm of persecution suddenly arose to prevent her submitting to discipline. (1.16, Edwards)

4. Lévi-Strauss's comment initially pertains to animals and totemism: "Natural species are not chosen because they are 'good to eat' (*bonnes à manger*), but because they are 'good to think' (*bonnes à penser*)."⁴ Other scholars have applied his observation to the use women as symbols and objects constructed and traded among men, although tracing the history of how scholars apply the observation is difficult. In the study of ancient Christianity, it appears to be Peter Brown who retools the Lévi-Strauss statement. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism* (trans. R. Needham; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), 162. See also Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (Lectures on the History of Religions n.s. 13; New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 153.

5. It is unclear if *Against the Donatists* was originally six books or seven. The seventh book may have been added by another author at a later date. Jerome mentions only six books, and some scholars have suspected that the history may have gone through more than one edition. Mark Edwards, however, argues that the seven books are original to Optatus. See Edwards trans., xvi–xviii.

6. She also appears in the appendix to Optatus, in which he describes her as bribing deacons, presbyters, and "seniors" to conspire toward making Majorinus a bishop.

Calling her a *potens et factiosa femina* (1.18), he continues, "The schism of that time, then, was brought forth by the anger of a humiliated woman (*confusae mulieris iracundia*), nourished by ambition (*ambitus nutriuit*), and strengthened by avarice (*auaritia roborauit*)" (1.19, Edwards).

Optatus is our only source for Lucilla, and he is often repeated by Augustine, who refers to Lucilla in suspicious, derogatory terms such as *praepotens* (very powerful), *pecuniosissima* (most wealthy), *et factiosissima femina* (utterly factious) (*Contr. Cresc.* 3.28.21).⁷ Elsewhere, Augustine asserts that the whole affair was "urged on by a woman's spite" (*odiis mulieribus*; *Ep.* 43.17, trans. Cunningham).⁸ In some sense, Augustine's construction of Lucilla as the font of all destruction is even more dramatic than the account Optatus gives: "Or is it so, that because Caecilianus gave offense to Lucilla in Africa, the light of Christ is lost to the whole world" (*Ep.* 43.25, *NPNF*)? Augustine goes so far as to liken Lucilla-backed Donatists versus Catholics as a struggle between (feminine) flesh and (masculine) spirit: "if you would subdue the lust of the flesh (*carnalem affectum*) in order to win the spiritual kingdom (*spiritali regno*)" (*Ep.* 43.17, *NPNF*). Beginning with Optatus and inflated even more so in Augustine, Lucilla is presented as the source of Donatism, yet she is never linked to the question about *traditores*—a problem that undergirds the actual schism.

Scholarly Readings of Optatus

Along with early Catholic theologians, many contemporary scholars have taken Optatus's account at face value and have delighted in imagining his duplicitous female villain. W. H. C. Frend writes, "He [Caecilian] had made too many enemies. One of these, Lucilla, a rich Spaniard resident in Carthage, has never forgotten having been rebuked by him before the Persecution for kissing some alleged martyr's bone before receiving the Communion. She decided her chance of revenge had come."⁹ Peter Brown claims, "A Spanish noblewoman resident in Carthage, Lucilla, was in a position to 'fix' the election of her own dependent to the great see of Carthage, in 311–312, by judicious almsgiving."¹⁰ Rose Lockwood likewise

7. Augustine acknowledges his use of Optatus in *Contr. Ep. Parm.* 1.3.5. For a brief discussion of Augustine's numerous anti-Donatist writings, see Maureen Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 137–41.

8. Augustine, *The Letters of St. Augustine*, in vol. 1 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1 (ed. Philip Schaff; 14 vols.; 1886–89; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

9. W. H. C. Frend, *Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 18. Frend mentions Lucilla on five additional occasions (pp. 21, 98, 161, 164, 214), and in each instance he seems to take Optatus at his word.

10. Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Haskell Lectures on History of Religions n.s. 2; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 34.

takes Optatus's account as historically accurate, sometime around the turn of the fourth century the matron Lucilla kissed the bone of a martyr before taking communion from Caecilian, the archdeacon at the church in Carthage."¹¹ Mark Edwards's translation-commentary also does not question the account.¹² Generally speaking, the scholarly treatment is simply to repeat Optatus and then move on to other issues pertaining to Donatism. Little attention has been paid to Optatus's strategic use of a female figure to discredit his opponents.

Some scholars not only recount Optatus's story but use the story as evidence for further scholarly conclusions. Brown uses the account to suggest that "[t]he overmighty patron had come to stay."¹³ Lockwood's study is dependent on Optatus's relative accuracy, but she acknowledges that his account is partisan. Still, she uses this as a basis for exploring Christian women's practices in North Africa, especially in relation to relic veneration. She writes, "What comes to the fore is a picture of a church which promoted forms of worship and practice that Christian North African Women had long cherished. . . . Women such as Lucilla even engaged directly in battles over church hierarchy and discipline. In short, we see a movement vigorously engaged with women and their spiritual concerns."¹⁴ Lockwood argues that Lucilla's practice of kissing the martyr bone is among the earliest evidence we have for the veneration of relics, and perhaps more significantly, dismembered relics. This is tied to the practices and concerns of women overall, she argues. She deftly outlines the evidence for the accounts of female martyrs in North Africa and the polemics against Donatism insofar as quite a large number of female confessors and martyrs came from Donatist ranks.¹⁵

Not many scholars have doubted the story of Lucilla. Robert Wiśniewski's brief remarks challenge the account, due to what he claims to be an anachronism.¹⁶ He argues that Optatus, writing between 364 and 367, describes the veneration practices of his own day rather than

11. Rose Lockwood, "Potens et Factiosa Femina: Women, Martyrs, and Schism in Roman North Africa," *AugStud* 20 (1989): 165. Other scholars who fall into this camp include Victor Saxer, *Morts, martyrs, reliques: En Afrique chrétienne aux premiers siècles. Au témoignages de Tertullian, Cyprien, et Augustin à la lumière de l'archéologie africaine* (Théologie historique 55; Paris: Beauchesne, 1980); Gillian Cloke, "Women, Worship and Mission: The Church in the Household," in *The Early Christian World* (ed. Philip F. Esler; New York: Routledge, 2004), 433; Edwards trans., xviii.

12. In the introduction to his translation, Edwards explains, "Caecilian, then a deacon to Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, incurred the animosity of a rich woman named Lucilla, because he had objected to her extravagant veneration of a martyr" (p. xviii).

13. Brown, *Cult of the Saints*, 34.

14. Lockwood, "Potens et Factiosa Femina," 167.

15. *Ibid.*, 170–78.

16. Robert Wiśniewski, "Lucilla and the Bone: Remarks on an Early Christian Testimony to the Cult of Relics," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4 (2011): 157–61.

those of Lucilla's time more than sixty years earlier. For Wiśniewski, the question is not the strategic use of women to undermine, but rather, the evidence we have for relic veneration.¹⁷ Lucilla's possession of a dismembered body part is highly unlikely in the early fourth century, as our other evidence does not report such a practice for several more decades. Here, Wiśniewski contradicts Lockwood, who argues that between 202 and 303, "the veneration of martyrs came to include the private handling of relics and their use in ritual."¹⁸ Perhaps with the understanding that Optatus's claims are baseless and meaningless in relation to the actual conflict fueling the schism, Maureen Tilley's 1997 study fails to mention Lucilla at all.

The Problem with Optatus

The problem in accepting Optatus's account at face value is the pervasive trope of "bad things begin with a woman." One can think of numerous literary and mythological examples: Eve in Genesis 3, Hesiod's Pandora,¹⁹ and Helen of Troy.²⁰ The author of 1 Timothy warns against the dangers of women talking and teaching, and further blames a woman for being the first "transgressor" or "deviant" (*ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν*, 1 Tim 2:11–14). Tertullian is outraged at the sedition among young female Christians in Carthage, which he links to the *exemplum Theclae* (Tertullian, *Bapt.* 17.5). Jerome's criticisms of Priscillianism are directed primarily at women.²¹ Celsus derides Christianity as a movement for the stupid, and in particular slaves, women, and children (Origen, *Cels.* 3.44, 59). This problem

17. Interestingly, Wiśniewski claims that the earliest record of relic translation involved the alleged bones of Luke, Andrew, and Timothy between 8 and 8, whereas most scholars point to the arrival of Babylas's bones to Antioch in 351 or 354. He dates Babylas's translation to 82, which undoubtedly refers to the account in Ammianus Marcellinus, when Babylas's bones were forcibly moved on orders of Julian (Amm. Marc. 22.13).

18. Lockwood, "Potens et Factiosa Femina," 169.

19. Hesiod, *Theog.* 560–612; *Works and Days* 60–105.

20. While the images and opinions of Helen varied, many ancient writers expressed disdain for her and blamed her outright for the Trojan War, including Alkaios and various characters in Homer and Euripides. See Diane J. Rayor, trans., *Sappho's Lyre: Archaic Lyric and Women Poets of Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Norman Austin, *Helen of Troy and Her Shameless Phantom* (Myth and Poetics; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

21. Jerome writes, "Silly women burdened with sins (*miserae muleirculae oneratae peccatis*), carried about with every wind of doctrine, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (*Ep.* 133.4). In this letter to Ctesiphon, Jerome provides an extensive list of women who have been centerpieces in heresy, including Helena (aid to Simon Magus), Philumena, Prisca, Maximilla, Lucilla, Galla, in addition to several unnamed women. See Jerome, *The Principal Works of Jerome*, in vol. 6 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2 (ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace; New York: Christian Literature Company, 1893).

has been so well documented by scholars that it hardly bears repeating. What does bear repeating is that somehow when women are named as primary transgressors, there is the suggestion that femaleness itself tends toward transgression. Epiphanius says it most clearly: "Do not believe a vulgar woman, for every heresy is a vulgar woman (πᾶσα γὰρ αἵρεσις φαύλη γυνή)" (*Pan.* 79.8).²² The female proclivity for error is written into ancient ideas of human biology and fetal gestation: to be born female is to have ceased developing in the womb. Women are essentially "failed" or "undeveloped" men.²³ Though his interests lie with the early practices of relic veneration, this does not escape Wiśniewski's attention: "The mere fact that it was a woman who founded Donatism should have been enough to discredit this movement in the eyes of Optatus' audience."²⁴

Optatus's rhetorical use of Lucilla is clever yet stereotypical. He crafts an image of a once-perfect and serene church whose unity is shattered by the meddling of a vengeful woman. His language relies heavily on images of male kinship (*fratres*) and peace, ordained by God and, indeed, as aspect of God: "Therefore peace has been given to all Christians, which patently is a thing of God's, as he calls it 'mine'" (1.1). Written largely in response to the published criticisms of Parmenianus,²⁵ Optatus is clear that a once-unified, God-given, divine peace—which is simultaneously a masculine brotherhood—has been sinfully disrupted by a schism whose

22. Carolyn Oseik, trans., in *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). I am not suggesting that male theologians failed to lambast heretical men—hardly! Optatus himself writes about Marcion, Praxeas, Sabellius, and Valentinus (1.9). Furthermore, Simon Magus was touted by many early theologians at the "father" of all heresies. Yet maleness itself does not tend toward error or heresy. Epiphanius, for example, does not say, "Every heresy is a vulgar man." Virginia Burrus pointed this out twenty-five years ago: "For the heresiological sources are not only written from the point of view of a self-identified orthodoxy, but are also written by men who utilize the figure of the heretical female as a vehicle for the negative self-expression of their own orthodox male self-identity" ("The Heretical Woman as Symbol in Alexander, Athanasius, Epiphanius, and Jerome," *HTR* 84 [1991] 229–48, here 230). See also Alberto Ferreiro, "Jerome's Polemic against Priscillian in His Letter to Ctesiphon (133.4)," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 39 (1993): 309–32. Nicola Denzey Lewis also explores this in detail in *The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Early Christian Women* (Boston: Beacon, 2007).

23. We find such ideas especially in Aristotle and the *Hippocratic Corpus*. See G. E. R. Lloyd, ed., *Hippocratic Writings* (New York: Penguin, 1978); Stephen Garton, *Histories of Sexuality* (Critical Histories of Subjectivity and Culture; New York: Routledge, 2004); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: The Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

24. Wiśniewski, "Lucilla and the Bone," 159.

25. In the early 360s the Donatist bishop of Carthage Parmenianus (successor to Donatus) published a five-part tractate criticizing the catholic church. The tractate is no longer extant, but we can piece much of it together via Optatus's response and Augustine's later *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani*.

roots are traced to Lucilla. God himself hates schism, thus Parmenianus and his camp have effectively "declared war on God" (1.21).

It is not that Optatus ignores the male participants in the schism's beginnings, but that he rhetorically locates Lucilla as the taproot: *N*o one is unaware that this took place . . . through some factious woman . . . while the church was still tranquil" (1.16). As Robert Eno has pointed out, the language of *origines* and *roots* is just as prominent in Optatus as it was in Cyprian before him: *caput, radix, origo, ratio, matrix*, and *princeps* appear in various forms throughout *Against the Donatists*.²⁶ Optatus claims that his "catholic" side "remained in the root (*in radice*) with the whole world" (Optatus 1.15). In book 2, Optatus argues, "But you say you too have a certain party in the city of Rome. It is a branch of your error (*ramus est uestri erroris*), springing from a lie, not from the root of truth (*non de radice ueritatis*)" (2.4). And in book 3: "And here in Africa for a long time the garment had been intact as the population remained in unity, but was rent by the envious hands of the enemy. The strips hung, as it were, from one point in the garment, and branches coming from a single root (*una radice*) were divided from one another" (3.9). There are many more examples from all seven books, but not the space to explore them here. Optatus's strategy is particularly effective in book 2 when he lists every male leader who occupied the see, beginning with Peter. As if a faultless quasi-patrilineal descent narrative, thirty-eight men constitute the apostolic succession in perfect harmony, beginning with Peter himself.²⁷ After tracing the history of his list to its origins, Optatus asks Parmenianus, "Tell us the origin (*uos originem*) of your see, which you wish to claim for yourselves as a sacred church." Optatus knows the humiliating answer to his query, as he has just constructed it in book 1: the *origo* is a vengeful, misguided woman. Such a strong emphasis on roots and origins serves Optatus well, as he claims Peter as the catholic root, and the trope of a *bad woman* as the Donatist root.

There are two options, really, for us to consider: (1) Lucilla played a significant role in the early Donatist schism, or (2) Lucilla did not play a significant role in the schism. Regardless of historical events, which we cannot access, the image of a vengeful, superstitious woman is strategically deployed by Optatus in order to undermine what appears to be the larger issue that fuels the schism, namely, what to do with *traditores* during or after the Diocletian prosecutions.²⁸ Again, however, Optatus

26. Robert Eno, "Radix Catholica," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 43 (1997): 3–13.

27. Robert Eno argues that Optatus uses such a list, in conformity with Cyprian, who constructs Peter as the font of church unity. While this may be the case, its use certainly accomplishes for Optatus the appearance of Donatist illegitimacy. See Robert Eno, "The Significance of the Lists of Roman Bishops in the Anti-Donatist Polemic," *VC* 47 (1993): 158–69.

28. For an excellent recent critique of the Christian construction of "persecution" see

never links Lucilla to this actual point of conflict. Much more simply and effectively, female vengeance triggers the conflict, rendering Donatism simultaneously flawed and feminized. This trope is something scholars ought to take seriously, since the figure of a problematic woman is simply too obvious a rhetorical strategy. For ancient catholic readers, a woman's influence may have helped to discredit Donatism, but for the modern scholar, Optatus's use of the "bad woman" trope is enough to discredit the account itself.

Conclusion

While one cannot disprove Optatus's story of Lucilla, one ought to consider his version of events with great skepticism. On the one hand, if we take the story factually, we may add the information to what we already know about the veneration of relics and the various forms of authority and power that some women exerted in the early church. This is the approach Lockwood takes. On the other hand, we may be too eager to take such accounts at face value, in a desire to accrue as much data as possible about how gender, social class, and religious practices intersect in early Christianity. While the figure of Lucilla might have existed historically (I doubt we can even confirm that), her role in the schism is likely exaggerated or even invented by Optatus (or his source). Historically, we can say very little about Lucilla. Yet rhetorically, "Lucilla" serves to undermine the legitimacy of Donatist arguments by attacking them at their origin: a vengeful, meddling woman. Even if Donatists had legitimate claims regarding *traditores* and those baptized by *traditores*, they (the Donatists) still ought not be taken seriously because an angry woman birthed the fracturing mess.

The significant disconnect between what actual historical female figures may have done, versus their usefulness as rhetorical tools in bolstering or dismantling other men, is what makes ancient male authors "unreliable witnesses." As Ross has recently reminded us, "ancient sources are presently seen to deploy ancient ideas about gender, mapped onto female characters, to explore a range of issues of concern to their largely elite, male authors and initial audiences."²⁹ Thus, we see male authors use actual female figures but also the imagined space of *femina* or *γυνή* as an empty place for thinking, imagining, disparaging, undermining, and rhetorically laboring in one way or another—a space waiting to be filled, so to speak,

Candida Moss, *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2013).

29. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 6.

with male authorial imagination and intention. In this case, a troublesome antagonist traced to a woman instantaneously loses symbolic capital.

Though we cannot determine Lucilla's role in the beginning of Donatism,³⁰ I would add that we do not need Optatus's account to be true in order to see that, as Lockwood has put it, fourth-century North Africa was a volatile social environment in which women's roles in the church constituted an ideological battleground."³¹ Hierarchical gender arrangement was a world-organizing principle in the ancient Mediterranean (and for many people today). Thus, to "gender" a person, group, idea, or ethnicity, is to locate that other on a ladder that evaluates and confers degrees of legitimacy, credibility, competence, and worth. Hardly limited to or unique to early Christianity, such patriarchal cultures (including the ancient Mediterranean) demonstrate what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu calls a "dogma of the radical inferiority of women"³² in which women are "separated from men by a negative symbolic coefficient."³³ Thanks to the detailed research of Ross Kraemer over the past thirty years, we now see much more clearly the extent to which gender has constituted an ideological battleground. Moving forward in our studies on Donatism, scholars would be better off taking Optatus's story of Lucilla as evidence for this.

0 . Ross has repeatedly explored the difficulty of reading ambiguous evidence steeped in the assumptions of the scholar, as well as the polemical slant of the evidence itself. See especially Ross Kraemer, "Jewish Tuna or Christian Fish: Identifying Religious Affiliation in Epigraphic Sources," *HTR* 84 (1991): 141–62.

1 . Lockwood, "Potens et Factiosa Femina," 167.

2 . Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (trans. Richard Nice; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 85.

3 . Ibid., 93.

Gender and Apocalypticism in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games Trilogy*

JORDAN KRAEMER

Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Wesleyan University

SHIRA L. LANDER

Rice University

None of our extant apocalyptic narratives from Greco-Roman antiquity features a female redeemer figure. Female redeemer figures whose saving acts do not require their deaths, whether mythological or historical, are few and far between in ancient Near Eastern polytheist, Jewish, and Christian literature: Yael, who saves the Israelite tribes Zebulun and Naphtali from their Canaanite attacker Sisera; Esther, who rescues the Jews of Persia through an elaborate scheme that entails marrying King Ahasuerus; Judith, who prevents her Israelite town of Bethulia from being conquered by the Assyrian general Holofernes; Tomyris, the Massagetae empress who defeats Cyrus the Great; and Artemisia, the queen of Halicarnassus who led a pro-Persian alliance against the Greek city-states. The closest approximation to saviors are martyrs, like the Maccabean mother, Thecla, and Perpetua, whose problematic and contested role in Jewish and Christian traditions has been analyzed by Ross S. Kraemer.¹ Unlike the salvation of apocalyptic literature, however, the heroism of martyrs demands their death, robbing them of enjoying the fruits of their labors.

* This chapter pays homage to Dr. Kraemer's popular work on the TV series *Star Trek* (*The Religions of Star Trek*, with William Cassidy and Susan L. Schwartz [Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001]) and continues the tradition of Kraemer-Lander collaboration ("Perpetua and Felicitas," in *The Early Christian World* [ed. Philip F. Esler; London: Routledge, 2004], 2:1048–68). The authors are deeply indebted to their mother and *Doktormutter* for the boundless love, guidance, and mind-wrestling that Ross has showered on us.

1. *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 329–333, and *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 122–152 and 244.

This article explores the aspects of gender and apocalypticism in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games Trilogy*. We argue that Collins's disruption of the category "gender" is an essential feature of its particular form of "dystopian apocalypticism" rather than a reflection of its uniquely postmodern American social context, as some have claimed, and that gender disruption is also characteristic of ancient apocalyptic literature, a feature that has often gone unremarked or has been attributed merely to ancient asceticism.² Modern dystopian apocalypticism shares a gender-transformed outlook with its ancient apocalyptic forebear, albeit for different reasons and in different ways, which we will explore. We employ the definition of apocalypticism provided by Kathleen Stewart and Susan Harding:

As a discursive field, contemporary American apocalypticism includes its (a) conditions of possibility, (b) histories of use, (c) symptoms, (d) precise social and institutional locales and modes of circulation, and (e) politics. . . . As a rhetoric, it is a strategy of persuasion or coercion that interrupts routine and acquiescence with a call of alarm; As a distinctive narrative, it claims to be not just a story with a beginning, middle, and end, but *the* story about *the* beginning, *the* middle and *the* end; Yet its very claim to Truth incites competing, often equally totalizing, counterclaims and creates dialogics, multivocality, and multiveiling at the heart of the apocalyptic; What is more, the very structure of any particular apocalyptic discourse is dialectical, oscillating between opposing poles of darkness and light.³

Lee Quinby distinguishes three types of American apocalypses, divine, technological, and ironic, among dystopian apocalypses:

For dystopian apocalyptic thought—divine, technological, or ironic—postmodern culture means the erosion of clearly defined sexual difference and the loss of authority of heterosexuality, the failure of the nuclear family and its replacement by a number of other family forms, and the fragmentation of unified national identity. . . . In other words, in dystopian apocalyptic thought, postmodernism is synonymous with loss—and this is correct for those who stand to lose their privilege. But to challengers of high-culture elitism, heterosexism, and homogeneous identity, these changes mean cultural enrichment, not decline.⁴

2. For the former, see John J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14: *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (1979): 1–20; for the latter, see Alexis C. Torrance, *Repentance in Late Antiquity: Eastern Asceticism and the Framing of the Christian Life c. 400–650 CE* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), Appendix 1.

3. Kathleen Stewart and Susan Harding, "Bad Endings: American Apocalypsis," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28 (1999): 285–310, here 290.

4. Lee Quinby, *Anti-Apocalypse: Exercises in Genealogical Criticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 16.

Although *The Hunger Games Trilogy* is fictional, the world it portrays is undeniably American. First, it is geographically situated in “Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America.”⁵ In particular, “the Capitol was built in a place once called the Rockies,” and District 12 is located along the Appalachian mountain range.⁶ Second, each of its 13 districts is identified, or essentialized, by the capital it produces for the ruling colonial power, the Capitol: District 1 provides luxury goods; District 2 supplies stone, weaponry, and “peace-keepers” (Panem’s police force), headquartered in “a virtually impenetrable mountain”; District 3 manufactures electronics; District 4, fish, and so on.⁷ And third, Panem’s voyeuristic visual-media-driven-and-controlled culture promotes and maintains the extravagance/deprivation binary that governs its occupants’ lives in a more than faint echo of American reality television, as many commentators, including Collins, have pointed out.⁸ Finally, the kind of military complex and totalitarian violence that this dystopian colonialism demands has ravaged Mexico and recently been exposed in the United States.⁹ Perhaps Canada’s social safety net will postpone this dystopian inevitability.

For all of its American specificity, however, the trilogy’s critique of Panem’s social inequities, injustices, and excesses knows no chronological or geographic bounds. The country’s name, “Panem,” evokes the bread and circuses of the Roman empire, an indispensable feature of colonial antiquity.¹⁰ The contest between male and female tributes randomly selected from each of the twelve districts intentionally mimics Roman gladiatorial games.¹¹ The reader is first alerted that gender plays an important role in this dystopian apocalypse when learning that Katniss (along with her hunting partner, Gale) has assumed the paternal role as provider for her family: “[H]ow would they live without us? Who would fill those mouths that are always asking for more? With both of us hunting daily, there are still nights when game has to be swapped for lard or shoelaces or wool, still

5. Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games Trilogy* (Scholastic Inc., Kindle Edition, 5–1–2011), Kindle location 194.

6. *Ibid.*, locations 436–37.

7. *Ibid.*, locations 713, 8555, 9644, 2225–26, 5860. Note, however, that not all products are identified, for example, District 5.

8. The parallel is noted by the author herself in her Scholastic, Inc. Interview, “Questions and Answers,” <http://www.scholastic.com/thehungergames/media/qanda.pdf>.

9. Consider “One of 43 missing Mexican students identified among remains,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 6, 2014, and the decision not to indict police officer Daniel Pantaleo for the death of Eric Garner, “Wave of Protests After Grand Jury Doesn’t Indict Officer in Eric Garner Chokehold Case,” *New York Times*, December 3, 2014, and similar cases.

10. The parallel is noted by the author herself in her Scholastic, Inc. Interview, “Questions and Answers.”

11. Suzanne Collins video clips, “Classical Inspiration,” <http://www.scholastic.com/thehungergames/videos/classical-inspiration.htm>.

nights when we go to bed with our stomachs growling.”¹² Tom Henthorne has enumerated the various ways that Katniss transcends Panem’s rigid construction of gender, including the subversive way she performs femininity in order to undermine the Capitol’s deployment of gender to control its citizens and sustain its colonialist exploitation of the districts.¹³ In *Catching Fire*, Katniss admits that she fails at traditional female activities: “Girl talk. That thing I’ve always been so bad at.”¹⁴ Assuming the role of male head-of-household has even caused Katniss to manifest physical signs of what the Capitol denizens perceive as “masculinity,” signs that have to be eradicated prior to her presentation in the opening ceremonies: “Venia, a woman with aqua hair and gold tattoos above her eyebrows, yanks a strip of fabric from my leg, tearing out the hair beneath it. ‘Sorry!’ she pipes in her silly Capitol accent. ‘You’re just so hairy!’”¹⁵

A second indication of the salience of gender is the binary, gendered selection process of the tributes:

[We] focus our attention on the temporary stage that is set up before the Justice Building. It holds three chairs, a podium, and two large glass balls, one for the boys and one for the girls. . . . The rules of the Hunger Games are simple. In punishment for the uprising, each of the twelve districts must provide one girl and one boy, called tributes, to participate.¹⁶

Although class is a salient dividing line, heteronormative gender is the most naturalized of Panem’s binary organizing principles. Katniss’s subversion of Panem’s strict gender roles is her first, yet unconscious, act of rebellion against the Capitol. Her second insurgent feat is parlaying traditional gender expectations into political solidarity through her partnership with Peeta. This act was also not a conscious choice, since it was orchestrated by her stylist Cinna:¹⁷

“Whose idea was the hand holding?” asks Haymitch.

“Cinna’s,” says Portia.

“Just the perfect touch of rebellion,” says Haymitch. “Very nice.”

Rebellion? I have to think about that one a moment. But when I remember the other couples, standing stiffly apart, never touching or acknowledging each other, as if their fellow tribute did not exist, as if the Games

12. Collins, *Hunger Games*, Kindle locations 104–6.

13. Tom Henthorne, “The Importance of Being Katniss: Identity, Gender, and Transgression,” in *Approaching The Hunger Games Trilogy: A Literary and Cultural Analysis* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), 46–57, 61–62. By breaking down the economic production and provision unit into a heterosexual couple-headed family whose survival depends on its adult male, the Capitol ensures continuity of its labor force through reproduction.

14. Collins, *Hunger Games*, Kindle location 5925.

15. *Ibid.*, locations 629–30.

16. *Ibid.*, locations 189–90, 198–200.

17. *Ibid.*, locations 815–19.

had already begun, I know what Haymitch means. Presenting ourselves not as adversaries but as friends has distinguished us as much as the fiery costumes.

Cinna and Haymitch, we come to learn in *Mockingjay*, are members of District 13's revolutionary army.¹⁸ It is Cinna who designs Katniss's sartorial transformation from bride to Mockingjay, from a paradigm of heteronormative femininity to one of revolution.¹⁹ Her reflection on Haymitch's invocation of the word "rebellion" suggests that she is beginning to realize what those around her already suspect: she is not merely the perfect symbol for the revolution, she is its exemplar:

What they want is for me to truly take on the role they designed for me. The symbol of the revolution. The Mockingjay. It isn't enough, what I've done in the past, defying the Capitol in the Games, providing a rallying point. I must now become the actual leader, the face, the voice, the embodiment of the revolution.²⁰

Gender in Panem is inextricably refracted through class and race as well, though the markers of these distinctions are often left implied or ambiguous in the text.²¹ Katniss is able to take on non-normative gender roles partly because of her class status, an impoverished inhabitant of the poorest sector of the poorest District. She is not expected to be respectable, nor is her ability to get married and reproduce (yet) of much political interest to the Capitol. Only when she arrives in the Capitol to perform in the Games must she adopt accepted markers of femininity (and heterosexuality), feigning both heterosexual feminine frivolity and attraction to Peeta. These two roles are intertwined, as her apparent love for Peeta helps feminize and humanize her for the Capitol's (largely invisible) media audience. The relationship between the Capitol and the Districts already articulates familiar late-modern gender norms, in which consumption is associated with women and production with men (even if these distinctions do not hold for the residents themselves, as Jessica Miller argues).²² The people of the Capitol, for example, are portrayed uniformly as members of an extravagant,

18. Ibid., locations 8152–53.

19. Ibid., location 6303.

20. Ibid., locations 7802–4.

21. Some readers, for example, were outraged by the film adaptations in which characters Rue and Thresh were depicted as black, even though Collins clearly describes them as having dark brown skin and eyes, and suggests that their home, District 11, is located in the former American South (see, for example, Dodai Stewart, "Racist Hunger Games Fans Are Very Disappointed," *Jezebel.com*, March 26, 2012, <http://jezebel.com/5896408/racist-hunger-games-fans-dont-care-how-much-money-the-movie-made>).

22. Jessica Miller, "'She Has No Idea. The Effect She Can Have': Katniss and the Politics of Gender," in *The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason* (ed. George A.

superficial aristocracy, consumed by finely attuned attention to cosmetic modifications, fluctuating fashions (what would Bourdieu say?), and banal squabbings of the self-absorbed—a disdainful, disconnected court unconcerned with the suffering of the less-than-human masses. Although Katniss finds life in the Capitol absurd, an oblivious bubble blind to the triviality of its concerns, she nonetheless bonds with her team of stylists and becomes emotionally attached to them, even as she finds their manners and appearance incomprehensible. These affectations implicitly index urbane femininity, whether adopted by male or female characters, as obsessing over costume, self-image, and elaborate beauty regimes are largely attributed to women in United States (and other late-modern) contexts. If the Capitol hews feminine, the rural, working-class hardiness of District 12 signals a certain rugged masculinity, where soot-stained residents labor in the coal mines. District 13, in contrast to both of these, appears more gender neutral in its utilitarian aesthetic. Again, Collins does not fully detail the degree to which self-cultivation plays out in gendered ways, leading some commentators to derive opposite conclusions.²³ The text's ambiguity on this count, for example, has led to speculation over whether some male characters in the Capitol can be read as gay, or whether such an interpretation merely reflects extant gender norms, as Henthorne explains: "one could argue that Collins constructs a queer subtext in order to challenge the heterosexual norms that underpin patriarchy by subordinating women to men."²⁴ Similarly, as Miller points out, Collins ambiguates whether victorious tribute Finnick Odair, left to the devices of President Snow, is prostituted out to men or women (or both); the patrons in question are referred to only as "citizens," suggesting that in the Capitol, class status and political standing might trump gender and sexual identities.

In the end, Katniss's ability to transcend gender binaries, and the class, gender, and sexuality-based norms that undergird the Capitol's colonialist regime, depends not on her becoming like a man but on coming to inhabit the symbol of the Mockingjay, of a completely different order than the male/female roles previously available to her. As Henthorne points out, she "disrupts traditional male/female gender binaries" when she takes on its mantle—not just a living icon, a "woman in a superhero outfit" but through action, challenging both the Capitol and its mirror opposite, the resistance led by President Alma Coin of District 13.²⁵ In Henthorne's account, Katniss subverts the entire binary system represented by Pres-

Dunn, Nicholas Michaud, and William Irwin; Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture; Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 152.

23. Henthorne ("Importance of Being Katniss"), for example, reads Panem as rigidly patriarchal, whereas Miller ("She Has No Idea") concludes that gender divisions are less salient than in the contemporary Western world.

24. Henthorne, "Importance of Being Katniss," 54.

25. *Ibid.*, 55.

ident Snow on one side and President Coin on the other, creating the possibility for "the birth of a new political configuration," and following analyses of power by Judith Butler, Antonio Gramsci, and others.²⁶ The Mockingjay symbol refers to an unintended hybrid species that resulted when wild mockingbirds bred with genetically engineered Jabberjays. The Jabberjays were designed to spy on the Capitol's enemies, but were repurposed [by the resistance] to spread misinformation instead. Their offspring ultimately escaped the Capitol's control and became symbols both of the resistance, and of the Capitol's failures.

The Mockingjay, like Donna Haraway's cyborg, is a hybrid creature, a creature that should not exist but nonetheless does, a creature belonging to another order."²⁷ For Haraway, the cyborg (a myth that itself owes to feminist science fiction), a cybernetic hybrid organism, is "a creature in a post-gender world," that is to say, not born of conventional sexual relations and not conceived through any mythology of originary unity: The cyborg skips the step of original unity, of identification with nature in the Western sense."²⁸ The figure of the cyborg embodies Haraway's reconfiguration of the nature-culture binary, calling into question their division, while drawing attention to their co-constitution, in which "nature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by the other."²⁹ Cyborgs were not born in mythical Eden, nor do they form complete wholes; they are always characterized instead by partialness, just as postmodern identities are always partial and, as such, offer the possibility for coming together through affinity rather than identity, that is, through partial connections that do not depend on totalizing narratives or erasing difference. Such origin myths tie directly to Western narratives of apocalypse, both ancient and modern, in which fulfillment and redemption depend, teleologically, on uniting complementary halves in a reunified whole: "holistic politics depend on metaphors of rebirth and invariably call on the resources of reproductive sex. I would suggest that cyborgs have more to do with regeneration and are suspicious of the reproductive matrix and of most birthing."³⁰ The cyborg, then, presents an alternative model for feminist politics of world-making that does not invoke gendered complementarity or binary generativity, and instead, deconstructs categories of male and female, man and woman, and reconfigures their constituent parts.

26. Ibid., 56.

27. Ibid.

28. Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 149–81, esp. 150, 151.

29. Ibid., 151.

30. Ibid., 174.

Through her performance as the Mockingjay, Katniss takes on this cyborg subjectivity to transcend gender binaries; by reconfiguring assigned gender roles, she calls into question the divides on which they depend, without unifying them. By killing President Coin, she refuses to choose between complementary halves, recognizing that Coin's regime will simply reproduce the existing structures of domination.

There is also a tension between the Mockingjay as symbol of the rebellion, and Katniss's desire to act, rather than mobilize others' resistance solely through circulated images. But her final act, taking down Coin rather than President Snow, results more from anger at losing her sister than from any great political plan. Katniss remains preoccupied with protecting her family and the ones she loves, and routinely refuses to resolve the romantic triangle common to some Young Adult literature. Though eventually she marries Peeta and has children (a boy and a girl, admittedly), she does not choose between Gale and Peeta (or Snow and Coin for that matter) in order to resolve the narrative. Kinship ties take precedence, both in avenging her sister and, later, in having a family of her own, perhaps akin to the affinities Haraway has in mind—not necessarily through metaphors of shared blood but as felt linkages that do not depend on discourse.

The gender transcendence achieved by Katniss is a significant feature of dystopian apocalyptic, as Quinby points out in the quotation presented at the opening of this article. Quinby's observation that "to challengers of high-culture elitism, heterosexism, and homogeneous identity, these changes mean cultural enrichment, not decline" applies equally to Katniss as to many of her fans and, perhaps, her author, as Collins states: "The sociopolitical overtones of *The Hunger Games* were very intentionally created to characterize current and past world events."³¹ Gender transcendence is an indispensable element of *The Hunger Games Trilogy's* apocalypticism. Katniss's ability to play the role of "challenger" of Panem's tyrannical sociopolitical structure, and ultimately the role of heroic redeemer from that tyranny, relies on the subversion of its oppressive gender norms, as noted above.

Although ancient apocalypticism is not as thoroughly dystopian as *The Hunger Games Trilogy*, both share the apocalyptic impulse that envisions the complete transformation of a declining world and of the beings who inhabit it. In much the same way that gender binariness is an essential feature of Panem's injustice, it is endemic to ancient apocalyptic conceptions of worldliness, or the pre-apocalyptic state. The purest, bodiless, angelic state is imagined as male and nonsexualized, as the story of the angelic watchers in *1 Enoch* makes clear: "But you originally existed as spirits, living forever, and not dying for all the generations of eternity;

3 . James Blasingame, "An Interview with Suzanne Collins," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 52.8 (May 2009): 726–27, here 726.

therefore I did not make women among you.' The spirits of heaven, in heaven is their dwelling" (1 *Enoch* 15:6–7).³² After the final judgment, only the righteous merit returning to this heavenly abode and its prelapsarian, mono-gendered, luminous angelic state:³³

Take courage . . . now you will shine like the luminaries of heaven . . . and the portals of heaven will be opened for you. . . . and do not abandon your hope, for you will have great joy like the angels of heaven. . . . Fear not, O righteous . . . you will be companions of the host of heaven. (1 *Enoch* 104:2, 4, 6)

Unlike modern dystopian apocalypses, ancient apocalypses portray the inversion and repudiation of traditional gender norms as signs of the decline and sinfulness of humanity, as portrayed in 1 *Enoch* 982 and 995.³⁴

For men will put on adornments as women, and fair colors more than virgins, in kingship and majesty and power. . . . At that very time, those who are giving birth will bring forth, and they will <ell> and abandon their young infant; and those who are with child will <abort>; And those who are nursing will cast off their children, and they will not return to their infants or to their sucklings . . .

In the hands of the ancient apocalypticist, this gender confusion signals a world gone very wrong. On the other hand, like their modern counterparts, ancient apocalypses portray gender transcendence as a feature of the Edenic, postapocalyptic state.

Later apocalypticism is even more explicit about gender transcendence, which is envisioned either as mono-gendered, as in 1 *Enoch*, or genderless. The mono-gendered view, as studied by Elizabeth A. Castelli, is expressed by the *Gospel of Thomas's* famous logion (114): "every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven."³⁵ The genderless view is best expressed by the early baptismal formula, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female," repeated by Paul in Gal 3:28. The *Apocalypse of Zosimus (History of the Rechabites)* shares this view of a post-gendered, postapocalyptic existence: "And seeing that pure soul, which has (just) left the body, all the holy angels unfold (for it) their shining stoles.

32 . George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, 1 *Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, Kindle Edition, 1–10–2012), 37.

33 . Ibid., 160–61.

34 . Ibid., 148, 151.

35 . Elizabeth A. Castelli, "'I Will Make Mary Male': Pieties of the Body and Gender Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity," in *Bodyguards: The Cultural Contexts of Gender Ambiguity* (ed. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub; New York: Routledge, 1991), 29–49. See "The Coptic Gospel of Thomas," trans. Beate Blatz, in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1, *Gospels and Related Writings* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; English trans. ed. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991).

And they receive it with joy, saying, 'Blessed are you, O pure soul, and blest, for you have thoroughly done the will of God, your Lord.'"³⁶

Unlike the ancient postapocalyptic visions of the end-time, the post-apocalyptic epilogue to *Mockingjay* envisions a harmonious, traditional-looking family coming to terms with its horrible past. Katniss and Peeta have two children (at Peeta's insistence), a girl and a boy.³⁷ Katniss's feeling of terror when she was pregnant with her daughter only abated with "the joy of holding her in my arms."³⁸ The children "take for granted" the idyllic world portrayed in the ancient lullaby Katniss had sung to her young ally Rue as she lay wounded, serenading her passage to death:³⁹

Here it's safe, here it's warm
Here the daisies guard you from every harm
Here your dreams are sweet and tomorrow brings them true
Here is the place where I love you.

Collins's reprise of the lullaby cum lamentation, this time recast as fulfilled prophecy, provides an Edenic resolution of the trilogy's numerous conflicts, including gender: "Peeta and I grow back together."⁴⁰ Katniss and Peeta's reconciliation signifies that something old has become new, a common apocalyptic trope. In its apparent return to traditional gender norms, *Mockingjay*'s ending lures readers into the illusory familiarity of their own culture's naturalized gender norms. Collins hints that what appears as a throwback may, however, be something else altogether: "Peeta bakes. I hunt. . . . Peeta says it will be okay. We have each other. And the book [of memories]. We can make them understand in a way that will make them braver."⁴¹ The use of "we" recalls the solidarity that Katniss and Peeta harnessed in order to defeat the Capitol. In the wake of reconstruction, Plutarch, the Capitol's replacement game designer and commander of the rebel forces, muses to Katniss, "Maybe we are witnessing the evolution of the human race."⁴² If Katniss and Peeta are any indication, this "evolution" includes the kind of gender transformation—the new creation—imagined by ancient apocalypses.

8 . *History of the Rechabites* 14:4–5, trans. James H. Charlesworth, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, *Expansions of the Old Testament and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms, and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 450–61, esp. 458–59.

37. Katniss muses, "It took five, ten, fifteen years for me to agree. But Peeta wanted them so badly" (Collins, *Hunger Games*, Kindle location 11643).

8 . *Ibid.*, location 11644.

9 . *Ibid.*, locations 2382, 11649–50.

40. *Ibid.*, locations 11634–35.

41. *Ibid.*, locations 11631, 11651–52.

42. *Ibid.*, locations 11538–39.

“To the Most Honorable Lady, Theophile” (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1)

ROBERT A. KRAFT

University of Pennsylvania, Emeritus

This topic in this context points us back to a footnoted comment on the frequency of stories about women in Luke-Acts, found at the start of chapter 10 (pp. 128–29) in Ross Kraemer’s *Her Share of the Blessings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).¹ Her n. 8 appears on p. 233 and reads in part:

It is within the realm of possibility that the patron of Luke-Acts was in fact not a man named Theophilus . . . but a woman named Theophile. Although there is no textual support for such a reading, there are other instances in which ambiguous names become clarified as male, as in the case of Junia(s) in Romans 16:7. . . . In this particular instance, the difference between the masculine and feminine vocation [*sic*, vocative] is simply the change from ε [epsilon] to η [ēta], a frequent change in ancient manuscripts that could have occurred under numerous circumstances. I am indebted to Robert Kraft for this suggestion. A woman patron would accord well with a portrait of women which, in antiquity, would have seemed quite favorable. . . . It would be consistent with Luke’s particular emphasis on women patrons, especially the figures of Joanna and Susanna in Luke 8:3. We might even speculate whether the detailed portrait of Lydia in Acts 16:13–15 points to Luke’s actual experience of women patrons, all the more so because Lydia’s apparent autonomy (evidenced in her lack of a husband, father, or identified patron of her own) does not accord well with Luke’s overall program to portray Christian women as socially respectable.

1. Cited also by Randel McCraw Helms, *Who Wrote the Gospels?* (Agawam, MA: Millennium, 1997), 65.

It was over half a century ago that I originally submitted a paper entitled *To her Excellency Theophile, to be read by title* on the overcrowded program for the SBL Middle Atlantic Section Annual Meeting on 26 April 1964.² As Ross mentions, with specific reference to the work of Mary Rose D'Angelo, it has often been noticed that the narratives of the Third Gospel and Acts show a special interest in women.³ It has even been suggested that, for this reason, the author/compiler of those two volumes (a.k.a. "Luke") might have been a woman.⁴ Although that hypothesis has received little positive attention, the question as to whether the patron/recipient of Luke-Acts might have been female is worth exploring in greater detail.

The obvious obstacles to such a theory are the references, in the vocative case of direct address, to "(most excellent) Theophilos" in the superscriptions in Luke 1:1–4 (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε = *optime Theophile*)⁵ and Acts 1:13

2. This has now been noted in my 2006 SBL Presidential Address (Robert Kraft, *Para-mania: Beside, Before and Beyond Biblical Studies*, *JBL* 126 [2007]: 5–27, here 6 n. 4). The original 1964 abstract and draft have not yet been located and retrieved from my stored files. The choice of "her excellency" in the title makes the point that the works could be addressed to a woman, although it has the unfortunate nuance of quasi royalty, while all that is required is great respect—"to the most honored (or honorable) lady Theophile" perhaps, or "most highly respected." See further below on uses of the adjective *kratistos* (κράτιστος).

3. And especially widows and rich women. For a list of pertinent passages, see Helms, *Who Wrote the Gospels?* 66, among others. The relevant modern literature is extensive, including the following: Constance F. Parvey, "The Theology and Leadership of Women in the New Testament," in *Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether; New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), 117–49; Eugene H. Maly, *Women and the Gospel of Luke*, *BTB* 10 (1980): 99–104; and the older literature cited there; Quentin Quesnell, "The Women at Luke's Supper," in *Political Issues in Luke-Acts* (ed. Richard J. Cassidy and Philip J. Scharper; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983), 59–79; Celeste J. Rossmiller, "Prophets and Disciples in Luke's Infancy Narrative," *TBT* 22 (1984): 361–65; Rosalie Ryan, "The Women from Galilee and Discipleship in Luke," *BTB* 15 (1985): 56–59; E. Jane Via, "Women, the Discipleship of Service and the Early Christian Ritual Meal in the Gospel of Luke," *St. Luke's Journal of Theology* 29 (1985): 37–60; eadem, "Women in the Gospel of Luke," in *Women in the World's Religions: Past and Present* (ed. Ursula King; New York: Paragon House, 1987), 38–55; Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View," *JBL* 109 (1990): 441–61.

4. For example, E. Jane Via, "Women in the Gospel of Luke," 49–50 nn. 37–40 and more recently Helms, *Who Wrote the Gospels?* 65. D'Angelo dismisses this theory, noting that "the persona the author assumes in the prologue to Luke-Acts is that of a man; Luke 1:3 refers to the author with the perfect active masculine participle *παρηκολουθηκότι*" in the dative [*ὅς τοι με, having followed*"] ("Women in Luke-Acts," 443). Presumably a woman author would have written *παρηκολουθηκυία*.

5. Luke 1:1–4: Ἐπειδὴ περ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, καθὼς παρέδωκαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου, ἔδοξε καὶ μοι παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πάντων ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, ἵνα ἐπιγινῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. For the Latin, see the Vulgate *optime Theophile*, and Muratorian Canon *obtime Theophile* (but referring to Acts!).

(ὦ Θεόφιλε).⁶ The probability that we are dealing with a personal name here, and not simply a description of the recipient as a "lover of God" (or one "loved by God") was the conclusion reached by Henry Joel Cadbury in his famous and detailed "Appendix C" on the topic in the *Beginnings of Christianity* volume 2,⁷ although either interpretation could also suit a female recipient.

The vocative constructions, ending in *epsilon* (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε), as found in the available Greek manuscripts indicate *masculine* singular. The standard vocative for the nearly identical *female* name would have ended with an *ēta*, not *epsilon*—κρατίστη Θεοφίλη.⁸ It is obviously wishful thinking on my part to mention that, since the Latin makes no distinction, in such constructions, between the short *e* (*epsilon*) and the long *ē* (*ēta*), it is theoretically possible that the feminine form of the words was in the Greek text being rendered *optime Theophile* (Vulgate and Muratorian Canon), but all the extant Greek texts collated and edited for the main Greek critical editions have the masculine form.⁹

6. Acts 1:1–3: Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποίησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὦ Θεόφιλε, ὃν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου οὓς ἐξελέξατο ἀνελεῖν μεθ'· οἷς καὶ παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις, δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα ὁπτανόμενος αὐτοῖς καὶ λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.

7. Henry J. Cadbury, "Commentary on the Preface of Luke," in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, part 1, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, vol. 2, *Prolegomena 2: Criticism* (London: Macmillan, 1922), 489–510. Among Christian commentators, the formation "Theophil-" is used both as a name and as a description of the faithful. This ambiguity is noted already by Epiphanius (fourth century) in *Panarion* (= *Adversus haereses*) [TLG 2021.002] vol. 2, p. 257, line 10: εἴτα τί φησιν; . . . γράψαι σοι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε (εἴτ' οὖν τινὶ Θεοφίλῳ τότε γράφων τοῦτο ἔλεγεν ἢ παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ θεὸν ἀγαπῶντι), [(Luke says) . . . "to write to you, most excellent Theophilus" (whether he says he is writing this to a certain person named Theophilus or to every man/person who loves God)]. See also Loveday Alexander on the context of Luke-Acts prefaces as "scientific preface style" ("Luke's Preface in the Context of Greek Preface-Writing," *NovT* 28 (1986): 48–74; also eadem, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1:1–4 and Acts 1:1* (SNTSMS 78; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

8. A masculine vocative ending in *epsilon* is normal for a nominative in -os, thus Θεόφιλος/Theophilus. A feminine vocative ending normally matches the feminine nominative form, thus if we posit the name Theophilē (Θεοφίλη) we would expect the vocative in *ēta*—if Theophila/Θεοφίλα, which is also a known form of the female name, the expected vocative would be Theophila (Θεοφίλα). On variant forms of names, see the Trismegistos site: <http://www.trismegistos.org/nam/detail.php?record=5474> (e.g., Θεοφίλη, Θεοφίλα, Θεουφίλα). On the use of vocative in addresses, see Eleanor Dickey, "Greek Address System of the Roman Period and Relationship to Latin," *ClQ* 54 (2004): 494–527, <https://www.academia.edu/8113272/> (Dickey makes no mention of *kratistē* or of Luke 1:3).

9. *The New Testament in Greek*, vol. 3, part 1, *The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapters 1–12* (ed. American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project; Oxford: Clarendon, 1984). The first hand of ms 713 lacks κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, but apparently it was added later. I have not found a similarly detailed list of variants for the Acts passage.

To test the theory that Luke-Acts could have been addressed to a woman, several issues call for attention. To pursue them, online access to the Thesaurus Linguae Graece (TLG) and Papyri Navigator databank (papyri.info), as well as inscriptional information has been crucial.

1. How likely would it be for a copyist to change original *ēta* (κρατίστη Θεοφίλη), indicating a female, to *epsilon* (κρατίστε Θεόφιλε), indicating a male?

Presumably, such a change could be caused by the assumption that the text must be speaking about a male. The fact that reading (or pronouncing) the female text form aloud would probably sound identical to the male form (“error of the ear”) could contribute to the process. This aural error is more likely than a visual misreading of *ēta* for *epsilon* (“error of the eye”), although that is not entirely impossible (see n. 11 below). Since, as noted above, all known manuscripts of Luke (and Acts) apparently have the masculine version, any change from female to male must have occurred very early in the textual transmission, without leaving a trace. This would then be another example of “maleization” in textual tradition (“error of the understanding?”), as Ross notes above.

Examples of this sort of “itacism” are frequent in the papyri, but since modern editors also often made/make what seem to be obvious “corrections” (especially in “spelling”) to their texts, it is not a simple matter to demonstrate such phenomena. If the searched source (e.g., in the TLG text-bank) is based on a modern edition, for example, and the edition contains such a “correction” without noting it, the original form in the manuscripts will not easily be recovered. Further, mere variation (confusion?) of the letters *ēta* and *epsilon* is easily demonstrated, but whether such confusion can be expected in final position in a word where something more than pronunciation or misreading is at stake is more difficult to judge. There are examples of expected *μή* written as *μέ*, or of expected *ean* (ἐάν) written as *han* (ἡάν) in numerous papyri from all periods.¹⁰ Somewhat more indirect, but also documentable, would be the reading or confusion of an *ēta* (H-shaped) as an *epsilon* + *iota* diphthong (EI-shaped),¹¹ with the subsequent dropping of the *iota*.

10. For the first examples (asterisk indicates that editorial correction is noted), see BGU 4.1049 (342 CE), line 20 ἐφ’ ἂς καὶ μὲ(*) ἐπιπορεύεσθαι μέτε(*) (requiring correction to *μή* . . . *μήτε*); similarly, a change from an expected final *ēta* (or *ēta* + *iota*, dative) to *epsilon*, appears in P.Ness. 3.46 [605 CE] line 12 ἐν ταύτῃ [τῇ] ὠφιλιξ(*) (read ὀφειλῇ). For ἐάν variations, see, e.g., CPR 5.20 (third-fourth century CE), line 5 ἡάν(*) ᾗν | (read ἐάν ᾗν). I have not attempted to test (statistically) whether changes from *ēta* to *epsilon* are more likely than the opposite in similar conditions at the end of words (especially names). And, of course, “classical” spelling and grammatical standards are assumed in such editorial judgments about what is “correct.”

11. Confusion resulting in a change from *epsilon* (plus *iota*, dative) to *ēta* is illustrated

2. Do we know of any women called Theophile/Θεοφίλη (or Theophila/Θεοφίλα) in the period before and during which the composition of Luke-Acts occurred, up to about the mid-second century CE?

Our main sources for such information, in addition to O nomastic" compilations,¹² are the aforementioned TLG (especially for literature), papyri.info (especially for nonliterary materials), and various inscriptional indices.¹³ They provide a clear affirmative: while it is true that Θεοφίλη as a female name is relatively rare in the source materials, it is not unknown. There is even a memorial inscription on marble from Athens to a woman with that name, including a partial image, dated to the fourth century BCE,¹⁴ and papyri containing tax records (also mentioning a Θεοφίλα) in a Jewish context from third-century BCE Egypt.¹⁵

in P.Lond. 6.1923 [fourth century CE?] recto line 2, τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ θεοσεβεστάτῳ καὶ θεοφιλῇ(*) (corrected to θεοφιλεῖ) καὶ εὐλογημένῳ πατρὶ Παπνουθ[ί]ω Ἀμμώνιος ἐν κυρίῳ θεῷ χαίρειν.

12. See, e.g., Friedrich Preisigke, *Namenbuch, Enthaltend alle griechischen, lateinischen, ägyptischen, hebräischen, arabischen und sonstigen semitischen und nichtsemitischen Menschennamen, soweit sie in griechischen Urkunden (Papyri, Ostraka, Inschriften, Mumienschildern u. s. w.) Ägyptens sich vorfinden* (Bearb. und hrsg. von Friedrich Preisigke. Mit einem Anhang von Enno Littmann, enthaltend die in diesem Namenbuch vorkommenden abessinischen, arabischen, aramäischen, kanaanäischen, und persischen Namen; Heidelberg, 1922; repr., Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1967).

13. E.g., <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/ljs/#eid=39939&context=search>. In Latin epitaph inscriptions included in the Heidelberg Epigraphic Database (<http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/inschrift/suche>), we find a L(---) Theophile / vix(it) an(nos) / LXVIII / Aetolia / patronae opti/mae fecit / [. . . Theophile 68 years old Aetolia best of patrons made it] dated to the second century CE from Baetica Spain = HD000900; see J. González, MDAI(M) 23, 1982, 353–354, Nr. 1; Taf. 8a . (C) - AE 1982. For another epitaph, from Rome, the mother is identified as Theophile(!) co(n)iunx [undated] = HD018428.

14. Found by Edward Dodwell in 1805, now located in the University of Queensland Museum (Australia), the inscription is clearly dedicated to a Theophile—see <http://www.uq.edu.au/antiquities/images/Dodwell%20Stelefull.jpg> for an image, and <http://www.uq.edu.au/antiquities/object-spotlight-grave-stone-14-001> for transcription and translation: σῆς ἀρετῆς μνημ<εῖ>α, | Θεοφίλη, οὔποτε λήσει, | σώφρων καὶ χρηστὴ καὶ | ἐργάτις πᾶσαν ἔχουσα | ἀρετὴν [R ecords of your virtue, Theophile, will never pass unnoticed, modest and excellent and industrious, possessing every virtue.] This text, with slight variations, also made it into the *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix, Epigrammata sepulcralia*. [TLG 7052.002] Epigram 142: Σῆς ἀρετῆς μνημεῖα, Θεοφίλη, οὔποτε λήσει, σώφρων καὶ χρηστὴ, πᾶσαν ἔχουσ' ἀρετὴν, καὶ ἐργάτις.

15. A woman or women named Theophile/Θεοφίλη, or possibly Theophila/Θεοφίλα, wife of Artemidoros (Ἀρτεμιδώρου / Θεοφίλη γυνή) appears twice in a Greek composite tax-register for Trikomia and other villages in the Arsinoite nome, dated 254–231 BCE (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek G 40663 in CPR 13.4 = HGV P.Count 26 [Willy Clarysse and Dorothy J. Thompson, *Counting the People: Population Registers from Ptolemaic Egypt (P. Count.)* (2 vols.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)], accessed through papyri.info as Trismegistos 7769, first (line 62–63) restored as Δῶρος Ἀρτεμ[ιδώρου] α / Θεοφίλη γυνή) (τριώβολον) [col. 3, 7 lines from below; originally (mis)read with a final alpha rather than ēta, Θεοφίλα γυνή], and later in line 189–190 [col. 10 last two lines <http://pcount.arts.kuleuven.be/75/PCount26-ix-xiv.jpg>] as Τήρης Ἀρτεμιδώρου / Θεοφίλη γυνή). On the Jewish context, see Willy Clarysse, "Jews in Trikomia,"

3. Would the laudatory adjective *kratiste* (κράτιστε) be applied only to males in this period?

Cadbury shows that the term went through various phases, and by the third century CE tended to be mainly applied to Roman officials, but was used much more broadly before that. It can be shown to be applied to women from the third century BCE to the late Byzantine period.¹⁶ Whether *kratiste* in its masculine grammatical form might be a “frozen” term of honor, regardless of gender (compare English “your honor” or “excellency”) cannot easily be determined. The name or title with which it is associated (e.g., Θεόφιλος [masculine] or Θεοφίλη [feminine]) would presumably be determinative in such situations.¹⁷ As already noted, unlike Greek, Latin makes no such gender distinction for transliterated words

in *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Papyrologists, 23–29 August 1992* (ed. Adam Bülow-Jacobsen; Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1994), 193–203, 1 tabl., 1 graphique (<https://books.google.com/books?id=QOYO2qHYOU4C&pg=PA193&lpq=PA193&dq=Willy+Clarysse,+%E2%80%9C9CJews+in+Trikomia,%E2%80%9D&source=bl&ots=8I0iD0sAWl&sig=Rs78HfZ4-ykjMRFCdjkqvVwt1CQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=FhSmVMitB4qpNrLMgZAG&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Willy%20Clarysse%2C%20%E2%80%9C9CJews%20in%20Trikomia%2C%E2%80%9D&f=false>). A summary of Clarysse’s conclusions (pp. 202–3) is given in papyri.info data: The Jewish community of Trikomia (Arsinoite Nome) forms now the best known Jewish community of the Ptolemaic chora. Onomastics indicates that at least one-fifth of the population was of Jewish origin. Moreover the texts (in part. C.P.R. XIII, 4) show that the Jews in Trikomia were deeply Hellenized. In the same collection there occurs another reference to Τήρης Ἀρτεμιδώρου / Θεοφίλα γυνή [but the smudged final letter of Θεοφίλα, could possibly be *ēta*] — P. Count. 23 [= CPR 13 2] [= CPR 13 5 Ro] [254–231 BCE; tax list Arsinoites] col. 8 line 99. Other occurrences of Θεοφίλα found in the papyrological data (none of which links to photos for checking) include P. Petrie 2 43 a-b = P. Petrie 3 117 d descr. = P. Bodl. 1 p. 320 no. MS. Gr. class. c. 23 (P) [220 BCE] line 23 Θεοφίλα Σιμίου Βερενικίδος Αἰγιαλ[οῦ] . . . ; P. Baden 4 51 [ca 200 BCE letter] line 1 Θεοφίλα Διογνήτῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ / χαίριν(*) ; BGU 10 1942 = SB 10 10209 = CPS 210 [ca. 100 BCE; list of women textile workers] line 14 Θεοφίλα μαλλ[ο]υργεῖ. In Christian materials, Theophila is the name of the second virgin in Methodius Scr. Eccl., *Symposium sive Convivium decem virginum*. [2959.001] Oration 2 section t line 2.

16. Among the oldest known occurrences are the Scholia to Homer’s *Iliad* = TLG *Scholia in Homerum*, Scholia in *Iliadem* (scholia vetera) (= D scholia) 6.160, line 2.

Δία. Ἥτοι, κράτιστη, εὐγενεστάτη, εἰρωνικῶς. [Goddess Dia, is most excellent. well born, peaceful], and the *Life of Euripides* by Satyrus [third century BCE?] = Satyrus, *Vita Euripidis* (P. Oxy. 9.1176) {(A)} Εὖ γ’ ὃ κράτιστη πασῶν καὶ τῷ ὄντι Εὐκλεία . . . [most excellent of all . . . Eukleia]. In the first century BCE we find Markios preparing his family for his exile, including his “most excellent” of wives, Volumnia (Dionysius Halicarnassensis, *Antiquitates Romanae* 8.41.3 [line 2] [first century BCE]): Μάρκιος, ὃ μῆτερ ἅμα καὶ σύ, ὃ Οὐλομνία, κράτιστη γυναικῶν . . . In the late Byzantine period, we find the dead Queen Cleofe, in 1433, mourned by Nicephorus Cheilas, *Monodia in Cleopam Palaeologinam*, page 13, line 20: ὃ πάνθ’ ἡμῖν ἀρίστη καὶ θειοτάτη καὶ κράτιστη δέσποινα . . . [O you, in all things for us best and most holy, and most excellent lady].

17. The possibility that the adjective *kratistos* in its masculine form was sometimes used as a frozen term without reference to gender (“excellency”) is probably worth exploring. I have not attempted to do so.

ending in the "e" vowel.¹⁸ A noteworthy feminine use in Greek is in references to the *boulē* ("council," feminine noun) of a city, presumably with the sense of "honorable" or "respected."¹⁹

4. Were there female patrons in this period?

In chapter 9 (starting at p. 106) of *Her Share of the Blessings*, Ross Kraemer cites several instances of women who were recognized for their benefactions to and/or leadership in Jewish synagogue affairs (pp. 117–123) as well as other women patrons in early Christian contexts (chapter 12, pp. 174–181). She notes that in the Greco-Roman worlds at large, it was not unusual for economically advantaged women to be involved in religious-cultural affairs as well (e.g. pp. 191–92).²⁰ Whether Luke addresses an actual "patron" (a named individual, or an anonymous "God lover/loved" person) in the opening remarks in Luke-Acts is not important for the present argument; what is important is that *if* he is addressing a woman, the possibility that she is in some sense a patron is not demonstrably improbable. The extent to which women may have sponsored (financed?) literary activities such as the Luke-Acts project is worth further exploration.

18. The entry in the Liddell-Scott-Jones online lexicon at <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/#eid=39939&context=search> (ask for *kratiste* in Greek) identifies a range of uses for the adjective: b. as a title or mode of address, *κράτιστε* Θεόφιλε Ev.Luc. 1.3; esp. = Lat. *egregius*, *ὁ κ[ράτιστος] ἡγεμῶν* PFay. p. 33 (i A.D.); *ὁ κ. ἐπίτροπος* BGU 891 (ii A.D.); *ἡ κ.*, of a woman of the equester ordo, IG 14.1346 [a decree (ca. 42 CE) of the Arcadian polis Lykosoura honoring Nikasippos and his wife Timasistrata for their various benefactions]; also, = Lat. *clarissimus*, of Senators, *ὁ κ. ἀνθύπατος* ib. 9(1).61; *ὁ κ. συγκλητικός* IG Rom.3.581, etc.; *ἡ κρατίστη βουλὴ* POxy. 2108.6 (iii A. D.) [almost all occurrences of *κρατίστη* are with *βουλὴ* — 99 out of 103 in papyri. info].

19. Some form of *ἡ κρατίστη βουλὴ* appears frequently in the papyri, especially in the latter part of the third century and the early fourth century.

20. On women as patrons associated with collegia, see Karen Stern, "The *Marzeah* of the East and the *collegia* of the West: Inscriptions, Associations and Cultural Exchange in Rome and Its Eastern Provinces," in *XII Congressus internationalis epigraphiae graecae et latinae* (ed. Marc Mayer Olivé, Giulia Baratta, Alejandra Guzmán Almagro; Monografies de la Seccio historico-arqueologica 10; Barcelona: University of Barcelona, Institut d'estudis catalans, 2007), 1387–1404, esp. 1391. [<https://books.google.com/books?id=qicQg3RsV3g-C&pg=PA1391&lpg=PA1391&dq=patronae+opti/mae&source=bl&ots=evPqJkX3Vh&sig=FFJQ3WohwD4hR5e41PVsxXszeao&hl=en&sa=X&ei=0S2jVJDiLY-TyATn84CADA&ved=0CEMQ6AEwBg#v=onepage&q=patronae%20opti%2Fmae&f=false>].

Barbara F. McManus (co-director of the "VRoma" web project), online publication *Rome: Republic to Empire* page(s) [<http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/romanpages.html>] topic "Social Class and Public Display," with a subsection on "Public Display: Patronage" that contains some observations on involved women including: "Inscriptions throughout Italy and the provinces commemorate women as public patrons; another page details the impressive buildings erected by three major civic donors in the Roman east, Plancia Magna, Aurelia Paulina, and Regilla" [http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/women_civicdonors.html]. For a specific first-century CE example, see n. 18 above (Timasistrata).

Summary and Conclusions

The suspicion that Luke-Acts may have been dedicated to a woman named (or addressed as) Θεοφίλῃ rests on the fact that the author/editor of those volumes pays more attention to women—and especially to women with some social status—than do the probable sources employed. It is easy to understand how the vocative female name ending in *ēta* could quickly be “corrected” to the male vocative name ending in *epsilon*, most likely because pronunciation of those names would have sounded nearly identical, although such a change has left no clear trace in the available textual witnesses. The female name Θεοφίλῃ itself is very old (as is the male name Θεόφιλος) and is attested in various areas of the Mediterranean worlds, with various cultural connections. The description of the recipient as “most excellent” need not indicate a male or someone involved in government and could apply to a respected female as well. In short, for those who like to believe that things are not always what they seem, the possibility that Luke-Acts was dedicated to a woman—perhaps even a respected Jewish woman—is not difficult to imagine.

“This Poor Widow . . .” (Mark 12:43)

From Donation to Diatribe

AMY-JILL LEVINE

Vanderbilt University

In her aptly titled *Unreliable Witnesses*, Ross Kraemer writes, “far from corresponding easily and usefully to women’s experiences and lives, ancient sources deploy ancient ideas about gender, mapped onto female (and male) characters, to explore a range of issues of concern to their largely elite male authors and ancient audiences.”¹ This unreliability of reporting continues into some present reading strategies. Christian readers deploy Gospel descriptions of Jewish practice, already one step removed from the lives of (nonmessianic) Jews, map onto those practices today’s social concerns, and derive from this overlay lessons of concern to church-based audiences. The intention—to have the Gospel speak to social justice—is excellent; the results can be at best problematic in terms of both women’s history and Jewish/Christian relations.

Our test case for the interpretive construal of gender roles and Jewish practice is Mark 12:41–44, traditionally labeled “the widow’s mite.”²

The text, in a fairly literal translation, reads as follows:

And sitting down opposite the treasury, he was watching how the crowd cast money into the contribution box (γαζοφυλάκιον³). And many rich

* Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Harvard Center for World Religions, Union Theological Seminary, Duke University, and Murdoch University. My thanks to all who commented on this material, with special gratitude to Francis Clooney, Brigitte Kahl, Jodi Magness, Joel Marcus, William Loader, Jeremy Hultin, and Rowan Strong.

1. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 31.

2. A “mite” was the smallest copper coin in circulation in 1611, the date of the King James Version.

3. See Josephus, *J.W.* 6.282 (6.5.2 §282): “They also burnt down the treasury chambers, in which was an immense quantity of money, and an immense number of garments, and

people cast in much. And one poor widow, coming, cast in two *lepta*, which is a *quadrans*. And calling his disciples, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, the poor widow herself cast in more than all of those casting into the contribution box. For all [of them] cast in from their abundance [or surplus], but she from her need [or want] cast in all of whatever she had, her whole life."

The traditional interpretation views the woman as a moral exemplar who demonstrates wholehearted fidelity, who has agency and honor, who models ideal discipleship, and who anticipates the sacrifice of the Christ who gives his whole life. This interpretation is what Mark's ideal reader should find given the Gospel's language, its other comments about economics, the Gospel's narrative arc, and the study of early Christian ideas.

A more recent interpretation regards the widow as the subjugated victim of a collaborationist, elitist, and gender-restricted temple system, as having neither agency nor honor, and whose exploitation by the Jewish leaders and their Roman imperial associates prompts Jesus to predict the temple's destruction.

While the traditional reading has the stronger literary claims, it fails to interrogate the social problem of poverty, to question stereotypes of women or widows, and to query Jesus' objectification of the widow. While the revisionist view addresses social issues, its condemnation of the temple for oppressing the poor and promoting the empire, which therefore render it worthy of destruction, replaces history with politics.

I'm not happy with either scenario. Nor am I happy with several messages finding their way into pulpits. Condemnation of hypocrisy, institutional greed, and exploitation of the poor—what's here not to like? The problem occurs when, in the preaching moment, any historical nuance goes missing and Jesus comes to stand over and against Judaism (defined variously, or not at all) rather than being seen as part of it. When the widow becomes the stereotype of "the exploited" and the temple the stereotype of "what we don't like," at best the message is preaching to the choir. At worst, it will inculcate anti-Jewish views and leave the poor widow as a stereotype rather than a distinct individual with agency and piety.

As Kraemer displays in her numerous publications, feminist analysis and historical-critical work can work together for the benefit of both. Faulty historical grounding produces theological constructs vulnerable to rain, flood, wind, as well as archaeology, epigraphy, and primary source analysis. Strong historical grounding not only respects the past, imperfect

other precious goods, there reposit[ed]; and to speak all in a few words, there it was that the entire riches of the Jews were heaped up together, while the rich people had there built themselves chambers [to contain such furniture]." See also *J.W.* 6.387–391.

as our understanding of it is; such grounding also allows us to determine better what parts of our own histories to celebrate and critique.

The Traditional Reading: Widow as Exemplar

Until recently, interpreters have regarded the woman as a moral exemplar who intuitively knows what Jesus demands: that his followers give up their whole lives. She represents the *'ānāwīm*, the "poor and afflicted who find their joy in God alone"⁴ even as her self-sacrifice anticipates Jesus' own. This interpretation has both literary-critical and historical-critical support.

In terms of style, the pericope recapitulates Mark's interest in devoting one's "life" to the kingdom of God. Although the NRSV translates Mark 12:44b, "all she had to live on," *ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτῆς* literally means, *her whole life*." This is exactly what Mark's Jesus commends, and what he does on the cross.

Jesus had earlier instructed a potential disciple, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor (*πτωχοῖς*), and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" (10:21). Had the rich man receiving these instructions done what Jesus advised, perhaps our widow, whom Mark describes as "poor" (*πτωχή*) would have benefited.

The other disciples do what the young man could not: they give up their jobs, and their money, for Jesus. For their missionary work, Jesus "ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts" (6:8). He then adds, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (10:25). The widow, presented in contrast to the rich who cast money into the treasury, is the one who will enter the kingdom.

A few verses prior to introducing the widow, Mark recapitulates the concern for full dedication. In the temple, a scribe asks Jesus, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy 6 and Leviticus 19: "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart (*ὅλης τῆς καρδίας*), and with all your soul (*ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς*), and with all your mind (*ὅλης τῆς διανοίας*), and with all your strength (*ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος*).' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The scribe agrees: to live "with *all* (*ὅλης*) the heart and with *all* (*ὅλης*) the understanding—, and with *all* (*ὅλης*) the strength . . . this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." The word "*all*," *ὅλης*, reverberates.

4. Mary Healy, *The Gospel of Mark* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 254.

The same word describes the widow's action: she put in her ὅλη life," ὅλον τὸν βίον.

The scribe's gloss, "whole burnt offering," is ὁλο-καυτωμάτων (English: "holocaust") continues the echo even as it anticipates the widow's offering. The comparison of Jesus' death to a sacrifice promotes neither replacement theology nor condemnation of the temple. The offerings *have value*; the love commandments have more. The widow's action combines the positive temple setting with the positive application of the love commandments: in the temple, she gives her *all*; her donation too is worth more than any burnt offering. Her "reckless generosity parallels the self-emptying generosity of God himself, who did not hold back from us even his beloved Son (12:6)."⁵

For Mark, divestment is the ideal, and the widow epitomizes those who, because of this *kenōsis*, inherit the kingdom. The message has theological resonance, and for many readers, the ideal of self-sacrifice, shown by the widow, by John the Baptist, by Jesus, and by Christian martyrs exemplifies true piety.

The message should also prompt social critique. I worry when I read that the widow "possesses what God loves: faith. She believes he will meet all of her needs. . . . How different she is from the wealthy, who give only from their surplus (after their own needs are satisfied) and thus never feel the joyful pinch of self-denial in the cause of love (note 12:28–34)!"⁶ "Joyful pinch" is not quite the same thing as destitution. My feminist studies as well as my personal experiences have attuned me to the socialization of women to "give" and "sacrifice" for the family, the community. I am wary of telling one already socialized to give, to give more. I am similarly wary of the advice, "Do not worry; God will take care of you" (cf. Matt 6:18// Luke 12:27). The lilies of the field may be glorious, but they'll be dead in a week. It is not God who will give this woman her next meal; it is rather the Jewish system of *tzedakah*, the contributions that others make to the benefit of the community as a whole. The very temple to which she gives her last two coins will be the institution that will provide for her.

My discomfort with this woman's giving her whole life likely comes as well from my own Jewish values. The Tanakh does not extol poverty; it rather insists that the poor, the widow, the orphan and the stranger are to

5. Ibid; see also Bonnie B. Thurston, *Preaching Mark* (Fortress Resources for Preaching; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 142; Lamar Williamson Jr., *Mark* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1983), 229, 234; Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark* (Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 184: "within the value system of the Gospel, where giving one's life for the sake of many is paramount (Mark 10:45), and where selling all that one has and giving it to the poor is a condition of entry into the reign of God (10:17–22), the widow's donation aligns her with Jesus.

6. Geoffrey Smith, "A Closer Look at the Widow's Offering: Mark 12:41–44," *JETS* 40 (1997): 27–36, here 28, 31.

be aided by the community because they are under divine care.⁷ Deuteronomy 15:1 reads, "Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land." To be poor is to be in an unfortunate economic circumstance; the state of poverty is neither despised nor emulated. As Tevye the milkman memorably expressed this view: "Oh Dear Lord, you made many, many poor people. I realize, of course, that it's no shame to be poor. But it's no great honor either!"

Mark's Gospel repackages Deut 15:11 even as it provides a structural parallel to our widow. When a woman anoints Jesus with nard worth "more than three hundred denarii" that "could have been given to the poor" (Mark 14:5), Jesus explains, "For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me" (Mark 14:7//Matt 26:11). This anointing scene neatly matches the account of the temple donation; each depicts a single, silent woman, a concern for money (extreme wealth vs. extreme poverty), an action that Jesus uses as a lesson for his followers, a service to the divine, and an anticipation of giving of one's whole life. That Jesus symbolically replaces the temple according to the Gospel (Mark 14:58; John 2:19–22 offers a stronger replacement image) makes the connection between the two women even stronger.

These single women who lavishly dedicate their resources to the divine attest certain shifts in values available in the Second Temple period. Along with interest in honorable deaths (*martyrdom*), and self-discipline and celibacy (*askesis*), some Jews in the Hellenistic period found poverty a virtue to be pursued rather than a problem to be addressed. Texts such as 2 and 4 Maccabees and the optimistically named pseudepigraphon *Lives of the Prophets* extol the glories of martyrdom. Denial of wealth is, according to Josephus, part of both the Pharisaic ethos and Essene practice. According to the Gospels, Jesus promoted self-improvement for his immediate followers (Matt 19:21//Mark 10:21//Luke 18:22; Matt 19:27//Mark 10:28; Luke 5:11, 28); praised those who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven (Matt 19:10–12); split apart husbands and wives (Luke 14:26); and commended taking up one's cross (Matt 10:38//16:24//Mark 8:34//Luke 9:23).

The widow suggests all three interests. Her poverty is self-evident; her martyrdom suggested by her giving her whole life and by the analogy to burnt offering; her celibacy by her widowed state. Luke's Gospel enhances this third factor by locating two single women in the temple: our widow, who also appears in Luke 21:1–4, is anticipated by Anna, who

7. Beavis, *Mark*, 186, citing, e.g., Deut 10:18; 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:19–21; 25:5; 26:12–13; 17:19; Pss 68:5; 146:9; Prov 15:25; Isa 1:17; Jer 7:6; 22:3; 49:11; Zech 7:10; Mal 3:5; cf. Acts 1:1–3; 1 Tim 5:3–5, 16; Jas 1:27).

lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day" (Luke 2:36–37).

The more Jesus' followers promoted martyrdom, celibacy, and divesting of the worldly goods—concerns most evident in the Apocryphal Acts—the more the rabbinic tradition concentrated on sanctifying life in the here and now: escape martyrdom with trickery; get married and make babies; support the poor but do not voluntarily put yourself in a state of poverty. Giving "all that one has" makes sense in a context where celibacy and martyrdom are also promoted. The rabbis, focusing more on the communal than the individual, insisted on giving alms (*tzedakah*), but they rejected complete divestiture, for that would endanger both family and community.

Mishnah Peah begins, "These are the things for which no measure is prescribed: *Peah* [leaving corners of the fields; cf. Lev 19:9; 23:22], first fruits, the festal offering, deeds of loving kindness and the study of the Law" (1.1). The Jerusalem Talmud insists that limitless charity "concerns actions done with one's body (such as visiting the sick or burying the dead)."⁸ It does not extend to selling all one has on behalf of the poor.

This distinction in the view of poverty appears in a midrash with several parallels to our Gospel text. *Leviticus Rabbah* 3.5 reads, "A woman once brought a handful of meal as an offering. The priest despised it. He said, 'What sort of offering is that? What is there in it for eating or for a sacrifice?' But in a dream it was said to the priest, 'Despise her not; but reckon it as if she had offered *herself* as a sacrifice.'"⁹

Both the midrash and Mark describe a poor woman making an offering in the temple; in both, the woman serves as an illustration used by a credible source (Jesus, the dream) to instruct men in authority (a priest, Jesus' disciples). Both Mark and the midrash insist: do not judge a poor person's offering as meager; quality (or percentage) rather than sheer quantity counts. The structures of the stories match, but the messages diverge. For Mark, the widow is a model to be followed and a precursor of

8. See Gary Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 171–73.

9. Daniel Falk explains, "Leviticus 2:1 begins 'Anyone, when they bring a meal offering as an offering . . . ' The word 'anyone' is the word for one's soul, one's self [*nefesh*; the LXX offers *psyche*]. The rabbis here read 'anyone' as the object of the verb: 'When one offers one's self . . . '" (<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~dfalk/courses/ejud/rabbis2.htm>). D. E. Nineham proposes, on the basis of this midrash, that Jesus originally told a story of the widow, and that the story was then transformed into a story about Jesus (*St. Mark* [Pelican Gospel Commentaries; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963], 334). It is just as likely, if not more so, that either Mark (or Jesus) and the midrash are drawing on the convention of the pious widow, or even that the midrash is a gloss on the Gospel account. See discussion in Thurston, *Preaching Mark*, 141.

Jesus' sacrifice. For the midrash, a poor woman in the temple is an object lesson, not a moral exemplar.

The Revisionist Reading: Widow as Victim

As far as I can tell, the shift from the commendation of the widow to the condemnation of the temple comes with Addison G. Wright's article in *CBQ* in 1982, "The Widow's Mites: Praise or Lament? — A Matter of Context." Wright asks, "[A]part from the text, if any one of us were actually to see in real life a poor widow giving the very last of her money to religion, would we not judge the act to be repulsive and to be based on misguided piety because she would be neglecting her own needs?"¹⁰ He concludes:

Jesus' attitude to the widow's gift [is] a downright disapproval and not an approbation. The story does not provide a pious contrast to the conduct of the scribes in the preceding section (as is the customary view); rather it provides a further illustration of the ills of official devotion. . . . She had been taught and encouraged by religious leaders to donate as she does, and Jesus condemns the value system that motivates her action, and he condemns the people who conditioned her to do it.

The liberationist reading is not without exegetical support. Between the admiring scribe who commends Jesus' summary of Torah and the admirable widow who manifests *ἅλ λ'* that Jesus proclaims and does, Jesus teaches, *Β*eware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation" (Mark 12:38–40). The traditional reading sees the widow as the antithesis of the scribes: they show *ἄ*ounterfeit piety" whereas she shows "true piety."¹¹ The traditional reading sees antithesis; the revisionist reading sees cause and effect.

Following the description of the widow, Jesus tells his disciples: "Do you see these great buildings [i.e., the temple]? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down" (Mark 13:2). Again, cause and effect come into play as commentators conclude that the rapacious scribes represent the temple, the temple then exploited the poor, and con-

10. Addison G. Wright, S.S., "The Widow's Mites: Praise or Lament?—A Matter of Context," *CBQ* 44 (1982): 256–65, here 256. Wright offers a thorough summary of earlier research. Ron Allen explicitly notes, "Few passages have been as radically re-interpreted in my life-time as the story of the widow who places her two small coins in the temple treasury" (https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1273).

11. E.g., Healy, *Gospel of Mark*, 253.

sequently the temple deserves destruction. The best that can be said about the woman's circumstances, then, is § he is giving all that she has *and* she is abetting a system that will take away all that she has. It is truly a tragic situation facing the widow, because her means of practicing true piety is *at the same time* a system that is devoid of justice and it will, in turn, exploit her."¹² The logical, and unfortunate, conclusion from these moves is, as Joel Marcus trenchantly summarizes, "that [the] institution is barren, corrupt, and headed for judgment and ruin . . . so whatever is contributed to it is at best a waste and at worst a prop for a rotten, oppressive, and doomed system."¹³

W ight's opening comment, "ap art from the text," is telling: these various constructs tend to be decontextualized both in terms of Mark's Gospel and in terms of history. The result is a condemnation of the entire temple system and with it, usually, a misunderstanding (to put it gently) of Judaism. The following five examples, taken from a variety of genres (academic writing, homiletic engagement, liberation theology, postcolonial interpretation, etc.), show a developing consensus: the widow's story is a condemnation of the temple.

One author begins by asserting that scribes rule the temple: W e have been prepared to see this for what it is: an illustration of how the scribes who run the temple are devouring the house of a widow, all she had to live on, indeed literally, 'her entire life'. Whether or not this was a 'freewill' offering or a compulsory payment, this temple system has eaten another widow."¹⁴ Scribes, a vocational role, do *not* run the temple; priests, a hereditary role, do. Nor does Jesus associate these scribes with the temple. The scribes who devour widows' houses are *everywhere but the temple*: in marketplaces, synagogues, and banquets. To make the connection, we would need to see these scribes as priests or Levites.¹⁵ Mark makes no such connection. Had the venal scribes frequented the temple, like the scribe who asks Jesus about the commandments, they might have been less rapacious.

A second interpreter sees the story of the widow as showing why

12. Mark Davis, "Left Behind and Loving It," <http://leftbehindandlovingit.blogspot.com/2012/11/pretentious-pretenders-pressuring.html>.

13. Joel Marcus, *Mark 8–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AYB 27A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 861.

14. Byron Smith, "Nothing New Under the Sun," Nov. 13, 2005; <http://nothing-new-under-the-sun.blogspot.com/2006/11/widows-mite-mark-1241-44.html>. See also Thurston, *Preaching Mark*, 140: ". . . at issue is not so much the widow's generosity (although she is certainly that) as a corrupt religious system (personified by the scribes) that would ask of her 'all she has to live on'"; John Petty states, "She represents the on-going exploitation of the poor by the Temple elite" (http://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive_involvement/2012/11/lectionary-blogging-mark-12-38-44.html).

15. See Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 854–55.

Jesus wanted to destroy the temple: J̄esus was there to take down the Temple and its corruption, a corruption that stooped so low that it would take advantage of widows in their poverty. . . . Seeing this widow abuse, I believe, strengthened Jesus' already strong resolve to give his life to take this corrupt religious system down."¹⁶ Claims that Jesus wanted to "bring the temple down," based in political rhetoric and not historical observation, are belied by the New Testament itself. Had Jesus thought the institution was completely corrupt, it is difficult to understand why he would speak about his followers placing gifts on the altar (Matt 5:23),¹⁷ why he described a tax collector finding justification in it (Luke 18:10–13), or why his followers continued to worship there (Acts, *passim*). As the New Testament itself shows, the temple welcomed rich and poor, male and female (indeed, the setting of our pericope is the "Court of the Women"; see *m. Šeq.* 6.5), even Jew and gentile.

A third reader argues that Jesus' t̄eaching about the scribes and the widow provides a critique of two of the Temple's most egregious offenses: religious hypocrisy and economic exploitation of the poor."¹⁸ Corollary to this is the claim that the critique of the temple "is another example of [Jesus'] tacit elevation of women, his particular sensitivity to their circumstances."¹⁹ One might accuse Caiaphas of hypocrisy (in John's Gospel, Caiaphas turns hypocrisy into an art form), but that is not the same as accusing the institution of such. Nor is there any evidence of the temple "exploiting the poor" peasant. That Jesus is here engaged in critique *on behalf of women* is not clear either, especially since women may well have been among the ones who contribute out of their surplus as well.

I have found no sermons that analogize the temple to *local churches* where collection plates are passed, and where congregants watch to see who put in how much. One could regard a widow on a fixed income who put in a few dollars as victim of "economic exploitation"; one could see the church as engaging in "widow abuse." Conversely, one could also see her participation as voluntary (she did not need to show up in church; she could have put her contribution in an envelope), as personally meaningful, and as reciprocal since she can get food from the church pantry. It would be patronizing to tell "the poor" that they have nothing to contribute or that "we" know how they should spend their money.

A fourth commentator asserts, J̄esus' healings and exorcisms and his

16. André Resner, "Widow's Mite or Widow's Plight: On Exegetical Abuse, Textual, Harassment and Learning Prophetic Exegesis," *RevExp* 107 (2010), 545–53, here 549–50.

17. The reference perhaps alludes to Cain and Abel (Genesis 4); for a first-century Jewish audience, the only "altar" would be in the Jerusalem temple.

18. Dawn Ottoni Wilhelm, *Preaching the Gospel of Mark: Proclaiming the Power of the Word of God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 217.

19. Thurston, *Preaching Mark*, 142; Thurston, explicitly sensitive to issues of anti-Jewish teaching, is cautious as to whether the critique is present.

pronouncement of forgiveness of sins demonstrated that God's grace was now available outside the walls of the temple" especially to those prevented from receiving divine compassion because of the vigorous purity ethic enforced by some of the temple authorities." This reader concludes that Jesus views the widow with a sense of sadness and a tinge of exasperation . . . he was grieved at the way the temple and its functionaries manipulated her to part with what little she had."²⁰ Problems here are manifold. Nothing in the Gospels speaks to the temple as enforcing purity regulations save for Jesus' *command* to the man healed from leprosy to offer his gift at the temple. Nothing in Judaism suggests that grace is restricted to the temple. Nor does Jesus appear grieved with the widow's offering. Had he wanted to speak truth to power, he could have called out, "Hey lady, save your money." It wouldn't be the first time he disrupted temple activities.

A fifth reading offers that the widow's gift will "support accomplices and abettors of imperialism."²¹ This anti-Roman, and so anti-imperial, theme is found by locating the widow as sandwiched between Jesus' attack on Jewish religious authority, the collaborators with the Roman empire (12:38–40), and the subsequent story of the imperial institution symbolized by the 'temple' culture (13:1–2).²² Thus, the widow becomes a victim of "patriarchal society and colonization under the Roman empire" who consequently "had lost her national and personal identity."²³

The temple's relationship to Rome is complicated. The high priest had to work with the empire: Pilate controlled his vestments; Roman troops surrounded the Temple Mount on pilgrimage holidays. As part of peace-keeping efforts, the temple offered twice-daily sacrifices for the welfare of the emperor and the Roman people. At the same time, the temple represents the Jewish refusal to assimilate; it symbolizes not capitulation but independence and even imperial resistance.

Josephus describes how Pilate provoked a fresh uproar by expending upon the construction of an aqueduct the sacred treasure known as the *Coronas*. . . . He, foreseeing a tumult, had interspersed among the crowd a troop of his soldiers, armed but disguised in civilian dress, with orders not to use their swords, but to beat any rioters with cudgels" (J.W. 2.175–177). When Caligula attempted to put his statue in the temple, the people risk

20. R. S. Sugirtharajah, "The Widow's Mites Revalued," *ExpTim* 103 (1991): 43.

21. Tat-Siong Benny Liew, "Postcolonial Criticism," in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore; 2nd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 211–31, here 224.

22. Seong Hee Kim, "Rupturing the Empire: Reading the Poor Widow as a Postcolonial Female Subject (Mark 12:41–44)," *lectio difficilior* (1/2006), http://www.lectio.unibe.ch/06_1/kim_rupturing.htm Ibid, p. 225; see discussion of this article by Liew, "PostColonial Criticism," 225–27.

23. Kim, "Rupturing the Empire."

their lives in protest. Bar Kokhba put an image of the temple on his coinage precisely to show Jewish independence.

Viewing the widow as victim, ignorant, or complicit in contributing to imperialism and elitism is not what Mark's literary structure suggests, what Jesus' actions convey, or what my own feminist inclinations promote. Here I follow Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, who observes, "Wright's narrow contextual focus results in an unfortunate, if not unusual, case of 'blaming the victim.'"²⁴ I do not want to romanticize poverty, and neither do I want to deny this woman agency. Nor do I want to strip her of her connection to her own Jewish tradition, including the temple.

This Poor Widow . . .

Mark's widow is, in her narrative context, a visual example of wholehearted dedication, self-sacrifice, and piety. She becomes, like the woman who anoints Jesus, an object lesson for Jesus and a moral exemplar for Mark's readers. But in Mark's narrative, causes of poverty go unaddressed; the widow's fate especially goes unnoticed, given the predicted destruction of the temple—a temple in whose system she participates; and the widow's own interior thoughts go unnoted. She requires a political response.

The widow is, for revisionist readers, a victim of a corrupt system. The good news in their readings can be found in institutional critique, anti-imperial polemic, and attention to economic inequity. The conclusions, however, can derive from ahistorical moves, and they can threaten to inculcate or reinforce anti-Jewish readings even as they strip away the widow's agency and awareness.

The woman is necessarily an unreliable witness. She does not speak for herself, so we have to give her words. In doing so, we will project our own values and concerns, traditions and ethics, onto her. These projections then become part of our common discourse today, as we interrogate the arguments, and the evidence. From this process, even unreliable witnesses may tell us something about themselves, and about ourselves as well.

24. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Poor Widow in Mark and Her Poor Rich Readers," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 589–604, here 596.

Bayit versus Beit Midrash

Jewish Mother as Teacher

SUSAN MARKS

New College of Florida

Talmudic discussions recognize *only* a father as being obligated to teach his children (*m. Qidd.* 1:7; *t. Qidd.* 1:11). Rabbinic literature's images of mothers as teachers are few and far between. Nevertheless, mothers, or surrogate mothers, appear with children or are invoked by their children in ways that cause me to ask, Could this be considered teaching? What is teaching? In order to address this question I approach these texts not for their own rhetorical goals but as literary witnesses (of course unreliable witnesses) of practice. For it is "practice," "habitus" and "ritualization," and their development in the works of Pierre Bourdieu and Catherine Bell, which, of the myriad of ideas I first learned from and with Ross Kraemer, have most resonated with the questions I find myself asking, and which have most certainly shaped my career.¹ So, in honor of Ross, I examine evidence of those practices or habits embedded in the rabbinic family that cast mother as teacher. As rabbinic authors struggle to maintain the literary vision of an ideal male rabbinic world, texts will rarely, if ever, reveal the historic women who taught. They do, however, appear unable to erase all traces of teaching done by mothers.

In the fourth-to-sixth-century CE Babylonian Talmud we find the case of a father absent as his son grows up. The single mother has apparently seen to her son's receiving an education.² Having been years away studying, Rabbi Hama ben Bisa returns to his home, sending word ahead so as not to scare his wife (as occurs in the story preceding this one in the Tal-

1. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (trans. Richard Nice; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); and Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

2. This initial foray does not consider differences between tannaitic and amoraic texts, or between Palestinian and Babylonian materials, which deserves further scrutiny.

mudic collection). When he encounters an eager student at the Beit Midrash, the house of study, he fantasizes about how such a child might have been his, had he made other choices. The reader realizes (while he does not) that this is indeed his child. Meanwhile, his wife, the mother of this fantastic child, speaks only to him, her husband. Whatever role she had had in teaching her son remains invisible, despite several shared years:

[R. Hama b. Bisa] entered the house of study and sent word to his house. Meanwhile his son, R. Oshaia, entered, sat down before him and addressed to him a question on [one of the] subjects of study. [R. Hama b. Bisa], seeing how well versed he was in his studies, became very depressed. "Had I been here," he said, "I also could have had such a child." When he entered his house his son came in, whereupon he rose before him, believing that [the other] wished to ask him some [further] legal questions. His wife chuckled. "What father stands up before a son?!" (*b. Ber.* 62b)

R. Hama meets his son at the Beit Midrash, the seat of male learning. One reading of this text suggests that this educated son springs full-formed from this system of rabbinic transmission. Alternatively, given his appearance at his mother's house as well, the reader might wonder whether some sort of pedagogical relationship existed between mother and son. To avoid signaling this possibility, the text directs all of the mother's speech to her husband. The narrative simultaneously acknowledges and denies that the mother maintained a presence in her son's life and may have provided his access to education. Did she only convey him to other teachers, or did she do any direct teaching (assuming these can be altogether separated)? The text does not answer this, but it does present the mother as conversant with definitions for proper behavior, which she reveals when she laughs and suggests that a son should rise before his father, not a father before his son. Should this indicate that she has the requisite knowledge and has ably served as a teacher to her son? Whereas I am interested in the mother and son, the redactor wants to focus on the father.

What does this text contribute to an understanding of teaching by rabbinic mothers? On the one hand, the text remains cagey about a situation where the reader might expect that such teaching has occurred. On the other hand, it seems likely that such an arrangement would not have been so uncommon. Death as well as absence could account for many a single mother in this teaching role. This essay investigates this relationship of mother as teacher to her son. Elsewhere, the Babylonian Talmud even acknowledges that rabbinic families must sometimes rely on a mother, declaring that women earn merit by "taking their sons to learn at the synagogue" (*b. Ber.* 17a). Daniel Boyarin suggests that this sentence might

even include the idea of a mother “teaching her sons.”³ In addition, recent research suggests that, at times, halakhic decisions likely occurred outside the Beit Midrash, at symposia-like meals in various homes.⁴ While this does not necessarily undo the recognition of separate gender roles, it does necessitate a rethinking of rigidly distinct locations. If rabbis transmitted laws within a variety of houses, the roles played by the women of these homes and their relationship to these Talmudic discussions become even more important.

Kraemer once concluded that in the Greco-Roman world, literary sources furnish only the most minimal representations of mothers and daughters, in contrast to the depictions of fathers and sons, mothers and sons, and even fathers and daughters.”⁵ While the present study sets aside the study of mothers and daughters for another time, even the case above suggests that, in fact, the literary sources [will] furnish only the most minimal representations,” also with regard to sons and mothers, or at least in the case of mother as teacher. Only reading against the grain allowed a glimpse of mother and son. The above relationship looks like teaching not because finding mother and son together necessarily means teaching has occurred, but because the situation allows for the possibility, while the narrative depicts the mother sharing wisdom. Because of this last criterion, exhibiting knowledge enough to teach, it follows that understanding what rabbinic literature has to say about women’s learning might help reveal aspects of women’s teaching.

Much has been written about the gendering of Torah study as exclusively male, with ongoing debate concerning the success of such exceptional figures as Bruriah.⁶ Most recently Elizabeth Shanks Alexander

3. Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel: Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture* (New Historicism 25; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 194. In the absence of the father, the mother may have also found her son a profession or apprenticeship; see Amram D. Tropper who shows, for example, how *Lamentations Rabbah* 3.17 presents a mother who might “have arranged her son’s apprenticeship with a master-craftsman” (“The Economics of Jewish Childhood in Late Antiquity,” *HUCA* 76 [2005]: 189–233, here 223).

4. Gil P. Klein, “Torah in Triclinia: The Rabbinic Banquet and the Significance of Architecture,” *JQR* 102 (2012): 325–70. See also Susan Marks and Hal Taussig, eds., *Meals in Early Judaism: Social Formation at the Table* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

5. Ross S. Kraemer, “Jewish Mothers and Daughters in the Greco-Roman World,” in *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen; BJS 289; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 110.

6. Concerning women and the study of Torah, see Elizabeth Shanks Alexander, *Gender and Timebound Commandments in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 178–210; David Levine, “Why No Women in the Beit Midrash?” in *Introduction to Seder Qodashim* (ed. Tal Ilan, Monika Brockhaus, and Tanja Hidde; Feminist Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud 5; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 177–90; and Ross S. Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41–46. Concerning Bruriah and the study of Torah, see Judith R. Baskin, *Midrashic Women: Formations of the Feminine in Rabbinic Literature* (Brandeis Series

systematically confronts the seeming contradictions of a system of learning aimed only at men, which did occasionally allow women. She observes that “as rabbinically practiced . . . Torah study was a pious practice from which women were certainly excluded,” while at the same time “other passages imply . . . that women could engage in the intellectual activities at the heart of Torah study.”⁷ Alexander arrives at a new explanation. She offers different kinds of Torah learning, concluding that women may share in Torah study when it is instrumental, but not when it exists for its own sake in establishing a cultural vision. She distinguishes between learning that serves utilitarian purposes and learning that “perpetuat[es] their covenantal community”—this latter she calls Ritual Torah Study.⁸ Her explorations of women’s Torah study helpfully reveal gender dynamics in rabbinic literature. Nevertheless, I argue that the case of the mother of R. Oshaia raising her son alone, together with two additional examples of mothers/teachers, encounter the limits of Alexander’s model, deconstructing distinctions between instrumental and ritual. These examples further reveal the paradoxical significance and invisibility of mothers as teachers.

Ritual versus Instrumental Study of Torah?

Alexander rejects the traditional distinction of timebound commandments versus non-timebound commandments, categories that suggest that women are exempted from timebound commandments because of their childbearing responsibilities. She finds this distinction inconsistently invoked within rabbinic literature. She explains that:

unlike the majority of scholarly work on the rule, [this study] does not find women’s exemption from this class of commandments to flow from the fact that they are “occasioned by time.”⁹

In her search for ways to understand rabbinic constructions of gender Alexander chooses to dismantle this category, “examining . . . the process by which the rule came to be perceived as a programmatic statement about

on Jewish Women; Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2002); Tal Ilan, “The Quest for the Historical Beruriah, Rachel, and Imma Shalom,” *AJS Review* 22 (1997): 1–17; and David Goodblatt, “The Beruriah Traditions,” *JJS* 26.1–2 (1975): 68–85.

7. Alexander, *Gender and Timebound Commandments*, 178. Alexander develops her categories in light of Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett and Bennett Simon, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

8. Alexander, *Gender and Timebound Commandments*, 205.

9. *Ibid.*, 21.

rabbinic gender."¹⁰ In other words, her study looks beyond that category that has satisfied earlier scholars. She argues that women's exemption from the Shema and Tefillin has more to do with the connection of these practices to Torah study than time.¹¹ She distinguishes between instrumental and ritual Torah study in order to explain the cases of women in literature who do study and learn, despite arguments against such action.

Thus, according to Alexander, if instrumental Torah study by women, Torah study for the sake of some other purpose, does not pose a threat to the rabbinic male worldview. She concludes that by contrast:

Where Tannaim took the trouble to specify that Torah study properly excludes women, they did so precisely because they figured Torah study as a ritual means of transcending the self . . . men connected with their ancestors at Sinai, fellow sages in the contemporary world, and their sons destined to become the community of the future.¹²

For Alexander this second category, ritual Torah study, remains distinct because it describes study for its own sake, or put another way, for no other purpose than continually establishing their community.

Into these clear categories this present essay brings the question of teaching. Alexander does deal with teaching when she discusses the case of the "wife who teaches her husband Torah." According to Alexander, *Tosefta Ketubbot* 4.7 explores a way for the husband to "extract himself from his obligations" by offering an inverted contract stipulating that he marries her on the condition that she feed him, she support him and she teach him Torah.¹³ Alexander explains that teaching him "most likely means that she agrees to support his studies, since in the surrounding traditions, the Tosefta's interest is with financial support."¹⁴ Nevertheless, while Alexander concludes, in my view, the surrounding literary context supports a nonliteral reading of the phrase "that she teach him Torah,"¹⁵ I want to take up the possibility of women teaching literally.

Reexamining Ritual versus not Ritual

Alexander presents a productive way to think about the contradictory evidence surrounding the education of women in rabbinic literature. She moves beyond the rabbis' category involving time-bound commandments

10. Ibid., 13.

11. Ibid., 137–77.

12. Ibid., 205.

13. Ibid., 195.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., 196.

by revealing how the rabbis construct a community for men, as well as highlighting the many ways that their rulings on education guard their vision of this world. Nevertheless, a focus on teaching reveals that Alexander's categories are also not consistent. A mother's teaching must be "instrumental," since it appears as other than invested in the rabbinic male worldview that "figured Torah study as a ritual means of transcending the self," to return to the earlier quote from Alexander. And while I agree the mother of R. Oshaia b. Hama could not have been among the "fellow sages in the contemporary world," she apparently does share enough of their vision to transmit this vision to her son, Oshaia, who is, certainly, "destined to become [part of] the community of the future." In other words, R. Oshaia's mother does not quite fit the category, nor does it quite exclude her. Ultimately, a focus on teaching rather than learning causes Alexander's distinction between ritual and instrumental to break down.

Ritual teases us into making distinctions that prove ephemeral. Catherine Bell explains the pattern, naming one camp of influential ritual theories as those, "c ontrasting ritual/magical activity with technical/utilitarian activity."¹⁶ She explains why such a distinction must always fall apart:

Despite these sociological uses, the distinction between ritual and instrumental activity can easily collapse into a distinction between the rational and the irrational or the logical and the emotional.¹⁷

New categories blur into other binaries because the underlying distinctions prove ephemeral. Bell explains, "when activity is analyzed and categorized as something already finished, the very nature of activity as such is lost."¹⁸ In considering rabbinic approaches to learning, Bell would caution that naming the learning of women f nonritual" shortcuts a complicated set of actions and habits that cannot be consistently defined.

In fact, in many ways Alexander attends to Bell, constructing a consideration of rabbinic acts rather than the representation of ritual as the ossified object. Nevertheless, she does frame the category "nonritual." While Bell allows that "ritualization" can "draw attention to the way in which certain social actions strategically distinguish themselves in relation to other actions," Alexander goes further, fixing particular distinctions.¹⁹ With Bell in mind she defends her actions:

I retain the term "instrumental" while recognizing its limits . . . I argue that the rabbis ritualized intellectual activity (ritual Torah study) so that

16. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 70.

17. *Ibid.*, 71.

18. *Ibid.*, 72.

19. *Ibid.*, 74.

it accomplished things other than that which could be achieved by mundane, instrumental or nonritual Torah study.²⁰

In pursuit of defining an understanding of Torah study, Alexander also constructs an opposing category, one that cannot sustain itself, as becomes apparent upon consideration of women teaching. Alexander replaces “timebound commandments” with a category that helps explain the dilemmas encountered by those interested in women who studied Torah, but not those of women teaching. While a woman teaching appears to exist only in theory for Alexander, the case of the son, who — for whatever reason — grows up without his father, certainly existed in fact as well as theory. Two further examples emphasize that their learning does not deserve either the category ritual or instrumental.

Women Teaching Their Sons

As was the case in the story of the mother of R. Oshaia b. Hama, additional examples offer insights into the presentation of women/mothers teaching their sons. These narratives obscure as they reveal, indicating either how irrelevant the authors found the question, or how hard they worked (consciously or unconsciously) to overlook the possibility of mother as teacher. The quintessential example of the educated woman, Bruriah, appears as both a mother and as teacher, but never at the same time. Who is Bruriah? Scholars challenge the likelihood that the texts that name Bruriah have any early connection to those texts that concern the wife of Rabbi Meir or the daughter of ben Teradyon. A later hand appears to have merged separate narrative threads.²¹ Further, only a late narrative, *Midrash Mishle* 31.10, describes Bruriah as having sons.²² Overall the stories of Bruriah transmit mixed messages, but one of the various fragments depicts her as a mother. The text that presents her as having sons, however, only shows them as recently dead. The narrative depicts Bruriah breaking the news to Rabbi Meir, their father. Any possibility of our glimpsing a teaching relationship between Bruriah and these sons is thus dead before it is born. Such a mother as Bruriah may or may not have had a role in teaching her sons, but the text that imagines her as mother refuses even to imagine the possibility. As elsewhere Bruriah stands as the exception that proves the rule, here the barriers to her depiction as mother-who-teaches appear exceptional as well.

20. Alexander, *Gender and Timebound Commandments*, 206 n. 66.

21. Goodblatt, “Beruriah Traditions”; Ilan, “Quest for the Historical Beruriah.”

22. Goodblatt (“Beruriah Traditions,” 76) explains that its present form is medieval, although it may preserve earlier material.

Bruriah's teaching persona is then separate from her presentation as mother. One narrative, however, describes her as presenting important insights not to an established rabbi, but to a student, who is presumably younger and more junior. While nothing indicates that this student is a surrogate son, I include the story here because her teaching of this student emphasizes the urgency she associates with proper learning, and thus with teaching:

Bruriah found a certain disciple who was reciting his lesson in a whisper. She kicked him and said to him: "Is it not written [2 Sam 23:5] 'ordered in all and secure?' [That is] first order by means of [all your 248 limbs] it will be preserved. But if not, it will not be preserved." (b. *'Erub.* 53b-54a)²³

Her kick, whether or not it reflects good pedagogy, provides a corporal gesture that underscores the message: Let the words become part of your body. In this depiction of Bruriah teaching a student, she displays passion and commitment. To characterize the teaching she does as "instrumental" would have to overlook her scripturally underscored view that the learner must deeply internalize words and meanings. As in the case of the anonymous mother of R. Oshaia b. Hama, the stories of Bruriah do not ever depict her directly teaching her son, but demonstrate her teaching in ways that cannot be constrained.

In contrast to the above cases in which the teaching is only glimpsed beyond the explicit content of the narrative, the Talmud does present one son who reflects on the teaching he received from his mother: "Abaye said 'mother told me . . .'" In one of quite a few such instances, during a discussion of circumcision post-op practices, Abaye presents his mother as his teacher and transmits what he has learned from her:

We place a compress on it. Abaye said: mother told me: a salve for all pains is seven parts of fat and one of wax. Raba said wax and resin (b. *Šabb.* 133b).

Abaye invokes his mother's teaching to help his colleagues address the question before them. Note that Raba responds to the content of the teaching, not the unusual fact of Abaye citing his mother as the source of the teaching. Through Abaye's eyes we witness a mother who had taught her son in a way that stays with him and that serves him as he faces the halachic decisions of his day. Nevertheless, despite the respect she appears to command in the above passage, the talmudic context works to do two different things, claim and un-claim. The narrative presents other authorities (rabbinic authorities) differently than it presents Abaye's mother,

23. Translation from Goodblatt, "Beruriah Traditions," 78.

argues Charlotte Fonrobert. The formula for rabbis citing each other "contributes to the collective [male] character of rabbinic literature." Explains Fonrobert, "against this, the individualized form of the latter formula [for Abaye's mother] . . . interrupts the collective form."²⁴ In other words, yes, Abaye references her teaching, but in a way that marks her as an exception. It acknowledges her as a teacher of her son, but not part of the body of teachers.

An additional challenge emerges; while the narrative certainly shows Abaye describing what he learned from this woman, she is not his biological mother. Elsewhere in the Babylonian Talmud the author/editor challenges this mother-son relationship, presenting him as an orphan and the woman he refers to as teaching him, as "his foster mother" (*b. Qidd.* 31b). In other words, in the one clear case of a mother transmitting learning to her son, the texts must question whether she is technically his mother. Ultimately, however, Abaye refers to her as his mother. Her teaching stands as memorable and significant to his life. If the text insists on caveats, it only provides another example of a narrative that shies away from depicting a mother teaching her son.

Abaye's mother appears to be very much a recognized expert.²⁵ Fonrobert suggests that the Talmud quotes from her "anthology on infant care."²⁶ From this perspective we see a recognized author, familiar to others as well as to her son. Because of this authority Tal Ilan suggests we understand her not as Abaye's mother, but as a woman whose name is "Em." While Em can mean mother, Ilan explains that "the editors of the Talmud . . . knew that this woman could not have been Abaye's mother. . . . They solved the contradiction by assuming that the woman in question was his adoptive mother."²⁷ For Ilan, the narrative minimizes this woman's accomplishments by presenting them as those of Abaye's mother rather than her own.

In so many ways these rabbinic texts question this mother-son relationship between Abaye and mother/Em. Does the text only connect her to Abaye to minimize her authority? Or alternatively, was there a connection they couldn't ignore? Whatever answers we put to these questions, none of the questions about Abaye's exact relationship to this woman or hers to him undo the insistence of the textual "Abaye" that he transmits knowl-

24. Charlotte E. Fonrobert, *Menstrual Purity: Rabbinic and Christian Reconstructions of Biblical Gender* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 152.

25. Tal Ilan, "Female Personalities in the Babylonian Talmud," in *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, ed. Paula E. Hyman and Dalia Ofer, Jewish Women's Archive, 1 March 2009, n.p. Online: <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/female-personalities-in-babylonian-talmud>. She notes that "Abaye's mother" is "mentioned in no fewer than seventeen separate incidents in the Babylonian Talmud."

26. Fonrobert, *Menstrual Purity*, 155.

27. Ilan, "Female Personalities."

edge learned from her. Abaye states repeatedly that “she told me X.” To whatever extent we understand this woman as his *fn* other,” the text still records a trace of her teaching him.

Thus we have three examples of teaching possibly done by a mother, or a mother surrogate. Each reveals a glimpse of important learning and/or transmission, remembered or witnessed. Attention to women learning, as explained by the Babylonian Talmud, or challenged by Alexander, does not account for the educated sharing of these mothers. Significantly, none of the narratives tell of mothers teaching without undercutting this perspective in one or more ways. The talmudic anxiety regarding absent fathers as well as the inevitability of such fatherless sons suggests the existence of such mother-teachers, while the caginess in the textual examples highlights the narrative’s dual challenges of imagining a women-less teaching force or imagining women who teach. These struggles suggest the need for further research into such contradictory literary presentations of mothers, and the traces of historic mothers concealed therein.

In Her Own Words

Religious Autobiography and Agency in Lucia Brocadelli, a Woman Writer of Early Modern Italy

E. ANN MATTER

University of Pennsylvania

Historians of Christianity have often pondered the question of women's authorship and "authentic" female voices in Christian documents. The Christian tradition can boast of a number of women authors; but the traces of first-person accounts in the tradition often lie embedded in the mediating layers of male authorship. This essay will discuss a female author who stands as an exception to this general rule, Lucia Brocadelli da Narni, a sixteenth-century Italian visionary whose personal voice was strong enough actually to invert the norm and speak for her men rather than having them speak for her.

As Catherine Mooney has put it, in the Christian tradition,

... men, and clerics in particular, exercised nearly complete control over the textualization of women's utterances. Women's words almost invariably reach us only after having passed through the filters of their male confessors, patrons, and scribes¹

Although Mooney was referring specifically to the Middle Ages, the tradition of Christian women's voices cloaked in men's texts is far older. Here I will discuss just two notable examples, the voices of Vibia Perpetua from the early Christian era, and Hildegard of Bingen from the twelfth century. One of the earliest documents thought to be the record of an

1. Catherine M. Mooney, "Voice, Gender, and the Portrayal of Sanctity," in *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters* (ed. Catherine M. Mooney; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 7.

authentic female voice in the Christian tradition is *The Passion of St. Perpetua, St. Felicitas, and their Companions*, an account of the heroic death of two Christian women martyrs and their retinue at Carthage in the early third century.² Many scholars believe that the central narrative of this text, written in the first person, is an autobiographical account by Vibia Perpetua, one of the protagonists, onto which a framing narrative was crafted by a male author, perhaps the noted theologian Tertullian.³ As Shira Lander and Ross Kraemer describe the layers of text: "In its final form, the *Passio* of Perpetua and Felicitas consists of three narrative layers. The middle core claims to be the original account of the martyr Perpetua herself, just as written by her own hands and from her point of view: "sicut conscriptum manu suo et suo sensu."⁴

A very similar form of composition is hypothesized for the *Vita* of the twelfth-century Benedictine nun and visionary Hildegard of Bingen. Although Hildegard was the named author of some of the most famous visionary works of medieval Christianity, her *Vita*, the story of her life, has been shown to have multiple layers of authorship, beginning with a core that is "a first person memoir written or dictated by Hildegard herself, recounting key events in her life from birth through 1170."⁵ Hildegard died in 1179, leaving her autobiography to be finished by her longtime secretary, Volmar, and two other monks from her Benedictine world.⁶

As is well known, many other medieval Holy *W* men only found their literary voices through the mediation of the men who acted as their protectors and agents; this was especially true for the women of the new Mendicant orders, Franciscans and Dominicans, in the later Middle Ages.⁷ This

2. This work is known in both Greek and Latin. See the critical edition of Jacqueline Amat, *Passio de Perpétue et de Félicité suivi des Actes: Introduction, texte critique, traduction, commentaire et index* (SC 417; Paris: Cerf, 1996), and the English translation of Herbert Musurillo in *Acts of the Christian Martyrs: Introduction, Texts and Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972). For a more recent English translation, see Thomas J. Heffernan, *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). The generally given date of 203 is a scholarly approximation.

3. For a survey on the debate about authorship, see Shira Lander and Ross Kraemer, "Perpetua and Felicitas," in *The Early Christian World* (ed. P. Esler; London: Routledge, 2000), 2:1048–68, and Brent Shaw, "The Passion of Perpetua," *Past and Present* 139 (May 1993): 3–45. On p. 1061, Lander and Kraemer say, "it seems wise to conclude that the matter cannot be resolved with any certainty."

4. Lander and Kraemer, "Perpetua and Felicitas," 1054; *Passio* 2.3, ed. Amat, 106–7.

5. Barbara Newman, "Hildegard and Her Hagiographers: The Remaking of Female Sainthood," in Mooney, *Gendered Voices*, 17. An excellent introduction to Hildegard is Barbara Newman, *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

6. Newman, "Hildegard and Her Hagiographers," 17–18.

7. Besides the Essays in *Gendered Voices*, see John W. Coakley, *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), Coakley, "Gender and the Authority of Friars: The Significance of Holy Women for

tradition continued into the Early Modern period, when a group of Holy Women who have been dubbed "Living Women Saints" played important roles at the courts of the rulers of Northern Italy and left us their spiritual reflections mostly through the help of their male colleagues.⁸

I choose to focus on Lucia Brocadelli da Narni because of the novel way in which she expresses her voice within a tradition not accustomed to innovations, while proceeding with established protocols of personal expression and autobiographical representation (hardly the "self" usually voiced by Christian women authors). Suor Lucia was one of the most revered of the *Sante Vive*, the prophetess of the Estense court of Ferrara at the turn of the sixteenth century. A Penitent of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, suor Lucia's notable fame faded after the death of her patron, Ercole, when, because of the disappearance of her stigmata, and even more because of the dislike borne her by Ercole's heir, Alfonso I, she was stripped of her authority and virtually held prisoner in the house that Ercole had built for her. Ercole died in 1505, but Lucia lived another thirty-nine years, dying in 1544. Some years after her death, the great Dominican hagiographer Serafino Razzi mentioned the existence of a book of revelations written by suor Lucia.⁹ However, all trace of this was lost until a manuscript was found in the Biblioteca Civica of Pavia and made known to be an autograph copy of seven revelations shown to her by the Virgin Mary and St Paul.¹⁰

An investigation of the "authentic voice" of Lucia Brocadelli da Narni has been enhanced by the discovery of another text by suor Lucia: her *Vita*. This text was found in the Archivio della Provincia dei Frati Minori [Antoniano] of Bologna.¹¹ The manuscript of 204 pages is written in a hand of the early eighteenth century and is entitled *Vita della B[eata] Lucia da Narni*

Thirteenth-Century Franciscans and Dominicans," *Church History* 60 (1991): 445–60; and Catherine M. Mooney, "The Authorial Role of Brother A. in the Composition of Angela of Foligno's Revelations," in *Creative Women in Medieval and Early Modern Italy: A Religious and Artistic Renaissance* (ed. E. Ann Matter and John Coakley; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 34–63.

8. See the classic work of Gabriella Zarri, *Le sante vive: cultura e religiosità femminile nella prima età moderna* (Turin: Rosenberg e Sellier, 1990).

9. Serafino Razzi, *Seconda parte delle Vite de' Santi e Beati dell'Ordine de' Frati Predicatori, nella quale raccontano la vita, & opere, di molte Sante e Beate Donne del medesimo ordine* (Firenze, 1577), 151–54.

10. "Le Rivelazioni of Lucia Brocadelli da Narni," ed. E. Ann Matter, Armando Maggi, and Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 71 (2001): 311–44. For a close description, see E. Ann Matter, Armando Maggi, Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner and Gabriella Zarri, "Lucia Brocadelli da Narni—Riscoperta di un Manoscritto Pavese," *Bolletino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria* 100 (2000): 173–99. The manuscript is Pavia, Biblioteca Civica "Bonetta," (BCPB) MS II.112 (formerly B1).

11. Archivio della Provincia dei Frati Minori [Antoniano], Bologna (APFMB) Sez. VII MSS XIX, 41.

Domenicana copiata dell'autografo della d[ett]a Beata. An edition by Gabriella Zarri and E. Ann Matter was published recently.¹²

In spite of the late date of the manuscript, there is little doubt that this is truly a writing of beata Lucia da Narni: many of the characteristics of the *Rivelazioni* of Pavia are also found here. These include visions of castles full of angels of the orders described by Pseudo-Dionysius; Jesus, who invites the visionary Lucia to look into his breast and his face as in a mirror; and, as Tamar Herzig has noted, a savonarolian penumbra throughout.¹³

I would like to call special attention to the problem of voice in this narrative. In doing so, I hope to call attention to the interesting ways in which suor Lucia finds her own voice.

The narrative of suor Lucia's *Vita* is complex and interesting. In contrast to her twelve *Rivelazioni*, all told in the first person, here the beata recounts her story in the voices of three father confessors: fra Martino da Tivoli, fra Tommaso da Firenze, and fra Domenico da Calvisano. In the internal time of the *Vita*, as seen by her, all three are already dead ("per essere tutti nella sua celeste e felice patria,"),¹⁴ but they testify to suor Lucia's fame on earth, and to the love felt for her by the entire Celestial Court.

Each confessor speaks for a while, and then, Lucia says, "hey all got to their feet and spread out, leaving me with a great perfume and a great contentment in my heart."¹⁵ Fra Martino returns the following night, and, at the fervid request of suor Lucia, promises to return often to tell her the details of her life, as he had written it, for many years, going back over many memories of her extraordinary career. But it is interesting to note that fra Martino always speaks through the voice of someone else who had reminded him of the story he is telling. For example, speaking of suor Lucia's birth, he says:

I will tell you in part what I have written, what things I know from the happy memories of your mother and your aunts, for example, Caterina, your father's sister, and sor Agnese, your mother's sister, and many other women, your neighbors and friends of your household, who were present when you were born, all good and reliable people. The first story I have from your mother is this, that when she was pregnant with you and the birth was near, she saw in a dream that it seemed she gave birth to a

12. E. Ann Matter and Gabriella Zarri, eds., *Una mistica contestata: La Vita di Lucia da Narni (21476–1544) tra agiografia e autobiografia. Con l'edizione del testo* (Temi e Testi 87; Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2011). All translations from this work are mine.

13. Tamar Herzig, *Savonarola's Women: Visions and Reform in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 79–82.

14. *Una mistica contestata*, ed. Matter and Zarri, 3–4.

15. *Ibid.*, 10.

daughter who had five crosses on her body, one on each hand, and one on each foot, and one right on her heart, and the crosses were of gold, and small. And from the moment you were born, it seemed to her in her dream that the women who were there at your birth took you to your mother, and when she saw you so marked with five crosses, she raised a great lament, in such a way that your father heard her, and woke up from sleep, and said "Sister, what is the cause of your lament?" And she reported her dream step by step, and your father told me over time that he answered your mother & on't get anxious about this thing, because God has shown this in a dream as he did with Joseph, son of the Patriarch Jacob [cf. Gen 37:1–11] and many others found in Sacred Scripture, so do not have any anxiety about your dream because God has shown you these signs because he wants our little daughter to be his servant and his bride, marked with the sign of his holy cross, not once, but five times, for his five holy wounds."¹⁶

The narrative voice is actually that of Lucia, who tells the story that her parents told fra Martino, and fra Martino then told her. In other words, the narrative progression here is actually the opposite of the usual medieval rhetorical device in which the father confessor speaks for the Holy Woman; here, the Holy Woman enfolds the words of her confessor into her own autobiographical account.

It is important to underscore the innovative role of rewriting as Lucia's original way of reappropriating her voice.

By working through a palimpsest of reports that have supposedly preserved her own voice, Lucia innovatively establishes a way of self-expression unknown to the canon, through, but not against, the authorized voices of the male scribes, she cleverly finds a way of talking about herself. This is extremely close to expressing herself in her own voice at the same time in which she is writing. But at the same time, this rewriting strategy constitutes a radical innovation and creates a consistent possibility of actually having a voice.

The diverse rhetorical strategies exhibited in the narrative become quite sophisticated: a bit further along, the narrative becomes even more complicated, when Lucia's report includes fra Martino speaking of things he had been told either by Jesus or by Lucia herself:

And then it happened, then you were eight years old, that the Lord appeared to me and said: 'Fra Martino, Son, I wish to give you a young girl to be my daughter; she is named Lucia, and I have chosen her as my bride. . . . And then he said: "Know, Son, that I chose her as my bride when she was seven years old. And when you told me about the vision you had in the house of your ancestor, above the church of Saint Augus-

16. *Ibid.*, 11.

time, when you were seven years old, I had no more doubt, and was more certain about my vision.¹⁷

So, here, suor Lucia speaks in the voice of her confessor who tells her what she had told him. In an original and important move, she is actually subordinating her Confessor's voice to her own!

It is surely the desire to "certify" the visions that leads suor Lucia to weave this complicated narrative system. But this narrative system is difficult for her to sustain, and we see every now and again the surfacing of that insuppressible "I". For example, we find a first-person suor Lucia when she throws herself into a long story about a vision of Purgatory, where she was able to intercede for and to free many friends and relatives, but not Pope Alexander VI, who was, instead, in hell. Suor Lucia exhorts:

In the name of our Father Saint Dominic, 1544.

Venerable and dear Father Confessor, all of the things that I have written in this little book were seen and shown on the feast of my sweetest Angelic Father, Saint Dominic, through divine goodness, and through the merits of our most holy Angelic Father, and not through any of my merit. To the praise of my sweetest Spouse, and out of obedience to you, because they are great and beautiful things, I have put them in a book so that Sweet Jesus be praised and glorified forever.¹⁸

Later on in the text, she returns to the novelistic narrative, or rather, to an imaginative fiction, when she says:

Having gone one time to that church called Santa Maria della Selva, on the very day of the joyful Ascension. Father, I cannot write any more as myself because my sweetest father, fra Martino has just appeared here with me. And he began to speak in this way: "My beloved daughter, when you went to that church on that morning, Ascension Day, I came with you because you had begged me a lot to come and give [you] Communion, because it was your custom to take Communion on all of the principal feasts of Mary, and I, who loved you strong and great, more than anyone on earth, could deny you nothing, especially nothing spiritual, and I came with you."¹⁹

Two things are evident here: (1) that although suor Lucia uses different voices to tell her story, she is firmly in charge of her discourse, and (2) that she allows fra Martino to speak in a manner even more prolix than she does.

But what is truly striking about the voice here is the inversion of the

17. *Ibid.*, 15.

18. *Ibid.*, 92.

19. *Ibid.*, 210.

usual medieval narrative of the Father Confessor speaking for the female visionary; here we have a visionary woman who makes a father confessor speak for her. And, ironically, this difference makes it clear that suor Lucia has understood the "rick" of an authoritative narrative voice, preferably from a divine source, and, by displacing it, is using it for her own ends. The agency of Lucia's voice is indeed surprising in a tradition of women's "auto-biographies" that normally relinquish the power to speak in "her own voice," entrusting it to some formally established authority figure. When one works through a palimpsest of testimonials and testimonies, Lucia's voice manages to be heard, not just in spite of the filter of her Father Confessor and scribe, but above and beyond it. Lucia Brocadelli thus demonstrates that even the constrictions set on female religious authority and agency in the Christian tradition could be used by an especially creative and self-aware woman to turn the tables and express her own autobiographical voice.

Witnesses from Medieval Mediterranean Society

The Reliability of Jewish Women's Narratives from the Cairo Genizah

RENÉE LEVINE MELAMMED

Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

One would not normally expect to be able to find reliable witnesses who could relate details of women's lives in medieval Mediterranean society. After the discovery of the Cairo Genizah, however, this assumption was radically altered, especially for researchers dealing with the Jewish and Muslim worlds. The vast number of documents and fragments of documents that had been stored in a genizah in an attic of the Ibn Ezra synagogue in Fustat (Old Cairo) revealed a world that had not been previously imagined.¹ A genizah was usually intended for storing used or worn-out documents containing the name of God or that were written in Hebrew letters, and many of these findings are indeed in the Hebrew language or even in Aramaic. The majority of the material stored had been written in Judeo-Arabic, a language developed by Jews living in Arab lands, which is a form of medieval Arabic written in Hebrew letters. The holiness attributed to Hebrew letters meant that these papers that no longer had any use or were worn-out had to be stored or buried and were not to be discarded.

This treasure contains documents, the majority of which date from 950–1250, such as letters, wills, legal papers, and rabbinic responsa (questions and answers) that enlighten us about women's lives. One discovers material belonging to what S. D. Goitein called "The World of Women," a

* This research was supported by the Israel Science Foundation (grant No. 488/11).

1. For basic information about this storehouse, see Stefan Reif, ed., *The Cambridge Genizah Collections: Their Contents and Significance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) or Peter Cole and Adina Hoffman, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza* (New York: Schocken, 2011).

world in which their voices are heard.² When a legal question was posed by a woman, it revealed aspects of women's lives even though it may well have been recorded by a man. When dealing with letter writing, one cannot always determine if a letter sent in a woman's name was indeed written by her or whether it was dictated to a family member or composed by a professional scribe.³ Yet this is often the case with men's letters as well, for a scribe might be commissioned because of his reputation for embellishment or erudite style or ability to add the appropriate and required blessings and biblical phrases required by protocol when composing a proper letter.

Although men were likely to be more literate than women, this in no way prevented women from sending letters. Because this Mediterranean Jewish society was extremely mobile and travel was commonplace, especially for the numerous merchants, one can easily understand the need for letter writing. Women were communicating with their husbands, mothers, fathers, sons, brothers, and other relatives. The letters they received and wrote reveal a world of emotions, tension, worries, complications, misunderstandings and stress. In some cases, women were turning to male leaders in the community when they found themselves in a difficult situation, usually after all other options had been exhausted. In addition, women were actively communicating in order to update those members of their family who were out of town or as representatives of family businesses or in order to attempt to rectify injustices they perceived.⁴ In no other medieval Jewish community can one hear a women's voice as clearly as in what has been termed the Genizah society.

Two types of testimony will be analyzed here, namely, documents belonging to the Jewish court, which usually required a rabbinic decision, and letters, written to the familiar as well as to the unfamiliar such as a community leader. The examples of the latter type of letter involve property and marital affairs, while the former range from the most personal to purely business matters. In Fustat [Old Cairo] and other medieval Mediterranean communities, women appeared in court and their testimonies were preserved in many legal documents. For example, in 1217, a young woman named Sitt al Tana, who was no longer a minor, was asked to testify in the court that was under the supervision of Abraham, the son of Maimonides.⁵ Her father had died while she was an infant and had left

2. See S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (6 vols.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–93). The "World of Women" appears in 3:312–59, 496–507.

3. See Joel L. Kraemer, "Women Speak for Themselves," in Reif, *Cambridge Genizah Collections*, 187–89.

4. For details on travel, see Goitein, *Mediterranean Society* 3: 336–41.

5. The original manuscript is TS NS 226.12. See also Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 3:280. Maimonides (1135–1204), the eminent Spanish scholar who arrived in Fustat/Cairo

instructions as to how to deal with his property. This witness confirmed the fact that the executor of her father's estate had dealt correctly and honestly with her and that she had received what she was due including rent that was collected from his property.

In another property dispute, which occurred in the second half of the twelfth century, one discovers that a widow suffering from an unsuccessful second marriage sought to extricate herself from this tie, but her husband would not comply.⁶ Thus, the only option available for her was to redeem herself, meaning essentially that she had to give up the later installment of the marriage gift due her (called the delayed payment) and her marriage contract; as a result, her husband would be forced to grant her a writ of divorce.⁷ Things did not go smoothly for this woman: upon hearing about her plan, the husband left town and died unexpectedly. His property would be transferred to his inheritors and used to pay debts. His widow informed the court that her husband had died before granting her the divorce writ although her delayed payment and marriage contract had indeed been liquidated. The court told her she was not entitled to anything because she had redeemed herself, but she took issue with this decision.

Maimonides was asked to rule in this case, but, interestingly enough, not because of her objections to the court ruling, but because there was a serious concern that she might approach a gentile court in order to obtain a more favorable ruling.⁸ It was possible that on the basis of her statements, property that had already been sold to cover the husband's debts or had been distributed to other family members might have to be redistributed so that she would receive a portion. If her testimony had not been viewed as reliable, one doubts that the Jewish court would have been so anxious to prevent possible complications. Maimonides does not deal with this issue in his response but does offer a solution to another problem that arose. This woman planned to remarry, but the court would not permit her to do so; it labeled her a "killer wife," a woman who had been widowed twice.⁹ Maimonides objected strenuously to such classifications

in 1167, had one son and heir, Abraham, who lived 1186–1237. The son continued in his father's footsteps, becoming the head of the community, establishing a hospital, and displaying impressive scholarship in his writings.

6. The original is located in Copenhagen, Simonsen Library B 29; its transcription in Judeo-Arabic and Hebrew translation can be found in Jehoshua Blau, *R. Moses b. Maimon Responsa* (Jerusalem: Ruben Mass, 1986), vol. 1, no. 15, 22–24.

7. See Mordechai Akiva Friedman, "The Ransom-Divorce Proceedings in Mediaeval Practice," *Israel Oriental Studies* 61 (1976): 288–307.

8. The Muslim court ruling would be binding.

9. For a discussion of the "killer wife," see Avraham Grossman, *Pious and Rebellious: Jewish Women in Medieval Europe* (Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series; Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 262–72.

and knew that marriage would provide sustenance for this widow, who had no ostensible income. As a result, he gave instructions as to how to arrange her third marriage. If her testimony had not been viewed as reliable, one doubts that the Jewish court would have been so anxious to prevent complications.

The following legal document concerns a widow with two sons and was recorded in 1171, also during Maimonides' lifetime.¹⁰ This woman wanted to remarry, but her deceased husband had made no provisions for her whatsoever. The following is a translation of the document which clearly does not question the reliability of this woman as a witness:

1. When Sitt al Hassan daughter of the elder Moshe, may his soul rest in paradise, widow of the sheikh Abu Alkayr the . . . , asked
2. To marry Sheikh Abu Ali the Cohen, son of Sheikh Abu al Hassan the elder Cohen, may he rest in Paradise, we asked her
3. We, the court, about what Abu Alkhayr the Cohen, her "man," left behind. And she said: "He did not leave me anything." And we said to her:
4. "Swear to this." She said: "Yes, I swear by an oath that binds me according to Jewish law." And this was
5. From her older son Abu Netzer. And we exempted her son Abu Netzer: "Oh, my son, do you know if your father (left anything)
6. With your mother?" And he said: "I don't know if my father left anything of the clothes, furnishings. . . .
7. And not merchandise and not dirhams and not dinars and not household utensils." And we repeated the question to the youth. And we said
8. To him: "Take care, if you knew anything or anything was said to you along these lines. Know that if your mother
9. Swears before us about what your father bequeathed (in taking anything), only then can she wed
10. And enter on her own into a marriage. Whatever (debt) remains for you from her will not be claimable." And the aforementioned lad said:¹
11. Know the situation of our mother and what she lacks and her poverty and that my father did not leave her anything. And I absolve her
12. Of the oath that I and my brother are required to take according to the law. And I take full responsibility for my little brother. And we bought
13. We, the undersigned, from Abu Netzer, the aforementioned fellow, a full acquisition, complete, in the wording that as of now, he has already exempted his mother,
14. The aforementioned Sitt al Hassan, from now on from the obligatory oath upon her according to the law, a complete and total exemption,

10. TS 10 J 26.4 is the manuscript. This document was transcribed and translated into Hebrew by Amir Ashur as part of the above-mentioned ISF project.

15. Final, real. And that he takes full responsibility for his younger brother, and he has by him and in his authority for his younger
16. Brother, all that is incumbent upon him and [if] his younger brother will sue him when he reaches maturity, for overturning the aforementioned oath,
17. He will not be exempt from what his younger brother sues him for but rather for the exemption of his mother, Sitt al Hassan, from the aforementioned oath.¹¹
18. And what was before us we wrote and we signed so it would be a title of rights
19. And it is all valid and all this occurred in the month of Tishrei 1171 in its first tenth, under the authority of
20. Our Lord, Moshe, the great rabbi, may his name last forever and be written as a merit.

Here is an example of a widow desiring to remarry but first having to take an oath concerning whether or not she had any of her deceased husband's property. She claimed not to have received anything whatsoever. Her older son took it upon himself to ascertain his mother's claims and not to subject her to the widow's oath.¹² Because of his brother's age, the second son was too young to take part in this discussion but might possibly object to the elder brother's actions at a later date. There seemed to be no doubt in anyone's mind, however, that this Cohen had not made any provisions for his family after his death. This situation enabled the widow, who had been left in an impoverished state, to remarry. While there is no signature on the document, the court that Maimonides conducted took responsibility for the proceedings, relying upon the woman and her son's testimonies. The court clearly accepted her as a reliable witness.

When writing their letters, these women were recording events and impressions of events; in short, they were providing informal witness testimony for the intended recipient and, unknowingly, for later readers of these letters as well. One letter has been the source of scholarly debate because of different readings and transcriptions and because some terms that appear there are rather difficult to identify. In this instance, a young girl, Najmiya, sends her father a letter whose content includes the personal as well as business matters, as was often the case.¹³ She used a

11. Here the scribe inserted three words (מנה אלא בראה) "but rather for the exemption" between the lines for emphasis, stating once again that the mother is exempt from the matter, in other words, exempt from taking the oath.

12. The widow has to swear that she has not received anything from her marriage contract funds in order to claim any inheritance from her husband's assets.

13. The document is TS 13 J 24.22; Goitein mentions it in *Mediterranean Society* 5:222. Joel L. Kraemer discusses it as well in "Spanish Ladies from the Cairo Geniza," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 6 (1991): 248–49. Criticism of Goitein's interpretation appears in Esther-Miriam Wagner, "Goitein and Girlish Prose: T-S 13 J 24.22," *Fragment of the Month*,

lovely expression of respect and love for her father (in Judeo-Arabic), describing her letter as being “from she who kisses both your hands and both your feet!” (line 3). Najmiya informs Moshe Perdonel, her beloved father, that the family missed him terribly. In fact, her sister Clara was pining for him day and night; according to Najmiya she was neither eating nor drinking (line 17). This girl was clearly forlorn without her father’s presence, and her sister hoped this description of her state of mind and body would pressure him to return home.¹⁴ If this information did not carry enough weight on its own, there was a more convincing reason for this merchant to curtail his journey. After conveying warm regards from her mother, Najmiya added that “she tells you to hurry to come, and that she has entered her month” (lines 12–13). His wife was in her ninth month of pregnancy, and the family felt that it was urgent that he join them.

The letter also included instructions regarding goods received and purchases they hoped the father would make for them as well as wishes for his health and well-being. The family in Cairo had received mail but was fearful because they had heard of illness and suffering in the father’s locale. Although this was hearsay, portions of this letter reliably reflect the angst that occurs during the prolonged absence of the head of household, the responsibility taken on by this daughter representing the family in the communication, and the hope that R. Moshe would soon return home to his loving daughters and his very pregnant wife.

A letter that can be dated to the twelfth century was sent by a woman named Miriam to her brother who was none other than the leader of Egyptian Jewry, Maimonides.¹⁵ She had sent her son there to study, but the boy had not communicated with her. His mother was understandably concerned about his progress and welfare. Thus, Miriam wrote to Moshe: “And if you were to see me, you would not recognize me because of the awful state I am in” (line 5), due to the fact that she was continually crying and fasting. Here again the strain of separation and the unknown created the inability to eat along with terrible stress. In this case, Miriam turned to her well-connected brother to come to her rescue. She told him that he must locate her son because she is about to perish from worrying.

Cambridge University Library, March 2012. I have analyzed it in detail in “Spanish Women’s Lives as Reflected in the Cairo Genizah,” *Hispania Judaica* 11.2 (2015): 101–3, 105–8 (annotated translation).

14. As will be seen presently, this custom of fasting or denying oneself even the basic needs is referred to frequently and was seen to be justified.

15. TS 10 J 18.1 See S. D. Goitein, “An Autograph of Maimonides and a Letter to Him from His Sister Miriam” (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 32.2 (1963): 184–94; and Goitein, “Corrections to the Autograph of Maimonides and to the Letter by His Sister Miriam,” *Tarbiz* 34.3 (1963): 299.

Kindly send me a letter from you yourself; you surely do not lack someone who can bring it to me, and inform me in it of all his affairs. In this way, you will gladden my heart and silence my weeping.¹⁶

What reliable information has Miriam provided? Her son had indeed left home, presumably for the purpose of studying. He had been remiss in updating his mother as to his whereabouts, his progress, and his well-being. She was distraught, understandably so, and did not attempt to hide her distress. Miriam also knew that her brother, a renowned and most highly respected scholar and community leader, could be of service. After all, it was his nephew who needed to be found. Surely a mother's concerns, however emotional, could be relied upon in such matters; these siblings trusted and relied upon each other.

A different and extremely informative letter was sent by a woman in Egypt to her family in Tripoli, Libya, about a male relative.¹⁷ This woman was somewhat defensive in this letter in which she informed the family of developments concerning this young man who had arrived in Fustat. After reaching the city, he fell ill and required care, so he sought someone "to serve him." He was in need of a live-in, or so it seems; as a result, he decided to employ a young female orphan. Since orphans were often homeless and defenseless, this arrangement might have been beneficial to both sides. The relative then proceeded to marry this orphan. One assumes that this girl had no dowry and no father to fend for her or to negotiate with the groom. As part of these marriage arrangements, the groom inserted an unusual condition: if he should decide to return home, namely, to Libya, he would give her a writ of divorce before leaving. Meanwhile, his wife gave birth to a boy who unfortunately died.

The letter writer explained that she had been ill at the time of these events and felt that this young man should take responsibility for his own actions, for she was not to be blamed for them. After all, as she pointed out, had he wed her daughter? Here we see that women were sometimes expected to supervise their relatives, especially when there were distances and separations involved. One cannot ignore the vulnerability of the orphan girl who had to literally *serve* her husband and live with the knowledge that she could be legally abandoned at any time. The letter writer presumably served as the more objective reporter, updating this fellow's family. Although one perceives a tone of defensiveness and criti-

16. Written in the right margin at an angle in the first two lines.

17. For a full discussion of TS 8 J 19.29, see my "A Look at Women's Lives in Cairo Genizah Society," *Darkhei Noam: The Jews of Arab Lands. Festschrift in Honor of Norman (Noam) Stillman* (ed. Carsten Schapkow, Shmuel Shepkaru, and Alan T. Levenson; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 71–73.

cism on her part, she was the most reliable witness available to this Libyan family. Thus, she let them know that, in her opinion, the manner in which their son was behaving was unacceptable, as he was taking advantage of the powerlessness of an orphan with no father to protect her.

There are letters sent from one woman to another, in this case from sister to sister.¹⁸ Because the language of women was usually on a lower register, the letter might begin with fewer biblical phrases and quotations, although in this case, the writer did bless her sibling quite elegantly. It was addressed to *Umm Salama* (Mother of Salama) from her sister. She began: "I write to you, my sister, the most beloved to me, God should grant you a long life" (line 1). She wishes her strength and nobility and for her enemies to be subdued. She prays that the two will meet soon "in the happiest of circumstances. . . . I miss you twice as much as you miss me. Every day I remember you" (lines 3–5).

This woman was worried about her sister's child, who apparently was living in Byzantine territories; she had letters sent there to inquire about Salama. At this point, she interjected, "I am healthy and well, don't worry about that" (line 11), as though the two were having a tête-à-tête! She pointed out the fact that this was the third letter that she was writing and had not yet received a response from her sister. As matter of fact, she hadn't the foggiest idea if her letters had arrived at all. A request was made to everyone she knew to be made aware of her concerns "so that my heart will be quiet" (in upper margins). The writer told her sister to give her regards to all; she would likewise give her sister's regards to those near her. A reply to her letter was all she desperately needed.

The modern reader of this letter does not know who is where. One can surmise that the recipient was in Fustat, but no place is noted. The only location mentioned in the letter is the Byzantine empire. One has no idea why the two sisters were separated or for how long. There is a strong tie between them, and while the recipient is clearly a mother, no husbands or brothers-in-law are mentioned, only one relative who came and was instructed to write a letter—it is quite possible that he was needed to send this letter in Hebrew rather than Judeo-Arabic. While these siblings do not seem to be involved in any business, trade, or commerce, as were the traders who went off on long business trips to India and the like, their separation was as difficult for them as for any couple or parent and child. Writing was the only means of communication available to them, although, as is clear, it was by no means reliable or consistent. One wonders where the nameless letter writer was located while she was left wondering how her family was and why no one was answering her letters. In this case, the mail seems to be less reliable than the letter writers themselves. When one

18. TS 8 J 22.19.

has no idea as to what has or has not been received, it is hard to maintain a continuous correspondence.

A less-educated and poorer woman sent a letter in Hebrew to an eminent leader, in this case to the Nagid David ben Daniel, Head of the Diaspora.¹⁹ The recipient was regaled with titles and superlatives while the petitioner receded into the background as a poor, modest creature.²⁰ Once the latter began to describe her situation, one cannot help but be affected by her plight: "I am alone, no husband, son, daughter, sister, brother, wandering like a lone bird on a roof" (lines 11–13). She was penniless and roaming about, with no one to help her, suffering from a physical ailment akin to leprosy, explaining that her face and nose had been eaten up by disease and that she was unable to work (lines 14–15). Once again, it is hard to know if there is a degree of exaggeration here regarding physical ailments or the severity of the situation, but this woman clearly was destitute and desperate. She needed a source of charity to alleviate her plight.

When dealing with a request of this kind, the president of the community could easily verify her report by sending representatives to corroborate the details and determine if her claims were justified. Most likely this woman had relied upon a letter writer to formulate the beautiful Hebrew in the text, but whoever helped compose it was surely aware of her condition; he agreed to seek aid for her and presented her as downtrodden and hopeless. One would not appeal to the head of the community on a whim, but it was perfectly acceptable to do so when no other alternative was viable;²¹ this woman was suffering physically and financially. This testimony should be considered to be quite reliable.

In another letter, a married woman wrote to her mother, 'Izza al-'Ibbilaniya, about her unhappy marital situation, signing it: "From her daughter, may she not be bereft of her" (side 2, line 2).²² She was from Old Cairo, where her mother still resided. The couple had been moving about and, although the daughter did not go into detail, her mother probably knew what had precipitated this mobility. The husband was from Aleppo, Syria, had taken his bride to Mahalla to be wed, and then moved to 'Ibillin in the western portion of the Galilee. He now wanted to take her to his hometown, which would be even farther away from her family. She begged her mother to come or to send a representative who could extricate her; she described herself as being in a fire and needing to be saved. Because the letter is so short, only thirteen lines, and partly damaged, details that might

19. See TS 13 J 13.16. I have discussed this case in detail in "A Look at Women's Lives," 17–18.

20. For a full translation, see Mark R. Cohen, *The Voice of the Poor in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 52–53.

21. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 2:33–38.

22. TS 10 J 12.18.

have shed light on the nature of her plight are missing. Yet her suffering is real: “release me from this situation” and “transfer me from the fire” (lines 9, 11). Unfortunately, it is not known if this description motivated her mother to act and to help this daughter who had stumbled into an unhappy marriage.

A sister sent a long letter to her brother describing the vicissitudes of her life.²³ She complained about not having received letters from him and awaited the mail, only to be disappointed and upset. She swore, “I will not have food during the day or change my clothes or enter a bath, neither I nor my daughter until a letter comes from you so that we know how you are” (lines 7–8). One again wonders if statements of this sort were to be taken seriously, if these women truly fasted and refrained from bathing, or if they were expressions intended to impress the recipient with the seriousness of their concern. She had heard that her brother was ill and was thus overcome with worry. As it turns out, Goitein explained that when a writer “lives in dread,” one observes a reliance on “the efficacy of intercession by those loved. . . . In addition to prayer, such intercession could also consist of fasting or other privations, which were regarded as sacrifices by the people remaining at home for the benefit of the members of the family who were abroad.”²⁴ In this case, fortunately, another boat arrived with individuals on board who reported to her that her brother had recovered. As a result, she was provided with reliable testimony concerning the status of her sibling that allowed her and her daughter to resume a normal lifestyle.

These women appear to be reliable witnesses, whether providing their testimony formally in court or informally in letters. Even when the wording of their letters might appear to be dramatic or exaggerated, it seems that the stress of life, especially the constant travel and lack of communication, justified fasting or other actions taken in the hope of improving the lot of one’s beloved. Women’s letters and testimonies provided important information to those who were not present as well as details that might aid them to improve their own lives. Some found themselves in dire situations and needed to speak up for themselves; others were concerned about siblings, parents, or children and expressed their concern in letters. As has been seen, the documents in the Cairo Genizah offer insight into the lives of these women and reflect the high degree of reliability they offer as witnesses.

23. TS 10 J 14.20. This document is mentioned often in the notes of Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*; see 1:259, 304, 317, 347; 2:84; 3:21–22; 4:157, 245–46. The scribe she employed copied this letter; another version that is somewhat sloppy can be found in manuscript TS 10 J 19.20.

24. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 1:346–47. In vol. 4, he reiterates this custom when discussing clothing preferences and points out that “to abstain from changing was a severe form of self-negation, destined, like fasting, to enhance the efficacy of prayer for a beloved person” (p. 157).

Miriam's Well

Rabbinic Variations on a Folk Motif, Gender Views, and Contemporary Reception

SUSAN NIDITCH

Amherst College

In her discussion of women's leadership in early Christian communities, Ross Kraemer notes that some writers who approved of female authority roles "ited Miriam the prophet" among others "as precedent for women clergy."¹ The figure of Miriam is a fascinating flashpoint for gender attitudes in Jewish tradition. She is portrayed as a source of inspiration, a spiritual leader, a charismatic to whom sustenance-providing miracles are attributed, but she is also portrayed as a malicious gossip, deserving of divine punishment by means of a deadly disfiguring disease, a weakened person who needs to be rescued by the intercessory prayer of her brother Moses. This tension in the portrayal of female figures is as old as the biblical tradition and reflects a deeply mythological dichotomy contrasting negative and positive archetypes of the feminine: the wife as helpmate versus the wife as shrew, illustrated, for example, by the midrash on Gen 220 concerning the marital problems of Rabbi Jose the Galilean (*Gen. Rab.* 17:3) and the biblical figure of "Woman Wisdom," a source of life and well-being, versus the "Strange Woman" who leads young men to the gates of Sheol (Proverbs 1–9).²

After a review of biblical treatments of Miriam and the ways in which rabbinic material continues these positive and negative threads in her characterization, I concentrate on the positive, a rabbinic version of a traditional folk motif involving fertility, fullness, and miracle: Miriam's well.

1. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 186.

2. See Carol A. Newsom, "Woman and Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 19," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. Peggy L. Day; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 142–60; Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (Bible and Literature 11; Decatur, GA: Almond, 1985).

I will explore meanings and messages implicit in rabbinic references to Miriam's well, a motif that is often related exegetically to Num 20:12, referring to Miriam's death and the absence of water, and 21:16-18, a song that lyrically celebrates the digging of a life-sustaining well. Finally, I will ask about the significance of Miriam's well for views of women and gender in Judaism in classical and contemporary sources. Perhaps most interesting of all, whereas the Hebrew Bible associates the provision of miraculously appearing springs of water with Moses, the tradition developed and preserved by the rabbis and available to modern appropriators emphasizes Miriam's role.

The passages in Hebrew Bible that mention Miriam by name neatly fit into the categories of positive and negative. Exodus 15:20-21 describes Miriam as a *nšbî'â*, a prophetess. Tambourine in hand, she leads the women in a victorious dance following the escape from Egypt, as she sings the opening lines of the ancient "Song of the Sea." Scholars have debated whether the attribution of the song to Miriam is more ancient than the tradition in 15:1 referring to the singing of Moses and the people.³ In any event, Miriam is portrayed as a charismatic figure, a leader, associated with divinely inspired gifts of poetry and music.

The offhand references to Miriam's genealogy and kin are perhaps the most informative pieces of the biblical tradition.⁴ Numbers 26:9 refers to her maternal genealogy. Her mother, Jochebed, daughter of Levi, birthed Miriam in Egypt, making her a genuine member of the foundational generation. Miriam is listed along with Aaron and Moses as the children of Jochebed and Amram. It is interesting that the list reads "Aaron, Moses, and *their sister Miriam*," but it is unclear whether such a designation suggests more or less status for Miriam. Is being the sister of the great men a derivative position? Does calling her "their sister" purposefully gender Miriam to subtly reduce her status or does such an association enhance anyone's status? She is clearly part of an important priestly triumvirate, worthy of mention and remembrance. Micah 6:4 unequivocally lists Miriam as one of the leaders of the exodus and 1 Chr 5:29 (Eng. 6:3) lists Aaron, Moses, and Miriam as the children of Amram. All three genealogical references point to leadership, a venerable priestly genealogy, and high status, and, as noted by Rita Burns, this view of Miriam appears to reflect an ancient and long-lasting thread in Israelite tradition.⁵

3. Rita J. Burns, *Has the Lord Indeed Spoken Only through Moses: A Study of the Biblical Portrait of Miriam* (SBLDS 84; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 12-40.

4. On the importance of offhand comments in traditional literatures for revealing threads in culture and society, see Jacques Berlinerblau, *The Vow and "Popular Religious Groups" in Ancient Israel* (JSOTSup 210; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 38, 44-45.

5. Burns, *Has the Lord Indeed Spoken*, 124, 129.

Jewish tradition would add to these positive passages that refer to Miriam by name the scene in Exod 2:4–9, which mentions the sister of the baby Moses (“his sister,” Exod 2:4). The girl watches from hiding as the events involving Pharaoh’s daughter and the rescued baby unfold. This helpful sister, who is critical in reuniting the boy with his natural mother, is portrayed as a wise and devoted child, capable of agency, and is identified with Miriam in the tradition, further adding to the positive biblical portrait.

A final positive biblical reference to Miriam mentions her death and burial in Kadesh (Num 20:1), the sort of notice reserved for important figures.⁶ The tradition emphasizes where she is laid to rest, pointing perhaps to a pilgrimage site. I will have more to say below about associations between Miriam’s death at Kadesh, Miriam’s well, and divinely sent water.

In contrast to these positive portrayals are Num 12:1–15 depicting Miriam as a gossip and a power-grabber punished by leprosy, and a reference to this vignette in the threatening language of Deut 24:8–9. In the latter, leprosy is treated as a curse to be avoided: “Remember what God did to Miriam.” Frank Moore Cross has discussed the ways in which Numbers 12 relates to competition for leadership among priestly groups and between priests and nonpriests, tensions that continue throughout Israel’s political and social history.⁷ Robert Culley has explored the genre of the complaint narrative, linking this scene with the Korah rebellion (Numbers 16) and others in which the people complain about their situation in the wilderness.⁸ Aaron is implicated in the received version of tale, but suffers no punishment. Numbers 12 is particularly rich in negative archetypes of the feminine. It is Miriam’s rebellion on which the received tradition has come to focus.

On the one hand, she is portrayed as a shrewish gossip sharing with Aaron complaints about Moses’ marriage to a supposed foreigner, a Cushite woman. The negative characterization of Miriam is clear. She and Aaron are described as jealous of their brother’s power and see his marriage as an implicit disqualifier for Israelite leadership. The true source of this discontent is revealed in Num 12: “Is it really only with Moses that Yhwh has spoken. Is it not also with us he has spoken?” As in Numbers 16, certain leaders of the community claim leadership status, a claim that the deity is shown to punish and reject, the pro-Moses voice being dominant in these accounts.

6. Ibid., 120.

7. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 195–215.

8. Robert C. Culley, *Studies in the Structure of Hebrew Narrative* (Semeia Supplements; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976).

The description of Miriam's punishment—to be afflicted with leprosy—suggests in a visceral way another archetype of the feminine. She is compared to a malformed fetus, evoking female imagery of birthing, unsuccessful and unproductive birthing, a reminder of the dangerous and polluting border between life and death inhabited by women of child-bearing age. Mothering is not always a matter of life giving; the womb can also house death.

Identifying the sister who stands by the Nile as Miriam (e.g., *Eccl. Rab.* 7.1.3), a number of traditional interpretations exemplify the positive spin placed on her character. Miriam's character as prophet and protester is developed by a series of wordplays on the names of Shifrah and Puah, the midwives of Exodus 1, with whom she is identified. She is said to be a special, life-giving child who brings forth the baby Moses and predicts his illustrious future (*Exod. Rab.* 1:13; *Eccl. Rab.* 7.1.3; *b. Soṭah* 11b; 12b-13a; see also *b. Meg.* 14a and *Mek. Shirata* 10:58–67). She is endowed with the courage to reprove injustice and to challenge Pharaoh (*Exod. Rab.* 1:13; *Eccl. Rab.* 7.1.3) and with the wisdom to advise her own father (*Exod. Rab.* 1:13). She is moreover associated with wisdom itself (*Exod. Rab.* 48:4). On the other hand, in another thread of midrashim identifying Miriam with the wives of the hero Caleb, attention is drawn to her leprosy. Miriam is 'āzûbâ, a woman who is forsaken, and she is ḥel'â, an invalid (see *b. Soṭah* 12a; *Exod. Rab.* 1:17). As a whole, however, the rabbis portray Miriam positively as a feisty and spiritual person who espouses the will of God, a leader for whom the Israelites wait even while she suffers temporary divine punishment. Most positive and affirming of these positive portrayals is the tradition of the well of Miriam.

Wells, a Jungian might suggest, relate to the archetype of the feminine, suggesting fertility, birth, and nurture.⁹ Indeed traditional texts such as *Lev* 20:18 and *m. Nid.* 25 describe a woman's menstrual blood as originating from her bodily "spring" or "well" (the term used is *māqôr* from *qwr*, "to dig out," "to bore"). Obtaining wives is associated with wells in tales of Rebekah, Rachel, and Zipporah, future wives of Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.

Magic wells (Motif Index D962.1, D926) or springs also gush forth for the sake of male heroes, Ishmael, Samson, and Moses, an indicator of divine favor and life-sustaining intervention.¹⁰ Miraculous wells in world folklore may yield not only water but also milk, beer, and wine (D 925.0.2). Miriam's well is a Jewish version of a common folk motif whereby a portable source of nourishment provides for the hero's or heroes' well-being.

9. Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (trans. Ralph Manheim; Bollingen Series 47; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 48.

10. Stith Thompson, *The Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955–58).

Elisha's miraculously causing a container of oil to fill and refill is a biblical example of this motif (2 Kgs 4:3–7), one of an international fund of folktales that often involve a magical helper who, for example, provides the beleaguered hero or heroine with a cloth that, when laid on the ground, fills with food (D1472.1.8). The source of nourishment may be a pot, plate, basket, bag, chest, or cup that never empties (see the range of entries under Motif Index D1472.1).

Several times in the wilderness trek Moses is associated (for better or worse) with the springing up of badly needed water. It is he who gathers the people together for God's miraculous provision of water at Beer, "Well," in Num 21:16, who strikes the rock at God's command to bring forth water (Exod 17:6), and who again strikes the rock instead of commanding it in Num 20:2–11, leading to his own punishment. And yet within the ongoing postbiblical tradition it is Miriam who is associated with a miraculous well. Indeed, the water from the rock obtained in Numbers 20 is necessary only because of Miriam's death, for according to one thread of tradition that juxtaposes the content of Num 20:1 and 20:2, her death accompanies the disappearance of a well that had sustained the people throughout their journeying; she dies in v. 20, and a lack of water is immediately mentioned in v. 21. This association of Miriam with a well can be viewed as the result of exegetical contemplation and creative historiography, to use the phrase of Yitzhak Heinemann.¹¹

One cannot but wonder, however, if deep within the prerabbinic tradition, Miriam was associated with the miraculous provision of water, a role eliminated in Hebrew Bible and transferred to Moses. This association of life-giving fertility with the figure of Miriam is sustained in the rabbinic tradition. We may observe a similar process whereby Miriam is robbed of her traditional status as an inspired leader in the truncated reference to her authorship of the Song of the Sea, now attributed to Moses, and in the few vestigial references to her rightful place as Levitical leader and prophet. These roles of prophet, leader, miracle worker, fertility bringer, and life sustainer are preserved, however, in the midrashic tradition, where Miriam has not been written out but elaborated.

Song of Songs Rabbah 4:5 declares that the well arose for the sake of Miriam (see also *Num. Rab.* 1:2; 18:20). *Numbers Rabbah* 1:2 quotes Mic 6:4, associating Moses, Aaron, and Miriam as leaders, to draw attention to the benefits of the merit possessed by each. Because of Miriam's merit, the Israelites are given the well. The proof is that the well disappears with her death in Num 20:1; hence the need for water mentioned in Num 20:2. *Numbers Rabbah* 12 also describes the well's appearance and mode of locomotion. It is rocklike, like a kind of beehive-shaped receptacle used to hold

11. Yitzhak Heinemann, *Darkê ha-Aggadah* (2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1954).

water, and it rolls along with Israel on its journeys. When Israel pauses its journey and sets up camp, the rock comes and sits itself in the courtyard of the tabernacle shrine, and ¶ he princes come and stand on top of it and say ‘Rise up, O well’ (Num 21:17), and it would rise.”

Song of Songs Rabbah 4.13 declares that the well produced not only water but various kinds of vegetables, herbs, and trees. As in *Num. Rab.* 1:2, when Miriam dies, the well ceases to produce. Numbers 20:5 is read to imply that there is no longer a source of seed, figs, or vines. Commenting on Qoh 7:1 that the day of death is better than the day of birth, *Eccl. Rab.* 7.1.4 suggests that no one notices when the righteous are born but that their loss is strongly felt and noticed when they die. The example offered is Miriam. When she was born no one noticed, but when she died “the well ceased to exist and all felt it.” This juxtaposition of the notice of her death with the need for water in Numbers 20:21 thus presupposes that she had been the source of water, a moving, miraculous well that followed her, throughout the wilderness trek.

It is interesting also that in some threads, the well never completely disappears from the landscape: thus, a person suffering a skin affliction is cured by Miriam’s well that gushes up from the Lake of Tiberias when he bathes there. R. Hiyya b. Abba comments on the language in Num 21:20 to describe a sievelike object in Lake Tiberias that is Miriam’s well (*Eccl. Rab.* 5.9.10). Similarly Miriam’s well is associated with the healing of blindness and is located in Shihin, a town near Sepphoris (*Num. Rab.* 18:22). Like the American tradition of the fountain of youth, the well does not disappear from cultural imagination and is found far afield, liberated from the exodus trek, surfacing even after the death of Miriam at Kadesh, the scaffolding upon which her association with the provision of water rests in the exegetical tradition. No Miriam, no well for the wandering Israelites. A Roman-period person, however, may come across it and be healed, and if you look carefully you can see its outlines in the Sea of Tiberias. Such folk motifs provide hope, a source of fanciful composition, etiological opportunities, and a way of linking the ancient tradition with one’s own time. The well of Miriam has particular resonances for those who seek women-affirming traditions in classical Judaism and has been drawn upon and elaborated in contemporary ritual surrounding the Passover seder.¹²

At the heart of the Passover celebration is the theme of liberation, and it has become common for American Jewish families to incorporate into the seder various themes pertaining to freedom. There are versions of the ritual text for the holiday, the haggadah, that include the theme of

12. Simcha Paull Raphael points also to “Miriam’s Well Healing Services,” “frequently sponsored by mainstream Jewish Federations of Conservative synagogues” (“‘Miriam took her timbrel out and all the women danced’: A Midrashic Motif of Contemporary Jewish Feminism,” *Women in Judaism* 7 [2010]: 1).

women's liberation, those that underscore resistance to colonialism, the cause of gay liberation, or the experience of African Americans. With the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s, new inclusive prayers, new gender-sensitive biblical translations, and a host of new or newly framed rituals have arisen such as celebrations for the birth of a daughter or for the new moon. Miriam and traditions pertaining to her have found a place in the Passover celebration with its theme of freedom from subjugation. Traditions of Miriam's well, with their strong nuances of the archetypal feminine, provide content for the development of new customs steeped in the material dimensions of religion, even as these new customs preserve ancient ideas and attributes associated with Miriam the prophet and developed in rabbinic literature. The evocation of Miriam's well at the Passover table is accomplished by the presence of *kos miryam*, the cup of Miriam, a cup filled with water that serves as a counterpart to Elijah's cup of wine. Numerous online discussions point to ways in which *kos miryam* can be incorporated into rituals that not only draw on the positive, women-affirming material in the rabbinic corpus but also encourage the further development of this tradition in prayer, midrash, and ritual action.¹³ One site attributes "the introduction of the Miriam's Cup in a Passover Seder" to Stephanie Loo Ritari, a member of a Boston Rosh Hodesh group, meeting in the 1980s.¹⁴ According to this site, "the women were inspired by the Mayim Hayyim—Living Waters—of Miriam's well, and the group drank from a special Kiddush cup called *Kos Miriam*—The Cup of Miriam."¹⁵

Suggestions for ritual action include passing around the cup, the recitation of midrashim about Miriam's well, and the use of new prayers. Matia Rania Angelou, Janet Berkenfield, and Stephanie Loo composed the following:

This is the Cup of Miriam, the cup of living waters. Let us remember the Exodus from Egypt. These are the living waters, God's gift to Miriam, which gave new life to Israel as we struggled with ourselves in the wilderness.¹⁶

13. See, for example, "Miriam's Cup Ritual in the Family Seder," n.p., <http://www.miriamscup.com/RitualPrint.htm>; Ariela Pelaia, "Elijah's Cup and Miriam's Cup," n.p., <http://judaism.about.com/od/holidays/a/Elijahs-Cup-And-Miriams-Cup-Passover-Seder.htm>; Risa Borsykowski, "Symbolism of the Miriam's Cup," n.p., <http://www.jewishgiftplace.com/Miriams-Cup.html>.

14. For a discussion of contemporary ritual observance of Rosh Hodesh (new month/new moon), see Arlene Agus, "This Month Is for You: Observing Rosh Hodesh as a Woman's Holiday," *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives* (ed. Elizabeth Koltun; New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 84–93.

15. Borsykowski, "Symbolism of the Miriam's Cup."

16. Matia Rania Angelou, Janet Berkenfield, and Stephanie Loo, "Miriam's Cup Blessing," *Kol Isha* (1996), n.p., cited in Roni Handler, Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin, Sarah Barasch-Hagans, Lori Hope Lefkovitz, and Rona Shapiro, "Miriam's Cup," n.p., <http://www>

Language is also provided to contrast the relationship of Elijah's cup to messianic redemption with the association of Miriam's cup with "renewal in the present life . . . rejuvenating our souls in the present."¹⁷ This contrast between the spiritual and the physical, future hope and present need, reinforces a Jewish version of male and female archetypes wherein the nurturing female is associated with real time, the physical, and the material, and the male is associated with the metaphysical and spiritual.

Other sites emphasize the spontaneity, flexibility, and possibility for variation in the ways that Miriam's well and the cup symbolizing it are woven into the seder.¹⁸ The cup may be filled at the beginning of the Seder "to symbolize inclusion of men AND women at the Seder."¹⁹ The cup may be lifted after the recitation of the plagues and before Dayeyyenu to emphasize the period of wandering when the well succors the Israelites. Alternatively, the cup may be filled near the close of the seder to emphasize the ongoing need for redemption and Miriam's role as intermediary to the divine.²⁰ Most interesting, these ritual options, the history of the Miriam's well tradition, new prayers, songs, a series of relevant paintings and other material are all presented in a commercial site! Various versions of Miriam's cup are now available for purchase online along with other Jewish home ritual objects. The cups may be inexpensive and mass-produced or artistic and unique renderings in valuable materials.²¹ Relevant here is the work of Colleen McDannell and others who have explored the significance of material religion, the interplay between objects, spaces, clothing, jewelry and people's religious lives as experienced.²² A commercial enterprise—selling water from Lourdes, or cereal named after a verse in Ezekiel, crucifixes or mezuzot, or mugs bearing "Heritage USA," the name of Tammy Faye Bakker's former theme park, or cups of Miriam—reinforces and shapes aspects of people's cultural and religious identity even as the commercial is informed and enriched by genuine religious concern, in the case of *kos miryam*, by a profound interest in making a central place for women in Judaism.

What conclusions concerning worldview and gender can we draw from this rich thread in Jewish folklore preserved in classical and con-

.ritualwell.org/ritual/miriams-cup-0. See also the prayer by Rabbi Susan Schnur, n.p., <http://www.jewishgiftplace.com/Miriams-Cup.html>.

17. "Miriam's Cup Ritual in the Family Seder."

18. Pelaia, "Elijah's Cup and Miriam's Cup"; "Symbolism of the Miriam's Cup"; "Miriam's Cup."

19. Borsykowsky, "Symbolism of the Miriam's Cup."

20. Ibid.

21. Simcha Paull Raphael points to "well over a hundred different types of Miriam's Cups available for purchase on the World Wide Web" ("Miriam took her timbrel out," 1).

22. Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

temporary sources? First, despite the misogynistic implications of various rabbinic midrashim, there is, as might be expected in any traditional culture, a counter-archetype that associates the feminine with life, empathy, and acts of salvation. One thinks here of the elaboration of the biblical figure of Rachel who weeps for her children, an intercessor with the deity in postbiblical interpretation (e.g., *Mek. Pisha* 1:60–62). Of course, even the venerable matriarch Rachel is treated as an immoral thief in other rabbinic threads in further confirmation of the tradition's manifestation of positive and negative archetypes of the feminine (e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 18:2). On the other hand, it is particularly interesting that, whereas the biblical tradition has been shaped either to erase or negatively preserve portrayals of Miriam, the rabbinic tradition brings her back or verbalizes and preserves an extremely sympathetic oral tradition that may be as old as stories of the exodus itself. It may be that the ancient priestly rivalries that frame Hebrew Scriptures and that reflect actual competition for leadership among Levitical clans early in Israel's social history, are no longer of concern for the rabbis. Instead, with the homeland under the control of colonialist Romans and other Jews living abroad under foreign domination, imagery of the fecund feminine, the preserver of life associated with the ever flowing well, appeals.

The merits of the ancestors especially is a favorite early rabbinic theme at a time in which current troubles are blamed on the people's sin, and God is regarded as increasingly hidden and difficult to reach.²³ The merits of the ancestors provide a way of connecting with the deity, a reason for him to listen to Israel's troubles, a motivation for his continued concern and the possibility of his rescuing activities. The Miriam tradition combines the international folk motif of the well with the merit of a female ancestor hero, Miriam, whose capacity for intermediation between God and the people seems to be an ancient theme represented already in Hebrew Scriptures, albeit in abbreviated or cloaked form as the received tradition now stands. The modern custom of including Miriam's cup in the Passover seder betokens a creative ritual appropriation of the rabbinic tradition that may well preserve an even more ancient association between Miriam and saving waters. In contrast to the creation and waving of Vashti flags during the reading of Megillat Esther at Purim, the custom of Miriam's cup, while innovative, is not entirely new, given that it is rooted in the well of Miriam.²⁴ Scholars such as Mary Gendler rehabili-

23. Susan Niditch, "Merits, Martyrs, and Undeserved Suffering: An Exegesis of *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael Pisha* 1," *JSJ* 13 (1982): 160–71.

24. See Susan Niditch, "Interpreting Esther: Categories, Contexts, and Creative Ambiguities," in *The Writings and Later Wisdom Books* (ed. Christl M. Maier and Nuria Calduch-Benages; *The Bible and Women: An Encyclopaedia of Exegesis and Cultural History* 1.3; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 272–73.

tate and reformulate Vashti as a woman of courage, but Miriam is already available; her positive characterization is deeply rooted in the tradition; and her well is an archetypal symbol of fertility, fullness, rescue, and healing, frequently associated with the feminine.²⁵

25. Mary Gendler, "The Restoration of Vashti," in *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives* (ed. Elizabeth Koltun; New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 241–47.

The Shape-Shifting Bride

Reflecting on Race and Ethnicity in Origen's Exegesis of the Song of Songs

ELAINE PAGELS

Princeton University

In great appreciation to Ross Kraemer, for her influential research and writings, which have introduced us to a remarkable range of women, Jewish, Christian, and “pagan,” I’m happy to contribute to this volume honoring her with some notes on a fictional woman who, as Origen depicts her, embodies all three identities—the beloved bride of the Song of Songs. As we shall see, Origen’s interpretation engages debate between third-century Jewish and Christian exegetes, each of whom identifies the woman in terms of his respective community, as each contends to answer the question “Whom does God love best?”

As Elizabeth Clark has noted, Origen’s exposition of the Song of Songs, written around 240 CE in Caesarea, which interweaves several strands of exegesis, is still the most influential Christian commentary on this text of all time.¹ Later Christian exegetes most often picked up Origen’s interpretation of the bride as representing either the individual human soul or else the church (an image he borrows from Paul’s image of the collective body of Christians as Christ’s bride).² From the time that Origen’s disciple Gregory of Nyssa amplified both themes in his own *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, these themes have tended to dominate Christian exegesis—includ-

1. Elizabeth Clark, “Origen, the Jews, and the Song of Songs: Allegory and Polemic in Christian Antiquity,” in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs/Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung* (ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn; BZAW 346; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 274–93.

2. Origen, *Comm. Cant.* Prol 1.1: Origen explains that, while the bridegroom is the *logos theou*, the bride may be seen either in corporate terms as the *church*, that is, the whole assembly of the holy ones,” or alternatively in individual terms, as “the soul created in His image.” *Commentaire sur le Cantique des Cantiques* (trans. Luc Brésard, Henri Crouzel, Marcel Borret; SC 375; Paris: Cerf, 1991).

ing, tradition says, the writings of the most famous Catholic mystics of all time—Teresa of Avila and her close friend and spiritual confessor, the Spanish monk who took the monastic name Juan de la Cruz.

More recently, Reuven Kimelman and Alon Goshen-Gottstein have focused on the other topic Clark notes, in discussions initiated by a previous generation of scholars (Yitzhak Baer, Ephraim Urbach, and Nicholas de Lange), showing how Origen's efforts to interpret this text engaged him in heated controversy with his Jewish predecessors and contemporaries.³ At stake was a topic of intense theological and practical concern to those in both camps: namely, how the Song, as well as other scriptural passages invoked to interpret it, picture the relationship between Jews and gentiles, and, by inference, between Jews and Christians.

It is well known that Origen, writing a letter to his friend Africanus, mentions what he calls *fn y* controversies with the Jews," explaining that he carefully investigates various texts of Scripture, to compare the Hebrew text as well as he could with various Greek translations, and gives special attention to the LXX, so that, he says, "they will not, as they so often do, scornfully laugh at Gentile believers for being ignorant of the genuine reading in the version they have" (*Ep. ad Afr.* 5; trans. ANF 4:387). Origen often mentions his discussions with "wise Hebrews," including one he calls *Ιούλλος πατριάρχης*.⁴ Various scholars have sought to identify this scholar; Kimelman suggests identifying him with Rabbi Yohanan, who was educated in Caesarea and later became chief rabbi there, while Origen was preaching in public every day and writing his commentary on the Song of Songs.⁵ Recently, Goshen-Gottstein challenged Kimelman's thesis, arguing that instead of responding in close dialogue with Jewish exegetes, Origen was contending against the whole trend of their interpretation.⁶ For our purpose here, the question of who was arguing

3. See Reuven Kimelman, "Rabbi Yohanan and Origen on the Song of Songs: A Third-Century Jewish-Christian Disputation," *HTR* 73 (1980): 567–95; Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Polemomania—Methodological Reflections on the Study of the Judeo-Christian Controversy between the Talmudic Sages and Origen over the Interpretation of the Song of Songs," *Jewish Studies* 42 (2003): 119–90. See earlier Yitzhak Baer, "Israel, the Christian Church, and the Roman Empire from the Days of Septimius Severus to the 'Edict of Toleration'" (in Hebrew), *Zion* 21 (1957): 1–49; Ephraim Urbach, "Rabbinic Exegesis and Origen's Commentary on the Song of Songs and Jewish-Christian Polemics," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 247–75; and N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third-Century Palestine* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 25; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

4. See Origen, *Selecta in Psalmos*, Preface (PG 12: col. 1056).

5. For references, see Kimelman, "Rabbi Yohanan and Origen on the Song of Songs," 569 nn. 5–9.

6. Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Thinking of/with Scripture: Struggling for the Religious Significance of the Song of Songs," *Journal of Scriptural Reasoning* 3 (2003), <http://jsr.shanti.virginia.edu/>.

with whom matters little; what matters more is the weight of evidence that Origen was interacting intensely with Jewish teachers and contending with—and against—their exegeses.

Origen opens his *Commentary* praising the reserve with which certain rabbis approached this text, and perhaps even paraphrasing Rabbi Akiba's famous saying that the Song of Songs is the "holy of holies" of the Scriptures.⁷ Then he begins his commentary with the most obvious question: *Who, after all, is the bride?* Origen certainly knew the answer given by Jewish exegetes: she is, of course, Israel, whom the prophets had praised as the Lord's beloved, his bride (Song 4:12), his wife (Isa 54:6; Hosea 1–3). Since Origen could not, certainly would not, gainsay the Scriptures, he agrees that the nation of Israel certainly was God's beloved, just as the prophets had said. Yet since he sees her through a range of lenses crafted throughout the tumultuous centuries that spanned from the time of the Song's composition through the letters of Paul, and into his own time, in the early third century CE, in his writings she becomes a shape shifter, as he charts her transitions from childhood and adolescence into adult maturity—transitions that correlate with his vision of Christian salvation history.

As we mentioned, Origen notes with approval that "the Hebrews," who advocate that boys should learn all of the Scriptures, nevertheless exempt from such teaching those four sections that immature people might easily misunderstand, including "his book of the *Song of Songs*, which they do not allow any except those of mature age to even hold . . . in their hands," saying that this "should be reserved for study till the last" (Prol. 1). Origen agrees, and warns that "everyone who . . . has not ceased to feel the passion of his bodily nature to refrain completely from reading this little book, and the things that will be said about it," lest anyone imagine that the commentary bears a relationship with sensual experience, and thus either arouse lust, or else invite ridicule by those who "say we are talking about dreams" (Prol. 1).

This turns out to be an apt warning, since the post-Freudian reader can hardly help wondering about Origen's dreams when discovering that this brilliant and celibate teacher reads the Song's ardent expressions of desire entirely in terms of longing for the bridegroom—not the bride.⁸ The Song does open, of course, with the bride speaking of her longing for the

7. Alternatively, he may simply be commenting on the way superlatives are used ("song of songs" — "holy of holies"): see Prol. 1.4. Furthermore, he may well have known traditions like that articulated in the *Gospel of Philip*, which pictures the sacred center of the temple as a "bridechamber"—the locus, metaphorically speaking, of spiritual union with God (*Gos. Phil.* 69:14–25).

8. See Stephen D. Moore, "The Song of Songs in the History of Sexuality," *Church History* 69 (2000): 328–49.

bridegroom ("Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth . . .," Song 1:2). Yet when interpreting Song 1:2 as the LXX translates it (ὅτι ἀγαθοὶ μαστοὶ σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον), Origen takes it to mean that the bride praises her bridegroom's breasts ("Your *breasts* are better than wine"; cf. Clement, *Paid.* 6.43.3 and 4) and finds delight and nourishment sucking on them (1.2.9). "So much for the historical sense," Origen hastens to add; since the Song is "written in dramatic form; now let us seek what has to do with the interior meaning" (1.1.4–5).

Noting the bride's attraction to the beauty of her lover's breasts, Origen immediately associates this scene with one in the Gospel of John, which tells how John, ἢ he 'disciple whom Jesus loved' reclined 'on Jesus' bosom (κόλπος)'" (cf. John 13:23; 21:20) and "spoke intimately with Jesus, while 'lying on his chest (στῆθος)'" (1.2.4). When connecting the two scenes, Origen argues that it makes sense to take the *bosom* or *chest*, and so also the *breasts* (μάσται), as all referring "with eloquent and mystical meaning" (*mysticis designatur eloquiis*) to the ἡ eart," that is, the ὅ rimary capacity of the heart" (1.2.7). Thus, he explains, the bridegroom's breasts are good, since what flows from them is "wisdom and understanding" (*sapientiae et scientiae/gnosis*, *Comm. Cant.* 1.2.8; cf. Col 2:3). Origen goes on to say that since the bride finds the fragrance of his ointments and perfumes irresistible, she is "impelled to pursue him by the sense of smell" (Fr. trans. "seduced by his fragrant smell"), just as "all the young women souls run after him, seeking to cleave to him, since he tastes so sweet and delectable that all of the senses evoke desire—eating, tasting, hearing, touching, smelling" (1.4.4; 2.9.1ff.). After expounding these passages at considerable length, Origen concludes with another salutary warning ("we beg the hearers to mortify their carnal senses . . . (and) not take anything of what has been said in regard to bodily functions, but rather use these to grasp the divine meaning" (1.4.16).

At this point Origen explains that the bride, as she first appears, is depicted as Israel, "a young child who had not yet attained maturity" (Prol. 4.4), singing songs she learned as a child, when "Moses and the children of Israel sang the first song to God"—namely, the Song of the Sea, and four or five other "songs" Origen finds in the writings of the Hebrew Bible (Prol. 4.5). So long as she remained prepubescent, Origen continues, she drank only "wine"—that is, "the ordinances and teaching that she used to receive through the Law and the Prophets" (1.2.20). Even during her long years of adolescence, she never saw the Bridegroom, who stood hidden "behind the wall" (3.3.9) of the Hebrew Bible, although she had caught glimpses of him, ἢ n the Law and the Prophets, hidden like a treasure" (1.2.22).

But as Origen opens the second book of his commentary, the bride abruptly shifts shape. Now that he pictures her as a young woman of marriageable age, Origen turns from gender-bending images to reflections

on ethnicity and race. For now she declares that “I am dark (*fustus*) and beautiful” (2.1.1). (Here Rufinus, who translated Origen’s Greek into Latin [the Greek manuscript having been destroyed] adds a note that pertains only to Latin translations, that some manuscripts translate the Greek term *μαλαινά* of the LXX as *nigra*, that is, black, and also translates the Hebrew conjunctive as *καί*.)

Origen explains that, since the bride has come to marriageable age, she is no longer a young Hebrew girl; now she has become an Ethiopian woman. Consequently, she no longer addresses the “daughters of Jerusalem” as she had before, as her childhood companions. Instead she speaks to them as people alienated from her, since they § poke derogatorily of her, as being ugly” (2.1.3), because she is black. Now she replies, saying, “Yes, I am dark, or black, as far as color goes, yet truly beautiful in regard to my interior qualities. Yet,” she continues, as Origen writes her dialogue, “black is not unbecoming to the king in all his glory”; since, she says, Solomon’s curtains were black (2.1.4). Then she rebukes those who despise her, saying “Do not reproach me for my color, since my body lacks neither natural beauty nor what is enhanced by exercise” (*ἁσκήσις*) (2.1.6).

¶ at this means, Origen continues, is that so long as she was prepubescent, the bride was Israel; thus Paul had said of his people that the law was “our pedagogue until Christ came” (Gal 3:24), tutored by the Law and the Prophets, and nourished on them as on good wine (2.8.3). Yet now she is about to be offered something infinitely better—namely, the “wine” of Christ’s breasts, just as the host of the marriage of Cana “had saved the best wine” to serve last (1.2.13). So much for the actual account; now, Origen says, “let us come to a mystical level” (2.1.2). For when the bride sings that “the fragrance of your ointments is better than spices,” she has come to realize that what she’d previously imbibed from “the words of the Law and the Prophets” is “infinitely inferior” to the “knowledge of mysteries and divine discernment,” the § spiritual and mystical meaning” that are the Bridegroom’s fragrance, and far inferior to the ξx cellent, all surpassing teaching” that she will be able to drink from his breasts (1.3.1).

Thus, by reading the Song intertextually through Pauline sources, Origen claims to show that the bride, no longer Israel, has become an Ethiopian—despised by Jews, who, he says, despise gentiles—especially black ones—who, they say, “cannot claim to belong to the race of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” and who have not been enlightened, as they have, by the teaching of the patriarchs, or by Moses’ law” (2.1.3). So, Origen says, “they call her black,” since she signifies “the church gathered from among the nations (*ethnoi*),” even though she has now left her own people, and her ancestral home, and has come to Christ (2.1.3). In his exegesis, she addresses—and chastises—those who despise her—the “daughters of Jerusalem,” that is, ¶ he souls whom Paul called ‘*the souls who are said to be beloved because of the election of their ancestors,*’ yet who have become

'enemies in relation to the gospel'" (Rom 11:28); for Origen explains that Jews are hostile to the church, since the Lord, having now turned to the gentiles, has left his previous beloved for a new wife (2.1.3).

While of course we cannot take Origen's comments as evidence for generalized social attitudes, he apparently sees the dialogue he supplies for the bride as reflecting how Jews saw gentiles in general, and how they—and, likely, Egyptians like himself—saw Ethiopians in particular.⁹ At first Origen lends her a defiant response to those who regard themselves as racially, culturally, and intellectually superior:

Thus she answers their objections: Yes, I am black, O daughters of Jerusalem; I am not descended from famous men, nor have I been illuminated by Mosaic traditions; yet nevertheless I have my own beauty. For in me there is that primal quality (which is the image of God in which I was created); and now, coming to the Word of God, I have received my beauty." (2.1.4)

Next, the slighted bride challenges those who treat her with contempt: "Why would you reproach me about the blackness of my skin? Do you recall what Miriam suffered when she reproached Moses for having married an Ethiopian woman? *I am that Ethiopian*. I am black by reason of my lowly origin but beautiful through repentance and faith; and having received the divine word, the image of God, I have been made beautiful" (2.1.4).

Origen then invokes four other intertextual passages that, he says, also "foreshadow this mystery" (2.1.8). Besides the account in which Aaron and Miriam denigrate Moses for having married an Ethiopian, he alludes to the story of the queen of Sheba, who comes to visit King Solomon, brings him rich gifts, and asks him all the questions "that she had in her heart" (2.1.10). Origen sees the correspondence between this Ethiopian bride and the queen of Sheba as very close, since Jesus himself spoke of the latter as "queen of the south," who has come "from the ends of the earth" (Matt 12:42) (2.1.14), which Origen takes as alluding to Ethiopia.¹⁰ Next he cites Ps 68:31b ("Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God") (2.1.16), and finally the passage from the prophet Jeremiah that tells how, after the great prophet's enemies had cast him into a deep pit and left him

9. See discussion on "the image of God" in Elizabeth Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 121, 127, 161.

10. Note that Origen here confuses Sheba with the Ethiopian city of Saba and mentions that Josephus, too, in his *Antiquities of the Jews* 8.165–75, had mentioned that the queen of Sheba ruled over Ethiopia as well as over Egypt (Origen, *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homily* [ed. R. P. Lawson; ACW 26; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1957], 95, endnote 15).

to die of thirst, “Abdimelech, the Ethiopian eunuch” rescued Jeremiah, saving his life (2.1.18–19).

What, then, impelled Miriam and Aaron to object to Moses’ marriage: was it his wife’s race? Had that been the case, Origen declares, they should have said something like this: “Moses, you should not have married an Ethiopian woman, of the seed of Ham; you should have married one of your own race, and of the house of Levi” (2.1.22). But, he continues, instead of objecting to her race, they spoke out of jealousy of their brother’s role, protesting, “hasn’t (the Lord) spoken to us, as well (2.1.22)?”

Origen diagnoses their problem as jealousy and speculates that Aaron and Miriam actually understood Moses’ marriage in terms of the mystery” it prefigured—namely, that they foresaw that Moses, understood as “the spiritual law,” would marry the church gathered from the gentiles (2.1.23). For since Origen explains that, in his exegesis, Miriam represents “the synagogue,” and Aaron, “the priesthood according to the flesh,” both, he says, turned in anger against the new wife, recognizing that for her sake the Lord would abandon them both, strip them of their royal prerogatives, and offer them instead to “another nation (*ethnos*, Matt 21:43) that bears the fruits” (2.1.23).

Thus, Origen says,

... this “black and beautiful” woman is *one and the same as the Ethiopian woman whom Moses married*—that is, married to the spiritual Law, who is the *logos* of God, Christ—although the “daughters of Jerusalem,” that is, the *Jewish people and their priests*, despise him and speak badly of him for having married her. (2.1.25)

Yet Origen contends that, on the contrary, “of all Moses’ great and splendid achievements, God praised him most when he took the Ethiopian wife” (2.1). He praises the bride—the church of the gentiles—for having come to the “vision of peace” (so he interprets the name *Jerusalem*) with a great entourage, and a great company of attendants, “for she came not with a single nation, as the synagogue had come before her, with only the Hebrews, but with the races of the whole world, offering worthy gifts to Christ.” Origen suggests that the gifts of gold she offers the king symbolize her disciplined understanding and the rational mental habits she had acquired in schools,” as an educated woman, but also “the adornments of good behavior” (2.1.28). And because of her excellent understanding and courteous manner, “there was nothing which the Lord did not tell to the queen of Sheba—that is, to the church gathered from among the gentiles” (2.1.30). Thus, Origen continues, the prophetic oracle of Ps 68:3b (“Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God”) reveals how Ethiopia—that is, the church of the gentiles—“shall overtake those to whom the first oracles were given, and approach God before them,” that is, before the Jews, even

though “the daughters of Jerusalem (the Jews) do not want this to happen, and so they envy and slander her” (2.1.42).

Finally, however, after showering praise upon the Ethiopian bride—that she is naturally beautiful, well educated, beautifully mannered, and unfairly slandered by jealous rivals—Origen expresses views on race that are deeply riven with ambivalence. For when explaining that the Ethiopian eunuch, like the bride, represents gentiles, Origen indicates that his praiseworthy attributes show the moral transformation of “a foreigner . . . from a dark and ignoble race (*alienigena et obscurae gentis homo et degeneris*)” (2.1.46). He goes on to explain the moral connotations of the color black: saying that someone has come from “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia” shows that he has “been darkened by many very great sins, and infected with the inky dye of wickedness (*malatie*), and so has been made black and full of darkness” (2.1.44). Origen also contrasts what he sees as superior peoples—the Jews, instructed by the divine law, and Greeks, educated in wisdom and learning—with those whose customs are “savage and inhuman”—his first example being Ethiopians, who “feed on human flesh” (*Prin.* 2.9.5).

Apparently hastening to correct misinterpretation, Origen goes on to say that he does not mean that dark-skinned people are inherently sinful, or that they cannot be saved. For when writing this *Commentary*, he already had spent decades contending against “heretics” who read Paul’s account of election in Romans 9–11 as denying that God gives every soul the capacity for moral freedom, the freedom to choose what is good or evil. So now he adds that blackness of soul—moral blackness—is a moral condition that may contaminate anyone: “One may say of *any* soul that it is black by reason of sin, yet *beautiful* by reason of repentance” (2.1.56).

Origen also hastens to add that, while moral blackness is caused by moral deficiency, physical blackness is not. So, he continues, while the Ethiopian bride expresses shame for being black, she pleads with her critics not to “look upon me, because I am dark; for the sun has looked down on me” (Song 1:6). Thus, Origen says, she defends herself from contempt by explaining that her physical blackness “is not a natural condition in which she was created, but something that occurred through circumstance (*quasi quae non natura talis nec ita a conditore creata sit, sed ex accidentibus hoc passa sit*)” (2.2.1), through exposure to the sun, which, Origen agrees, accounts for the blackness of “the whole Ethiopian race,” which he acknowledges is now genetically transmitted (2.2.2).

Yet Origen’s ambivalence seems clear—for when closing his second book, he tells how the bride shifts shape a *third* time. For, he concludes, “while now the bride is saying, ‘I am black, and beautiful,’ she will not remain in her blackness permanently” (2.1.57). At this point Origen inserts a crucial phrase of his own into Song of Songs 8:5 (“*Who is this, coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?*”) to clinch the startling transforma-

tion: after she comes to Christ, the black bride suddenly becomes white! Thus Origen paraphrases as follows: *Who is this woman who ascends, entirely turned white (dealbata), and leaning upon her Nephew?*" (2.1.57). So although at times he distinguishes between moral and physical blackness," Origen elsewhere interweaves the two, suggesting that since the Scripture says of the righteous man that "the sun shall not burn you by day, nor the moon by night" (Ps 121:6), you see that the sun never burns the saints, in whom is nothing sinful; but . . . it . . . does burn sinners" (2.1.56).

What are we to conclude, then, about how Origen (and perhaps, by implication, other second- and third-century Christians as well) perceived race? His interpretation of these passages from the Song and from Psalm 68 is often read by African and African American Christians in terms of race.¹¹ As Origen saw it, while Jews (and perhaps others as well) tended to despise Ethiopians for being from an inferior and more ignorant race, and for being black, he himself—apparently born from an Egyptian mother, of lower status than his Greek father—wants to declare that, despite the special privileges given to the Jewish people, *all* are created in the image of God, and so may claim that primordial dignity. Yet we have seen that his exegesis also reveals considerable ambivalence, as when he insists that the bride's beauty as a black Ethiopian must be surpassed by the beauty of one who has become "entirely white."

Anyone familiar with Denise Kimber Buell's book *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* could get the impression that Christian conversion freed believers from ethnic and racial stereotypes and animosities when they choose to join what she, echoing a second-century Christian apologist, calls "a new race," not constituted by birth, ethnicity, or race, but only by voluntary choice—in Buell's words, "an *ethnos* that humans from all other *ethnē* can and should join."¹² What Buell here articulates is, indeed, a view that certain early apologists for the movement sought to promote. Justin, the Christian philosopher and apologist writing during the mid-second century in multicultural Rome declares, for example, that while *we* used to hate and destroy people of another tribe, and would have nothing to do with them, on account of their different customs," now, after conversion, *I* live intimately with them, as our brothers and sisters" (1 *Apol.* 14). Yet, as Gay Byron has shown,¹³ and

11. For a recent example, see the allusion in Emily Raboteau's autobiographical book, *Searching for Zion: The Quest for Home in the African Diaspora* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2013).

12. Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 82.

13. Note, here, the important contribution of Gay L. Byron, *Symbolic Blackness and Ethnic Difference in Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

as Buell also acknowledges, other evidence—including some where we might least expect to find it, as in Origen's *Homilies* and *Commentary on the Song of Songs*—indicates that for some Christians, including Origen, questions of race and ethnicity were by no means simple ones.

While these comments are only preliminary observations on the topic, I note, in conclusion, that the questions it raises sent me back to perhaps the greatest classic Christian text on the Song—the magnificent poem called “La noche oscura,” in which the sixteenth century Catholic mystic Juan de la Cruz took up both of Origen's traditional themes—Christ's “bride” as the church, and as the individual soul. Yet when I returned to this poem after reflecting on how Jewish and Christian exegetes argued over interpretation of the Song, I was surprised to see that the man who took the monastic name John of the Cross often bypasses the traditional patterns set out by Origen and his followers and crosses over into different territory. What surprised me first was that John speaks far more often of God as the beloved, rather than Christ. The second surprise was that John cites fewer passages from the New Testament than from the Hebrew Bible. And there was a third. Checking recent biographies, I discovered what earlier biographers I'd read had left out: that Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, revered for centuries as the greatest of Catholic mystics, both came from families of *conversos*—their grandparents, in both cases, Jewish.

E.T. Phone Home

Exile and Gender in Postexilic Storytelling

ADELE REINHARTZ

University of Ottawa

In *E.T.*, Steven Spielberg's iconic 1982 movie, the adorable Extra-Terrestrial builds a telephone from electrical components that he has found around the house. "Phone," he tells Gertie and Elliott, his human friends and protectors. He then points out the window into the night sky: "Home."

E.T. exemplifies the forced migrant, the stranger in a strange land. Like other exiles, E.T. must function in an alien society, filled with creatures—in his case, people—who are visibly different from himself and whose language, customs, values, habits, and inventions are foreign to him. Being different also makes him vulnerable to those earthlings who have both the power and the interest to harm him, and dependent on those who want to help him. But he adapts to his situation: he learns to speak, and he learns to use the instruments of this new society for his own purposes: phoning home.

One of the questions raised by this film is the relationship between E.T.'s experience of exile and his "E.T.ness," that is, his nature as an extra-terrestrial. This issue is not explicitly addressed in the film, but it arises when one considers this film in the context of other stories of exile, including the Jewish apocryphal novels named after Esther, Judith, and Susanna. To the best of our knowledge, these books were written within and also for diaspora communities. Even if they had Hebrew or Aramaic antecedents—a matter that is certain with regard to Esther and likely but not proven with regard to Judith and Susanna—the books as we have them circulated primarily in Greek and other diaspora languages.¹

* This essay is dedicated with respect and affection to Ross Kraemer, from whom I have learned so much.

1. For comments and detailed discussion of the dating, provenance, and original languages, see Amy-Jill Levine, "Judith," in *The Apocrypha*, ed. Martin Goodman, John Barton,

These novels differ from Spielberg's 1982 movie with regard to medium, antiquity, and language. But, like the film *E.T.*, these works are fictions: they create worlds that, while not our own, are nevertheless *like* our own in important ways.² And, like *E.T.*, these novels belong to popular culture; they were very broadly read—more broadly perhaps than any other literature with the exception of the Bible itself.³ Furthermore, they too foreground the theme of exile; although some of their appeal lies in their perennially entertaining themes—war, intrigue, lust and sex, or lust and no-sex—we may speculate that at least some of their popularity may have rested precisely on their negotiation of the fraught topics of exile and gender.

In this essay, I hope to show that, just as E.T.'s E.T-ness—his identity as an alien nonhuman creature exiled on planet earth—is central to the story of his exile, so too is the femaleness of Esther, Judith, and Susanna germane to the stories of exile that their narratives recount. My argument will be structured around three points—the exilic setting; the phone call; and the message—and will conclude with some reflections on the role of gender in stories about exile.

Exile

Like the movie, the novels refer explicitly to exile. The book of Susanna is set in Babylon (1:1). The story of Judith takes place “in the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh” (1:1), a fictional era that evokes the destruction of both the northern and southern kingdoms of biblical Israel. Greek Esther, like its Hebrew counterpart, takes place in Persia, and describes Mordecai, Esther's uncle, as a former prisoner of war “whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had brought from Jerusalem” (1:2–3).

All three books present the diaspora situation as a place where bad things can happen to good people. In Greek Esther, the Jews are threatened with complete extermination due to the machinations of the king's minister Haman. All this is revealed to Mordecai in a dream of “[n]oise and confusion, thunders and earthquake, tumult on the earth! . . . It was a day of darkness and gloom, of tribulation and distress, affliction and great

and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21–32; and, in the same volume, Adele Reinhartz, “Esther (Greek),” 33–44; and George J. Brooke, “Additions to Daniel: The Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Jews, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon,” 120–28.

2. Lawrence M. Wills, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World* (Myth and Poetics; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 1.

3. Ibid., 3; Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 204–9.

tumult on the earth! And the whole righteous nation was troubled; they feared the evils that threatened them, and they were ready to perish (Gr. Esther 11:5–9.)

In Judith, the threat is conquest. Judith and her compatriots are not themselves exiles; they live in the Judean town of Bethulia. But they are threatened by the enemy general Holofernes, whose army was marching on those parts of the Persian empire that were not yet under the control of the (fictional) Assyrian king Nebuchadnezzar. Holofernes' nearby camp strikes fear into the hearts of the Bethulians; would they succumb to Nebuchadnezzar's plan to "lead them away captive to the ends of the whole earth"? (2:9).

In Susanna, the threat is not national but personal: Susanna is entrapped in the garden of her husband's lavish home by two Jewish elders who have rape in mind. Their wickedness is indirectly attributed to their exile in Babylon, for, according to v. 5, "the Lord had said: 'Wickedness came forth from Babylon, from elders who were judges, who were supposed to govern the people.'" A direct biblical source for this assertion is nowhere to be found, but the biblical connection between evil and exile may lie in the background here (e.g., Jeremiah 22).

In *E.T.* it is the Extra-Terrestrial who actively works out a solution to his problem. In the ancient Jewish novels, it is the central female character who confronts the threat head-on. Esther risks her own life by interceding with the king, when she reveals her own Jewish identity and persuades the king to turn upon Haman and foil his plan to destroy the Jews (ch. 15). Judith ventures into enemy territory and lulls Holofernes with wine and offers of sex, only to carry his head back to Bethulia in triumph (13:15). Technically Susanna is saved by the young prophet Daniel, but only because she had cried out against the elders who had confronted her in the garden (Sus 21–24).

Phone Call

For *E.T.*, the transformation from passive and vulnerable bystander to active agent of his own salvation occurs when he discovers and makes use of a telephone-like communication device of his own invention. Using a Buck Rogers cartoon as his guide, *E.T.* constructs an instrument of various odds and ends he has found in the house. He then sets it up in the forest, at the location near where he was accidentally abandoned in the first place. His goal is to alert his fellow extra-terrestrials as to his whereabouts; he is confident that they will save him once they know that he is in trouble.

By contrast, the apocryphal women protagonists do not call upon their ethnic or national compatriots in the homeland to rescue them. For

one thing, Judith still lives in the homeland, if under threat of imminent exile; Esther and Susanna, who live in Persia and Babylon respectively, do not mention, let alone contact, their Judean cousins. Nor do they count on their local friends and family when the going gets rough. But, like E.T., they reach to the heavens, not to aliens but to God, not by phone but by that ancient medium of divine-human communication called prayer.

As Esther prepares to go to her husband the king, she prays for three days. The gist of her prayer is provided in Addition C:⁴ *O my Lord, you only are our king; help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, for my danger is in my hand,*” she begins (14: 3–4). She acknowledges the sins of her people in glorifying the gods of the nations, which led God to hand them over to their enemies. She pleads with God not to abandon her people now in exile, but to *ℓ* urn their plan against them, and make an example of him who began this against us” (11), to give her the gift of eloquent speech when she presents herself to the king. She reminds God that she holds her exalted position against her own wishes, for she hates *ℓ* he splendor of the wicked,” and abhors *ℓ* he bed of the uncircumcised and of any alien.” She has neither eaten the forbidden food of Haman’s table and the king’s feast nor “drunk the wine of libations.” Her piety and careful observance of Jewish law, Esther implies, should carry some weight with God, and cause God to save her people from the hands of evildoers and save her from her fear.” Mordecai too prays for a good outcome (13:8–17).

Judith, like Esther, prays to God before she prepares herself for the offensive against Holofernes, and she too is not alone in her prayers. Rather, *ℓ* v ery man of Israel cried out to God with great fervor, and they humbled themselves with much fasting” (Jdt 4:9). And not only Israelite men but “their wives and their children and their cattle and every resident alien and hired laborer and purchased slave—they all put sackcloth around their waists” (4:10). They prostrated themselves before the temple, put ashes on their heads, spread out their sackcloth before the Lord, even draped the altar with sackcloth, and then prayed in unison to God *ℓ* ot to allow their infants to be carried off and their wives to be taken as booty, and the towns they had inherited to be destroyed, and the sanctuary to be profaned and desecrated to the malicious joy of the Gentiles” (4:11–12). Their message was received, for “the Lord heard their prayers and had regard for their distress; for the people fasted many days throughout Judea and in Jerusalem before the sanctuary of the Lord Almighty.” Only after this reassuring response does Judith enter her own private plea to break the strength of the Assyrians, and to *ℓ* m]ake my deceitful words bring wound and bruise on those who have planned cruel things against

4. The Greek versions of Esther include six additions not present in Hebrew Esther. These additions amplify the narrative as well as the portrayals of the main characters, especially Mordecai and Esther.

your covenant, and against your sacred house, and against Mount Zion, and against the house your children possess" (9:13).

Susanna, by contrast, has no time for leisurely prayer and fasting. Rather, at the moment of her near-assault she makes a quick decision that it is better to fall into the hands of the evil elders "than sin in the sight of the Lord" (1:23). Her prayer comes during her trial, when it looks like she will be convicted and summarily executed for adultery. At this dire moment, her prayer is short and to the point: *O eternal God, you know what is secret and are aware of all things before they come to be; you know that these men have given false evidence against me. And now I am to die, though I have done none of the wicked things that they have charged against me!*" (Sus 42–43). But this pithy prayer is enough to prod the Lord into action, and to come to her rescue through the person of the clever young man Daniel, who exposes the elders' damning testimony as false (54–58). Unlike E.T., these three women do not need a telephone; they have a direct line to their rescuer, the God of Israel.

The Message

E.T.'s phone message too to his fellow extra-terrestrials was short and to the point: Please pick me up and take me home. This is not to say that he disliked America; though he felt threatened—for good reason—he had come to love the children who loved him too. But his entire being was focused on going home. The emotional stress and distress of his exile were eventually mirrored by a sharp decline in his health. Soon, going home became a matter of life and death.

The longing for home is also evident in some of the postexilic literature in the Hebrew Bible, most famously in Psalm 137 in which the exiles weep for Zion as they sit by the waters of Babylon. A similar sentiment can be found in the book of Judith, where drastic means are needed to avoid conquest and exile. It is difficult to determine the audience and circumstances of this novel; if it was written in the Maccabean period to celebrate the Judeans' victory over Nicanor, as some scholars believe, then the book of Judith could have originated as a celebration of victory over the Gentile enemy. But read by later diaspora communities, it could well have been viewed as a narrative of wishful thinking, or perhaps as a manifesto of faith that the exiles, like the Bethulians, would eventually be restored to their homeland.

Judith herself symbolically undertakes the journey traveled by the Judean exile after the Babylonian conquest: she leaves her rooftop home in Bethulia, descends to enemy territory—Holofernes' tent—and then returns home in triumph. The same cannot be said, however, for Esther

and Susanna. While both of these novels concern the troubles that Jews face in the diaspora, neither book expresses or narrativizes the longing or desire for a return to Zion. The book of Susanna is completely silent about the exile. By contrast, the narrative of Esther does evoke the motif of exile and return. In her prayer, she recalls the exodus, when God “took Israel out of all the nations, and our ancestors from among all their forebears, for an everlasting inheritance, and that you did for them all that you promised” but then God handed Israel over to the enemies for their sins and idolatry.” Now Israel faces destruction. But it is significant that Esther does not ask God to take the people Israel back to their land, but prays that God intercede to foil Haman’s genocidal plan (Gr. Esther 14:5–11).

Why no longing for a return to the land? E.T. yearns not only for his physical home but for his own kind, his “people.” Esther and Susanna, on the other hand, had their people with them in exile. Being an exile within a community of exiles diminishes one’s sense of isolation.⁵ Even more important, however, a critical mass of exiles from similar social and geographical locations allows for the creation of practices and institutions that help to maintain identity and create safety and security on foreign soil.⁶ These women do not need to phone home to Judea because they have their home community with them.⁷

Conclusion: Gender and Exile

In the film and in the novels, the main characters are in important ways marginal to or outside the systems of power that normally operate in that society. In the case of Greek Esther and Judith, the marginal status accrues to the exiled or threatened people as a whole, and, one might suggest, that marginal status is underscored by the gender of the books’ protagonists,

5. On the effect of exile on social isolation, see León Grinberg and Rebeca Grinberg, *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 19.

6. Gerasimus Katsan, *History and National Ideology in Greek Postmodernist Fiction* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013), 36.

7. Erich S. Gruen notes that diaspora included voluntary, not only forced, migration. Voluntary “exiles” were not necessarily longing for the homeland, but may still have been concerned to maintain group identity at the same time as they accommodated to their diaspora contexts (*Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002], 6). Tessa Rajak suggests that the tone of cautious realism in these novels contributes to group solidarity, as “depictions of crises do not necessarily arise from situations of crisis: there are reasons for them to be thought useful and to be found appealing in good times as much as in bad. . . . The most useful narratives . . . are precisely those which act as a deterrent to complacency by depicting both the worst of possibilities and the most vivid of reversals. Moreover, dramas with satisfactory endings provided excellent lessons in the benefits of piety” (*Translation and Survival*, 205–6).

one of whom—Esther—is stuck in the king’s harem without the protection of her uncle, and the other of whom—Judith—is a widow and therefore without the protection of her husband. In Susanna, it is the protagonist herself who is threatened, by elders who represent the wickedness that caused exile to begin with. In the film, marginality is signaled by E.T.’s identity as an extra-terrestrial alien. Indeed, E.T.’s own liminal situation is accentuated humorously in a scene in which the little girl Gertie dresses E.T. up in women’s clothing.

Like E.T., Judith, Susanna, and Esther make use of the means available to them in order to resolve their situations. For all three women, sexuality is in play, but in different ways. Esther exploits her relationship with the king in order to save her people, while Judith dangles her body before Holofernes in order to gain access to his inner sanctum, ply him with drink, and cut off his head. Susanna saves herself from sexual assault by crying out, leading to a shouting match with the elders, which in turn summoned others to the garden.

In all four cases—the movie and the three novels—dressing and undressing accompany, and signify, the transitions between vulnerability and agency. When E.T. is dressed up in girly clothes and hidden in the closet, he is merely Gertie’s plaything, a living doll. But as he stretches out his finger to point to his home, and makes his goals understood to the children, he removes the hat and wig and becomes himself again. When Esther made her potentially fatal decision to approach the king on behalf of her people, she was “seized with deadly anxiety” and “fled to the Lord. She took off her splendid apparel and put on the garments of distress and mourning, and instead of costly perfumes she covered her head with ashes and dung, and she utterly humbled her body; every part that she loved to adorn she covered with her tangled hair. (Gr. Esther 14:1–2). After praying for three days, she removed her garments of distress, and arrayed herself in splendid attire.” “Majestically adorned,” she proceeded to the king’s throne room (15:1). Her royal attire, which, we are led to believe, was a mere mask for her fear and piety, nevertheless—and perhaps ironically—allowed her to unmask herself before the king, finally revealing to him her identity as a Jew, for the sake of saving her people.

Similarly, Judith’s decision to act on her people’s behalf is marked by a dramatic wardrobe change. “She removed the sackcloth she had been wearing, took off her widow’s garments, bathed her body with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment. She combed her hair, put on a tiara, and dressed herself in the festive attire that she used to wear while her husband Manasseh was living. She put sandals on her feet, and put on her anklets, bracelets, rings, earrings, and all her other jewelry. Thus she made herself very beautiful, to entice the eyes of all the men who might see her” (Jdt 10:2–4).

Susanna’s situation is the most precarious of all; whereas Judith and

Esther adorn themselves in order to entice the enemy, or the enemy's unwitting agent, in Esther's case, Susanna disrobes only to wash herself and enjoy the beauty of a bath in the privacy of her locked garden. She is vulnerable not only as a woman who is alone and unprotected by husband or servants, but, we presume, as a naked woman to boot. To make matters worse, at the order of the elders, she was required to unveil herself at her trial as well, "so that they might feast their eyes on her beauty" (Sus 1:31–32). If clothing—and the act of donning and removing clothing—is merely symbolic in *E.T.*, tracing his transformation from a passive alien to an empowered extra-terrestrial, clothing is both symbolic and instrumental in the apocryphal novels, woven not only into the major themes of these books but also into plot structure and characterization.

The matter of wardrobe returns the discussion to the question posed at the outset: Is the gender of the protagonists in these three novels germane to the theme of exile, or is it incidental? The similarities between *E.T.* and these three novels suggest that stories about exile feature protagonists who stand out visibly as well as in cultural and other ways from the majority society. This convention ensures that the different-ness of the exiled individual, and therefore the situation of exile, is visible and in the forefront as the narratives move to their climax and resolution.

E.T., an alien left behind on earth by a spaceship, differs in just about every way from the human beings who find him, even if these differences begin to blur as he learns language, uses technology, and develops relationships. The protagonists of our three novels, by contrast, are of the same species as the people among whom they are, or fear they will be, exiled. It is the protagonists' gender that marks their difference and their status as exiles or potential exiles. Of course, in the story world of each novel, the "host" nations include women, but these women have only minor roles, if any, in the stories.⁸ Rather, the three principal women of the stories operate in worlds in which the important players are exclusively male. This difference makes them vulnerable but is also a source of strength and power: vulnerable because they can easily be overpowered by stronger, more powerful, and more numerous men, but powerful because they can use their wiles, sexuality, and, above all, their piety, to save themselves and their people.

The strong emphasis on piety and prayer suggests a second reason that gender is not incidental in these stories. In biblical literature, especially in prophetic books such as Hosea, the relationship between God and Israel is metaphorically described as a marital relationship in which God is the husband and Israel the wife.⁹ While the specific plot lines of

8. All three novels have other female characters—Vashti and the other harem women in Esther; servant women in Susanna and Judith—but none has a major role.

9. On the biblical use of female metaphors for Israel and its relationship to the portrayal

each of these novels vary considerably, their central theme is the same: a vulnerable exiled people can survive intact if they remain true to their covenant with God, through piety, obedience, and, above all, prayer. The relationship between God and his bride remains intact whether in the land of Israel or in exile. The God of Israel is a universal God, not tied to a particular place; this God hears and heeds his people's cries for help no matter where they are. E.T. in America must phone home to tell his fellow aliens where he is, but Jews in exile need only lift up their voices in prayer.

In contrast to the movie *E.T.*, which was produced for humans rather than aliens, the apocryphal novels were written for the type of diaspora communities which their female heroes represent. The books themselves therefore constitute a phone call, from author to reader, bearing a message of how to behave in the diaspora to ensure safety and to maintain group identity. But it is not a long distance or interplanetary phone call, just a local call, not a plea for rescue but a helpful chat between neighbors and friends.

of female characters, see Tikva Simone Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible* (New York: Schocken Books, 2002), xx–xxii, 333–38.

Her Share of the Cursings

Grid and Group, Gender and Demons

SARAH L. SCHWARZ

Princeton University

In one of my first graduate seminars with Ross Kraemer, I remember observing that, while there appear to be no female angels,¹ we can easily find examples of ancient and late antique demons described with highly gendered female characteristics, and angels gendered male. This sparked some curiosity in me about the whys and hows of gendering the demonic—how this works, why some of our evidence does not seem invested in gendered description of these beings while other examples emphasize traits that seem chosen to heighten our awareness of gendered ideas, especially about demonesses, and why this is so.

It is through Kraemer's work that I first came to see the utility of Mary Douglas's notion of grid and group. While Kraemer uses grid and group to unlock the social dimension of the varieties of women's religious experience in antiquity, I dabbled with its application to various late antique demonologies. This moment of honoring Kraemer's contributions to our field and my work is the perfect time to test another dimension—that is, to ask how might grid and group enable us to nuance our understanding of gendering the demonic?²

1. However, neuter or eunuch angels do seem to have been a possibility; see Saul M. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (TSAJ 36; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993) for a discussion.

2. Kraemer's work on women's religions suggests two possible pathways for a consideration of gender and demons. It would be fruitful to examine both the ways in which various ancient and late antique cosmologies envisioned the gender of demonic beings, and how that might reflect the grid and group of the social setting that created them, and it would be useful to think about the ways in which rituals for dealing with the demonic were gendered for the use of human clients (and how that too reflects both social setting and cosmology). In this essay I can only take a stab at the first, but the other pathway has been explored by Rebecca Lesses (see esp. her "Exe(o)rcising Power: Women as Sorceresses, Exorcists, and Demonesses in Babylonian Jewish Society of Late Antiquity," *JAAR* 69 (2001): 343–76, among

In this exploration, I ask what is revealed about cosmology and social setting when we attend to the ways in which demons are gendered in late antique examples. Not all demons are explicitly gendered, but some are pointedly, for example, described as female in incredibly sexualized ways. In this paper, I make a preliminary suggestion that the details of such characterizations are likely to map onto certain settings and even genres. Attention to this might help us better understand what we are seeing in these sources and also might help us to reverse triangulate from the details of a particular representation of gender in the demonic to the social location that produced it.³ Furthermore, in some quadrants demonic gender is unlikely to be particularly attended to, so demonesses or their absence can help reveal important clues about the setting of a particular (demonological) source.

Students of Kraemer's work will doubtless be familiar with the four quadrants of Douglas's grid and group, elucidated and refined in many publications from the 1970s forward, but nevertheless a brief review is warranted here.⁴ Douglas articulates two key dimensions that govern human experience of the social world—the horizontal “group,” which measures how strongly the group pressures individuals to conform, and the vertical “grid,” which measures how tightly group members are bound by rules that limit their autonomy. The intersection of these dimensions yields four possible quadrants, each representing a generalized picture of a society with certain key characteristics.

Kraemer notes that Douglas rarely attends to women's experiences,⁵ except to state that women typically are found in weak group/strong grid settings (regardless of where their fathers, husbands, or sons might be situated), which Kraemer reads as implying that women will find broadly similar experiences even in different social contexts. Kraemer explores whether Douglas's model can be refined to attend more specifically to women's social locations and cosmologies. Kraemer writes, “Douglas seems to be saying that in all social locations, male control of women is likely to be the

others. It is also essential to note Peter Brown's pioneering application of Douglas's work to late antique demons in “Sorcery, Demons, and the Rise of Christianity,” in *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations* (ed. M. Douglas; London: Tavistock, 1970), 17–46.

3. Although it is always important to note that this reversal of Douglas's work is something she herself would object to; see Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 20.

4. Douglas published her schema in slightly different versions in her 1970 and 1973 editions of *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, and made further changes in *Cultural Bias*, No. 35 (London: Royal Anthropological Institute, 1978). James Spickard's work “A Guide to Mary Douglas's Three Versions of Grid/Group Theory,” *Sociological Analysis* 50 (1989): 151–70 provides a useful overview of the changes. Also helpful is Douglas's “Introduction to Grid/Group Analysis,” in *Essays in the Sociology of Perception* (ed. M. Douglas; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 1–8.

5. Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, 17.

norm, but that the explanations used to legitimate that dominance will vary according to the combinations of grid and group.”⁶ Ultimately Kraemer argues that Douglas put almost all women, almost all the time, in the same quadrant of the diagram, but examining antiquity more closely shows that actually women can be found in various social locations, and attending to those differences might help us better trace the trajectory of women’s involvement in various ancient and late antique religious movements.

So from Douglas’s schema to Kraemer’s refinement through attention to gender, we can begin to sketch what we might expect to find when exploring the intersection of gender and the demonic (see fig. 1). The most common ancient and late antique situation was weak group, strong grid; a fixed status in an arbitrary universe, with women and men strictly separated. Marriage is a valuable social good in this quadrant, so women are tightly controlled since they can be sources of ritual impurity and social shame. Demons are arbitrary and amoral but are understood primarily as a source of harm like bad weather or fever, not part of a larger dualistically understood cosmic evil. Demons in this quadrant are addressed instrumentally, with ritual forms and utterances that properly address the fixed stations of all the participants, directed at individual, everyday problems involved. In this quadrant, we would tend to find demons fixed in their stations by gender as well. I can imagine two possibilities here: we might find highly gendered demons who are potentially sources of shame, not cosmic evil; and/or we might find demons so featureless and quotidian that we cannot discern personality or narrative—they are not connected to a cosmic evil and are not particularly gendered at all). Overall the concern is *harm*.

The so-called rider amulets may come from this common social setting of weak group and strong grid.⁷ Hundreds of these amulets have been published,⁸ and their similarities suggest a shared iconographic vocabulary even as their crude renderings suggest non-elite production (and consumption?). Most appear humbly made in forms that suggest they were worn close to the body by individuals seeking their protective

6. Ibid., p. 19.

7. Todd E. Klutz addresses the iconography of the rider amulets (*Rewriting the Testament of Solomon: Tradition, Conflict and Identity in a Late Antique Pseudepigraphon* [LSTS 53; London: T&T Clark, 2005], esp. ch. 4), but he focuses his consideration primarily on the rider figure. On p. 125 he considers the demonesses but minimizes the effect of gender, simply writing that these are part of a genre that links femininity and danger.

8. Many rider amulets are published in Campbell Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets: Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 49; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950) and in Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (Bollingen Series 37; New York: Pantheon, 1953–68). An online sampling can be found at Gideon Bohak, “Traditions of Magic in Late Antiquity,” <http://www.lib.umich.edu/files/exhibits/pap/magic/intro.html>.

FIGURE 1. DEMONESES IN GRID AND GROUP
(following the work of Mary Douglas and Ross Shepard Kraemer)

<p>Weak Group, Strong Grid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fixed social status• Weak group support• Strong pressure to follow rules• Arbitrary cosmos• No rewards, must fulfill set station in life <p>Example: Rider amulet (demons are highly constrained by both status and gender, perhaps mirroring the ways people were constrained in this social setting)</p>	<p>Strong Group, Strong Grid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Status fixed• Strong group support• Many rules; great concern about sin as violation of rules• Good rewarded, evil punished• Hierarchy affirmed <p>Example: Obyzouth (<i>T. Sol.</i> 13) (demoness affirms the order with a particularly gendered punishment that is not useful, except to confirm the (low) status of female beings, thus affirming the hierarchy, and confirming that evil is punished)</p>
<p>Weak Group, Weak Grid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social status achieved• Individualism• Egalitarianism• Neutral cosmos• Personal achievements, not divine plan <p>Example: Not treated in this essay (perhaps akin to demons in contemporary literary or political metaphors, in which demon(esse)s may be invoked rhetorically but are not taken literally)</p>	<p>Strong Group, Weak Grid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Status achieved• Sectarian situations• Strong group boundaries• Many divisions between/among groups• Dualist cosmos <p>Example: 4Q560 (dualist situation where asceticism is strong and yet women can often be seen as sources of impurity, so demonesses are viewed as outsiders, and thus associated with cosmic evil, which trumps their gender to the extent that they become breachers/penetrators)</p>

power against demonic harm. In some cases the image is paired with a range of symbols of power, drawing from Jewish, Christian, Egyptian, and broadly Greco-Roman cultural sources, to the extent that we can see this quest to preserve the bearer from evil seems to have trumped communal boundaries.

These representations are highly gendered, with the demoness characterized by disheveled long hair, and sometimes bared breasts. Typically



FIGURE 2. KM 26092, Rider amulet, hematite, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan.

the female figure is presented in a passive, defensive pose. While many such amulets are completely or mostly textless, they are frequently understood as participating in a larger narrative structure (e.g., the rider is conventionally Solomon, with all the force of allusion to Bible and history that that figure suggests) but in the form of these magical objects often all we see is the gendered demoness in the act of submitting. The gendering on these amulets seems to emphasize (or even yearn for) a cosmos in which everyone is ascribed to their proper station: strong male on horseback, a powerful king versus weak, passive sexualized female demoness on the ground, and the amulet seems to direct its power toward reasserting this social/cosmic order.

In one typical example (Bonner 294; see fig. 2) the iconographic details⁹ affirm the set stations in life. Solomon the king is depicted in a neat toga (the folds of his tunic are visible tied at his shoulder). His posture is upright, and even his horse's mane is neatly depicted. His erect pose draws the eye toward the diagonal created by his spear, poised to penetrate the female figure below. In contrast, the demoness is recoiling underneath, on her back, nude, with a rounded body (in contrast to Solomon's defined waist) and wild hair. In every way, the pair seems to represent opposites, from powerful male to subdued female, suggesting the amulet works by (re-)asserting those "proper" social roles. In this case, the main concern seems to be demonic harm, since the purpose of wearing such an amulet would be personal protection. The bearer is situated in his or her

9. Since my focus in this essay is on the representation of demonic gender, I leave aside the inscription of Solomon's name in Greek here. For a key discussion of the uses of writing in amulets, see David Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions," *Helios* 21 (1994): 189–221.

proper position in the hierarchy too (beneath king, above demoness) and all are affirmed and protected by the amulet.

In a strong group, strong grid setting, Douglas says there is pressure to conform to rules and regulations, a moral worldview, and a reward/punishment system is understood. Women and men rarely operate in the same spheres, and few women would fit in this social category. Social rules serve to control marriage and inheritance through defining categories of permitted and illicit sexual relationships. This is often the quadrant for priests and religious elites. In this location, hierarchy is affirmed as just, and there is the view that good is rewarded and bad is punished, so we often see a demonology here that explores how demons fit into God's larger plan. In this setting, demons might be gendered so as to affirm the ordered cosmos and hierarchy that rewards people like the priests and elites found at the top of the social pyramid.

The Greek *Testament of Solomon* tradition is replete with demons of all sorts, and so it is unsurprising to find that it also contains an array of demonesses.¹⁰ I have elsewhere argued that this tradition is a complex composite, and that different layers of the tale were produced by different communities from different quadrants of Douglas's grid and group.¹¹ In the story, King Solomon interacts with many demons, ultimately using a ring of power to subdue them and force them to do various labors of building the Jerusalem temple, and along the way he provides a recipe-book of ritual instructions for use by practitioners. While a detailed introduction is outside the scope of this article, it is enough to say that this tradition is broadly late antique, preserved in Greek in a large and highly varied array of late manuscripts, and shows signs of connection to Jewish, Christian, and various "pagan" traditions as well.

While there are many examples of gendering the demonic across the layers of the *Testament of Solomon*, a particularly vivid example comes in the treatment of the demoness called Obyzouth. The bulk of the narrative proceeds as a series of conversations between King Solomon and the various demons who are summoned before him. Each reveals his or her sphere of harm before being bound by their particular thwarting angel and consigned to a particular job in building the temple. In this framework, Obyzouth stands out. She arrives in ch. 13 with disheveled hair¹²

10. For a critical edition, see Chester Charlton McCown, ed., *The Testament of Solomon* (Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 9; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922); and for an introduction and translation, see Dennis C. Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *OTP* 1:935–87.

11. Sarah L. Schwarz, "Demons and Douglas: Applying Grid and Group to the Demologies of the *Testament of Solomon*," *JAAR* 80 (2012): 909–31.

12. Duling points out that this description may allude to the representation of lilliths in the iconography of Aramaic incantation texts ("Testament of Solomon," 974 n. 13a). For more on the iconography of demonesses in the bowls, see Michael D. Swartz, "The Aesthetics of Blessing and Cursing: Literary and Iconographic Dimensions of Hebrew and Ara-

and tasks Solomon with washing his hands—perhaps also a magical ritual—before she will answer his questions. As is typical, she then reveals that she is the demon who determines when women will give birth and kills their infants, but she is thwarted by Raphael. Strangely, however, her labor in building the temple is, unlike the rest of the demons in the *Testament*, unusually unproductive. Solomon orders her “to be bound by the hair and to be hung up in front of the Temple in order that all those sons of Israel who pass through and see might glorify the God of Israel” (13:7). This appears quite distinct, gender based, and completely different from any labor conscripted from male demons in the story.

Attention to the intersections of gender, status, and sin in this vignette suggest that the case of Obyzouth is likely to have come from the strong group, strong grid category. The very ways in which the authors and transmitters have chosen to depict her make her gender, her sphere of harm, and her conscripted labor together work to serve the social order and affirm its rightness. Like the depiction of the demoness in the amulet above, Obyzouth is here dominated by the male king, and the added descriptor of disheveled hair emphasizes her disreputable and feminized appearance.¹³ Her form of harm is gendered too, as it is connected with childbirth. Like the rest of the demons in the story, she is adjured by the king and the mention of her thwarting angel. However, while the rest of the male demons perform seemingly useful work, like cutting stones (Ornias, ch. 2) or moving them into place (Lix Tetrax, ch. 7), and even other female demons provide properly feminized productive labor, such as Onoskelis, who spins hemp into rope for the construction project (ch. 4), Obyzouth’s punishment does not appear to directly advance the building effort. Instead, she is bound by her hair in shame, solely to serve as a lesson to the human men who will pass by her. In this way, her destiny, or at least her narrative purpose, seems to be to emphasize the rightness of proper order, to affirm the hierarchy of God on top, king below, demons and humans beneath. A demoness punished as warning at the entryway of the temple serves the aim of reminding all of the importance of the rules and significantly emphasizes that the wicked will be punished and good will win out in the end, perhaps reflecting the assumptions made by those in power who might tend to believe that their status at the top was a reward, and thus to see a cosmic system of rewards and punishments at

maic Blessing and Curse Texts,” *JANER* 5 (2005): 187–211; and Erica C. D. Hunter, “Who Are the Demons? The Iconography of Incantation Bowls,” *Studi epigrafici e linguistici* 15 (1998): 95–115.

13. On the meanings of women’s hair in antiquity, see Molly Myerowitz Levine, “The Gendered Grammar of Ancient Mediterranean Hair,” in *Off with Her Head! The Denial of Women’s Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture* (ed. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 76–130.

work. All these are features we would expect to find in the strong group, strong grid situation, and by paying attention to the representation of a demoness in this category we can see how the hierarchy and gender roles are further affirmed by this cosmology.

In situations of strong group and weak grid, which are typical of sectarian communities, we find a dualistic cosmology, huge divisions between insiders and outsiders, and the possibility that status could be achieved within the group. In these settings, asceticism is frequently present, and gender distinctions may be minimized; yet women can be seen as sources of dishonor and impurity. The boundaries between demons and human opponents of the insider group might be blurred in this quadrant. Demonic gender might be minimized here, with the emphasis placed on demons as outsiders first, to be attended to by proper boundaries and attention to the cosmic evil force they represent.

I suggest that the Qumranic fragment known as 4Q560 (4QAgainst Demons)¹⁴ might be an example from this category.¹⁵ The highly fragmentary nature of this text makes transcription and translation challenging, so I cite Douglas L. Penney and Michael O. Wise's translation¹⁶ in full:

Column 1

... Beel]zebug, you/to you[
 ...]the midwife, the punishment of childbearers, an evil visitant,
 a de[mon ...
 ... I adjure you all who en]ter into the body, the male Wast-
 ing-demon and the female Wasting demon
 ... I adjure you all by the name of YHWH, "He who re]moves
 iniquity and transgression," O Fever and Chills and Chest Pain
 ... and forbidden to disturb by night in dreams or by da]y
 in sleep, the male Shrine-spirit and the female Shrine-spirit,
 breacher-demons (?) of
 ... w]icked ...

14. Published in Douglas L. Penney and Michael O. Wise, "By the Power of Beelzebub: An Aramaic Incantation Formula from Qumran (4Q560)," *JBL* 113 (1994): 627–50; E. Puech, ed., *Qumran Cave 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie: 4Q550–575, 580–582* (DJD 37; Oxford: Clarendon, 2009); and Florentino García Martínez, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (2nd ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1996).

15. An important discussion of demonology at Qumran can be found in Philip S. Alexander, "The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 2:331–53; with some caveats in Andy M. Reimer, "Rescuing the Fallen Angels: The Case of the Disappearing Angels at Qumran," *DSD* 7 (2000): 334–53.

16. Penney and Wise, "Power of Beelzebub," 632.

Column 2

...
 before h[im] ...
 and ...
 before him and ... [
 And I, O spirit, adjure [you that you ...
 I adjure you, O spirit, [that you ...
 On the earth, in clouds [...

Florentino García-Martínez translates the key passage: “and to the heart, and as [. . .] and you gave birth to rebellion, begotten) through the visitation of evil [. . .] [. . .] he who enters the flesh, the male penetrator and the female penetrator . . . he who crushed the male and she who passes through the female” and then continues “he who crushes the male and she who passes through the female, those who dig [. . .] the wicked [. . .].”¹⁷

This text looks like an apotropaic spell to protect the bearer during sleep from the variety of demons who might attack. It is hard to know whether this text was composed within the community at Qumran or merely utilized there, but for the purposes of this analysis I will suggest that there is no reason the user could not have understood this demonology within a larger Qumranic worldview. The demonology encompasses male and female demons who are treated in parallel, and a primary concern to the bearer of the spell seems to be invasion of the body by these male and female demonic beings, just as breach of the social body (the *Yahad*) was of paramount concern for members of the Qumran community.

I suggest in this example cosmic dualism might trump gender in how demonesses are portrayed. While it is certainly the case that many amulets, particularly those which draw on ancient Near Eastern sources, mention both male and female demons of various sorts,¹⁸ it seems important here that they are not only male and female but also “breachers” or, as García Martínez translates, “penetrators.”¹⁹ This image fully transcends the oft-cited ancient dichotomy between those who penetrate and those who are penetrated, and thus suggests that here demonesses are more important in their association with the forces of evil than in their femaleness. In a strong

17. García Martínez, *Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 378.

18. And in fact Penney and Wise argue that this pattern of naming paired male and female demons in the text f' s perhaps the single most important feature identifying this text as magical” (“Power of Beelzebub,” 639).

19. The term is מַחְתְּרִי, which Penney and Wise term “the most difficult of the entire text” (“Power of Beelzebub,” 645), but their discussion of the likely etymology makes a case for “breaking into” as a key locus of meaning—thus either breachers or penetrators seems appropriate to me.

group, weak grid situation, we would expect to find high barriers to the outside and a strongly dualistic worldview. Asceticism is often strong in such groups as well, and in some situations gendered roles can be transcended or transformed, at least in limited ways (as, Kraemer argued, was the case in some early Christian groups²⁰). The example of 4Q560 suggests that the strong group, weak grid situation might have been one in which some demonesses were also able to transcend their gender roles.

In the boundaries of this brief essay, I only sampled some of the open questions about what Douglas's and Kraemer's insights might reveal through a more detailed analysis. I began this exploration planning to offer a taxonomy of gender and the demonic, and I quickly imagined mapping tidy examples to the quadrants of my grid. Yet as I probed the demonesses, I found them slipping away from my efforts at categorization. Following the insights of Sarah Iles Johnston and Charles Stewart, I have come to think there is no fully stable way to categorize demons.²¹ As Johnston writes:

This is because the function of such traits and patterns is not to identify one demon definitively in contrast to all others, but rather to say something about the nature of the demon as it is being experienced by a specific person at a specific moment. . . . It is not until those who stand outside of a community begin to make lists of its demons (i.e. demonologies) for their own purposes that any real consistency of traits and imagery is obtained, and it is an artificial consistency, born from a scholar's desire to organize, a magician's desire to control, or a missionary's desire to devalue and eventually overcome.²²

Johnston points out that our classificatory challenges are greater with ancient material than with ethnographies of living communities for many reasons, not least because the artists and writers who left us our evidence may have been selective to a nonrepresentative degree in depicting the demons.²³

What is going on with gender and the demonic in late antiquity? A brief foray such as this one can only begin to sketch the possibilities, but once again, following in Kraemer's footsteps, the application of Douglas to our sources appears to be a productive way forward.

20. See Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, 15, for a discussion of strong group/minimal grid first-century Christian women, for example.

21. Sarah Iles Johnston, "Defining the Dreadful: Remarks on the Greek Child-Killing Demon," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 361–87, esp. 370–71; Charles Stewart, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture* (Princeton Modern Greek Studies; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), ch. 6.

22. Johnston, "Defining the Dreadful," 371.

23. *Ibid.*, 372.

Working Women?

Professions of Jewish Women in the Late Ancient Levant

KAREN B. STERN

Brooklyn College

One day in the fifth or sixth century CE, a woman made her mark on the grand hippodrome in Tyre. She, or someone she commissioned, dipped a brush into red pigment and carefully painted a message in large letters (7–11 cm high) onto a stone in the hippodrome arcade. The text boldly proclaimed that the surrounding space, measuring 64 × 192 cm, was the place of Matrona the purple-seller or purple-fisher (Ματρῶνας κονχυλέως . . . τόπος).¹ In modernity, acts of writing intended to appropriate public spaces for private use or self-advertisement might be classified as vandalism. But Matrona's *dipinto* (painted writing) was surprisingly conventional in the Tyrian hippodrome. The impressive structure, which may have accommodated up to forty thousand people in its heyday, served as a center of commerce as well as of athletic contest; merchants sought to capitalize on its popularity to sell goods to racing enthusiasts.² A system of vaults supporting the hippodrome stands created spaces where merchants could hawk their wares. Matrona and her colleagues thus logically painted their names and occupations in the broad gallery of the structure's east side to demarcate and advertise their small shops.³

Matrona's nonmonumental *dipinto* rarely attracts attention from scholarly audiences: it promises few insights into the life of Matrona herself, into the general workings of the hippodrome, or into the intertwined entertainment and economic cultures of the late Roman east. But closer

1. Transcription follows J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Inscriptions de l'hippodrome du Tyr," *JRA* 15 (2002): 325–35; 326 no. 14; David Noy and Hanswulf Bloedhorn, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis III: Syria and Cyprus* (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 17–18; Syr10 (henceforth *IJOIII*). Similar "topos" inscriptions appear in Aphrodisias, e.g., *SEG* 37 846–54.

2. Maurice Chéhab, "Le Cirque du Tyr," *Archéologia* 55 (1973): 16–20.

3. *IJOIII*, 17; position and map in Rey-Coquais, "Inscriptions," 333, 335.

evaluation reveals certain significant features. First, the personal name in the text unusually declares that the merchant was, indeed, a woman.⁴ *Matrona*, a *κονχυλέως*, either produced purple dye from murex or conch shells, manufactured purple-dyed cloth, or represented a family affiliated with this work.⁵ Related occupations were common in Tyre, even if fewer inscriptions directly link women with these trades.⁶ The location of the text on the hippodrome's east side suggests that *Matrona*, along with neighboring merchants, allied herself with the "Blue" faction, which competed against the "Greens" inside the hippodrome.⁷ But a final feature of the dipinto—its appearance beside a large red menorah with seven branches—tells us something even more exceptional about its subject. The rendering of the menorah in the same medium and thickness as the letters in the inscription, the symmetrical placement of the symbol, and the correspondence between its height and that of the two left lines of the text, collectively suggest that *Matrona* and a neighboring vendor deliberately painted their names beside it to designate their market stalls.⁸ *Matrona* declared her place in a civic and commercial sphere through affiliation with this quintessentially Jewish symbol.⁹

What was *Matrona* doing selling her wares inside the Tyrian hippodrome? Was it considered appropriate for Jewish women in Tyre and elsewhere to work regularly in public spaces? Moreover, in periods of late antiquity, during which regional pagan and Christian writers railed against Jewish neighbors, why would *Matrona* mark her stall with a blatantly Jewish symbol? These features appear puzzling, especially given traditional assumptions about Jewish women's general absences from marketplaces, let alone entertainment complexes, in the late Roman and

4. On the name *Matrona* in Jewish contexts, see Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity*, part 3 *The Western Diaspora 330 BCE–650 CE* (TSAJ 126; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 599.

5. Rey-Coquais argues ("Inscriptions," 333) that *Matrona* was related to a purple-fisher but plied her own trade; cf. *IJOIII*, 19.

6. Related professions (*κονχυλεῖς* and the *κονχυλευταί*) constitute one-fifth of those ascribed to the deceased in Tyre's necropolis; see J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Fortune et rang social des gens de métiers de Tyr au Bas Empire," *Ktema* 4 (1979): 281–92. Women purple-fishers are also documented in J.-P. Rey-Coquais, *Inscriptions grecques et latines découvertes dans les fouilles du Tyr* (Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth 29; Paris: Maisonneuve, 1977); nos. 68 and 24B.

7. On this point, see Rey Coquais, "Inscriptions," 327, 329–30, 333–34; figs. 1–4, 6–8; Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Pieter van der Horst, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Environment: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity* (WUNT 196; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 53–58; cf. Alan Cameron, *Porphyrus the Charioteer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

8. A second inscription probably appeared on the menorah's opposite side; *IJOIII*, 17–18.

9. On the menorah as a marker, see Ilan, *Lexicon*, 35.

Byzantine east.¹⁰ But closer scrutiny of Matrona's inscription addresses these questions and promises new insights into the daily activities of Jews in the late Roman Levant. Until the publication of Matrona's dipinto, for instance, mostly circumstantial and literary evidence indicated the presence of Jews in late Roman Tyre and linked Jewish women, throughout the Syrian littoral and Palaestina, to professions outside the home.¹¹ Inclusion of the menorah on Matrona's sign, however, strongly suggests that Matrona identified herself as Jewish. When examined alongside regional literary and epigraphic data, then, her dipinto offers rare documentation of potential roles that Jewish women occupied in Levantine markets and civic spaces and of the functional coexistence of some Jews and their neighbors in sixth-century Tyre.

Data and Its Limitations

The daily lives of ancient Jewish women remain challenging to reconstruct. Literary elites of late antiquity generally demonstrated lesser concern for the lives and behaviors of women, let alone those of lower status, who were more likely to pursue trades outside of the home.¹² For instance, while Jewish women are amply represented in contemporaneous writings of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, most female characters therein appear remarkable in some way, with respect to wealth, status, or circumstance. Related narratives might chronicle women's emotional and religious journeys, or even their physical surroundings, but provide fewer details about the comparatively mundane lives of humbler women.¹³

Similar problems beset interrogations of rabbinic literature, whose inward and masculine foci predict meager attention to day-to-day activi-

10. These arguments are countered by Cynthia M. Baker, *Rebuilding the House of Israel: Architectures of Gender in Jewish Antiquity* (Divinations; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 77–78, 99. On women in circuses, see Zeev Weiss, *Public Spectacles in Roman and Late Antique Palestine* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 195.

11. Rey-Coquais' identifications of Jewish epitaphs from Tyre remain tenuous (*Inscriptions grecques*, nos. 164, 167); for Tyrian Jews in Palaestina, see *CII* no. 991; note 41 below.

12. Considered in Miriam Groen-Vallinga, "Desperate Housewives? The Adaptive Family Economy and Female Participation in the Roman Urban Labour Market," in *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West* (ed. Emily Hemelrijk and Greg Woolf; Mnemosyne Supplements 360; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 295–312, esp. 298. Literary and epigraphic data that attest to the lives of "ordinary" Roman women are summarized in Robert Knapp, *Invisible Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 53–96.

13. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 191–221; also Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 113.

ties of women—particularly those conducted outside the home.¹⁴ Several rabbinic texts idealize the household as a female domain, where women raised children and sustained their husbands and families through ongoing activities of grinding flour, baking bread, cooking food, washing clothing, spinning and working with wool and flax (*m. Ketub.* 5:5).¹⁵ Other texts advocate excluding women from mixed work environments, streets, and marketplaces, due to dangers associated with interactions with men (*m. Ketub.* 1:8–9; *t. Ketub.* 4:9).¹⁶ Recent readings of rabbinic texts, however, have offered new perspectives on the roles women played among selective Jewish populations in Roman Palestine and suggest that rabbinic idealizations of women in the home need not reflect ancient realities.¹⁷ While writings concerning women and their occupations cannot constitute objective historical reports, critical interpretations of Palestinian rabbinic texts offer important, if partial, suggestions about the trades some Jewish women pursued in the southern Levant.¹⁸

Archaeological and epigraphic evidence initially appears to offer more lucid documentation of women's activities in the public sphere.¹⁹ Donor inscriptions and epitaphs attribute to women important status within Jewish communities, particularly in Syria, North Africa, and Asia Minor. Such texts, carved into stone or inscribed in mosaic, praise women, who donated funds for the construction and beautification of local synagogues. Epitaphs from cemeteries throughout Rome, North Africa, and Malta, moreover, commemorate women who held positions in synagogue hierarchies and who bore titles of *archisynagōgē*, *presbyteressa*, and even *pateressa*.²⁰ But regardless of women's involvement in diaspora synagogue

14. Judith Hauptman (*Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice* [Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998], 1–14), Miriam B. Peskowitz (*Spinning Fantasies: Rabbis, Gender, and History* [Contraversions 9; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997], 27–48, 53, 157, 205 n. 17), Baker (*Rebuilding the House*, 26–31), and Kraemer (*Her Share of the Blessings*, 96, 105) consider portrayals of female domesticity.

15. Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies*, 98–102; Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine: An Inquiry into Image and Status* (TSAJ 44; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 184–86. This ideal may parallel those in Italian epitaphs for women, such as CIL 6.11602. See also Natalie Kampen, *Image and Status: Roman Working Women in Ostia* (Berlin: Mann, 1981), 122–23.

16. Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies*, 50–52.

17. Examples include Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies*, 1–25; Baker, *Rebuilding the House*, 1–14.

18. I emphasize Palestinian texts of the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Talmud Yerushalmi, but methodological problems of relying on texts to investigate rabbinic and nonrabbinic Jewish populations remain well documented; see Hayim Lapin, *Rabbis as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine, 100–400 C.E.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 39–49.

19. Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, 93.

20. Bernadette J. Broton, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues* (BJS 36; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982); Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, 118, 120–21.

life, donor inscriptions and associated titles tell us frustratingly little about the lives of their bearers—usually only that such women were sufficiently wealthy, important, or learned to earn such titles. Related inscriptions, furthermore, only record activities of wealthier women, who could afford to donate surplus time or money to synagogues. Regardless of the importance of these monumental inscriptions, then, they still limit investigations of activities of Jewish women outside the home.

Mortuary inscriptions often serve supplementary roles in the historiography of ancient Jewish women of more variable social and economic means.²¹ But two principal factors additionally curtail their contribution to this inquiry. First, wealthier Levantine families possessed greater financial means to commission stone inscriptions that commemorated the lives and works of their female deceased. Families of poorer women, who were more likely to work outside the home, did not necessarily have the same ability.²² The known epigraphic record, for these and other reasons, underrepresents working-class women.²³ Second, the professions of Jewish women are strangely absent from epitaphs. Only synthesized readings of rabbinic texts, epitaphs of regional non-Jewish populations, and closer evaluations of Matrona's dipinto, then, promise new possibilities for investigating occupations of Jewish women in continuous zones of Roman and Byzantine Palaestina and Phoenicia.

Attention to the occupations of Jewish women is predicated on targeted assumptions about gender, work, the gendering of space, and the dynamics of economic and social exchange among Jews and their Levantine neighbors. Several of these points require brief justification. First, attention to the genders of tradespeople masks contingencies of status and power that also inflected their occupational activities. Necessity, as well as choice, informed women's tendencies to work outside the home, because Jewish and non-Jewish women who practiced public trades were often of compromised socioeconomic status.²⁴ Moreover, additional undetectable and overlapping factors of age, marital and legal status, and family

21. This tendency is cross-regional; see Catherine Heszer, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (TSAJ 81; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 361; Serena Zabin, "Iudaeae Benemerenti: Towards a Study of Jewish Women in the Western Roman Empire," *Phoenix* 50 (1996): 262–82.

22. Heszer, *Jewish Literacy*, 388 n. 262. Some epitaphs, however, announce when the female deceased had been manumitted. One example appears in Moshe Schwabe and Baruch Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim*, vol. 2, *The Greek Inscriptions* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1974), 185, no. 200.

23. Wealth cannot singlehandedly predict distribution patterns in the epigraphic record. This point is exemplified famously by Elizabeth A. Meyer, "Explaining the Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire: The Evidence of Epitaphs," *JRS* 80 (1990): 74–96.

24. See Judith Evans Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 20–59.

industry, likely predisposed women to practice certain occupations. As women's work fit into complex networks of responsibilities in the family economy, related activities often resulted from degrees of compulsion, rather than agency or self-determination, frequently associated with women's employment in modernity (*m. Ketub.* 4:5).²⁵

Here, the term *ʿw rk* selectively designates activities that women conducted outside of the home, which generated some form of income for themselves and for their families.²⁶ This distinction remains targeted rather than evaluative. Whether conducted inside or outside the home, women's "work" in antiquity, as well as in other historical periods, cannot be equated with post-Marxian notions of "labor."²⁷ Domestic activities, such as child rearing, food preparation and production, necessarily constituted work, which consumed the day-to-day lives of many ancient women. Wealthier women might additionally oversee the domestic employ of slaves or servants, while those of lesser means might serve others or help to run family businesses. Women's domestic responsibilities were often all-encompassing and laborious but are largely excluded from this discussion.

Emphasis on work outside of the domestic sphere might seem arbitrary and artificial. As Cynthia Baker has noted, traditional binaries of home versus marketplace are often erroneous and distorting, particularly because they mask the complexities of ancient life and commerce in regions where domestic and commercial spaces were architecturally interconnected and overlapping. Baker has rightly argued that conventional market models for the Hellenistic east and Latin west, whereby businesses were conducted in public and architecturally fixed *agorai* or *fora*, need not represent the dynamics of markets (*shuks* or *souks*) in the Roman Levant.²⁸ The *shuk* of Roman Palestine, like markets elsewhere in the region, for example, often included seasonal and "scattered network[s] of workshops and storehouses," which included storefronts occupying the bottom stories of domestic buildings, and streets, in which mercantile activities were interspersed with homes and civic spaces. By my choice to focus on women's extra-mural work, I do not intend to reinforce traditional binaries of "home" versus "marketplace" but, rather, to draw from this complexity by expanding notions of the practical and spatial boundaries of Jewish women's economic activities within heterogeneous cultural environments.²⁹

25. Baker, *Rebuilding the House*, 113. Groen-Vallinga critiques "family economy model[s]" ("Desperate Housewives?" 300).

26. Groen-Vallinga, "Desperate Housewives?" 295 n. 1.

27. Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 116–21.

28. Baker, *Rebuilding the House*, 78.

29. *Ibid.* Demographic heterogeneity prevailed in many regional markets (Chrysostom *Stat.* 19.1; 49.188; *m. 'Abod. Zar.* 1:1–2).

Working Women in the Roman East: Textual Possibilities

Perhaps contrary to expectation, rabbinic texts offer some of the most important, if inadvertent, evidence for working women in the marketplace in late antiquity. Most rabbinic discussions of the topic are incidental; that is, they primarily address other concerns but, in so doing, disclose information about women's work outside the home. For example, arguments about *hallah* (bread) secondarily describe women's roles as preparers of dough destined for sale in the marketplace (*m. Ḥal.* 2:7). Such texts imply that women's baking skills were sometimes used for profit; perhaps, in some cases, female dough-sellers and preparers were one and the same.³⁰ Other texts, which permit men to purchase flax and wool from women of Judea and the Galilee, imply that women in those regions manufactured and sold cloth directly to customers, presumably around or outside of their homes (*m. B. Qam.* 10:9; *t. B. Qam.* 11:3). Associations between women and textile manufacture are echoed in Christian texts, which describe women from the eastern Mediterranean as purple-sellers and tentmakers (Acts 16:14; 18:3).

Other rabbinic discussions are more explicit about women's roles as vendors. One passage, for example, offers men permission to position their wives in storefronts to sell olives in their stead if they are too embarrassed to do so themselves; such texts imply that certain acts of selling, occasionally conducted by women in public places, were held in lower social esteem (*t. B. Qam.* 11:4; *b. B. Qam.* 119a). Some texts describe women as shopkeepers (*m. Ketub.* 9:4; *b. Ketub.* 86b), or wage earners with unspecified work environments. Pejorative rabbinic discussions of the behaviors of women, who “pin in the shuk,” however, suggest that some Jewish women both sold fabrics in regional markets and created them in plain view (*b. Ketub.* 72b).³¹ While men engaged in the manufacture, processing, and sale of textiles, female involvement in these trades remains unsurprising, both due to women's domestic training and to the burgeoning of the textile trade in Palestine and Syria in late antiquity.³² Baker specifically interprets rabbinic critiques of women's public spinning and selling against this backdrop; she suggests that such perspectives reflect rabbinic anxieties over a shifting economy and changes in the gendered landscape in which women participated.³³

Employment of women, however, was limited neither to textile trades

³⁰ . Baker, *Rebuilding the House*, 82.

³¹ . *Ibid.*, 102, 107.

³² . Compare approaches of Baker (*Rebuilding the House*, 108–9 n. 78) and Ze'ev Safrai (*The Economy of Roman Palestine* [New York: Routledge, 1994], 194).

³³ . Baker, *Rebuilding the House*, 109.

nor to the marketplace. Rabbinic debates about mourning procedures, for example, detail men's obligations to commission professional female musicians and mourners to play dirges at their wives' funerals (*m. Kelim* 16:7; *m. Ketub.* 4:4). Both Jewish and non-Jewish women, moreover, were paid to work inside the homes of others as maidservants (*m. Qidd.* 3:13; Josephus, *Ant.* 17.141). Disparaging descriptions of Jewish women as sorceresses or prostitutes appear in rabbinic texts (*m. 'Abot* 2:7; *b. 'Eruv.* 64b; *m. Tem.* 6:2; *b. Sanh.* 67a, *b. 'Abod. Zar.* 18a-b; *y. Soṭah* 1:4, 16d; *y. Qidd.* 4:11), and recur in works of pagan and Christian writers (Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.542–47; Augustine, *Civ.* 22:8–10).³⁴ As discussions of the latter categories of skills and occupations remain closely linked to authors' polemical agendas, they provoke skepticism in several scholars.³⁵

Working Women in the Roman East: Epigraphic Possibilities

Decidedly poor documentation of Jewish women's professions in the epigraphic record frustrates hopes that archaeological data might complement Levantine literary accounts. Unlike extensive archaeological and epigraphic evidence for occupations of lower-class pagan or Christian women in Italy, however, objectively fewer inscriptions from regions of modern Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and Syria record information about the work of both Jewish and non-Jewish women, whether inside or outside of their homes.³⁶

Regional mortuary customs generate the first obstacle. From the outset, unlike inscriptions from Italian cemeteries, which commonly record women's occupations, fewer Levantine epitaphs document women or their professions; trades are more robustly represented in inscriptions for men.³⁷ Larger regional cemeteries, which contain critical masses of epitaphs, demonstrate this point. Roughly half of the published epitaphs from the Roman necropolis in Tyre, for example, list professions of the male deceased.³⁸ Many stones that designate the dead as Christian or

34. Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 207; Juvenal describes Jewish women as dream-interpreters; see also Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, 108–9.

35. See Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies*, 54, 132–33, 149; on Christian writings, see Susanna Drake, *Slandering the Jew: Sexuality and Difference in Early Christian Texts* (Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 85.

36. Compare Claire Holleran, "Women in Retail in Roman Italy," in Hemelrijk and Wolff, *Women and the Roman City*, 313–30, esp. 313, 317. See nn. 15 and 23 above.

37. Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 38.

38. Tabulations from Rey-Coquais, "Fortune et rang," 285; cf. Lidewijde DeJong, "Performing Death in Roman Tyre: The Life and Afterlife of a Roman Cemetery in the Province of Syria," *AJA* 114 (2010): 597–630.

Samaritan commemorate carpenters and bakers, cheese makers, garum sellers, grain dealers, murex fishers and purple-dyers.³⁹ But women are commemorated to a lesser degree, and their professions are conventionally omitted. If their texts are restored correctly, only three Tyrian epitaphs record women's modes of employment.⁴⁰ The relative epigraphic absence of women's occupations, compared to those of men, remains striking.

Beit Shearim, the largest Jewish cemetery in the Levant and roughly contemporary with the Tyrian necropolis, offers several points of comparison for these epigraphic patterns. Similarities abound between the Tyrian necropolis and that of Beit Shearim, where several epitaphs trace the origins of the interred to the coastal cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos.⁴¹ In Beit Shearim, as in Tyre, epitaphs of men significantly outnumber those of women.⁴² Some of these also record professions of the male deceased, including perfume sellers, arrangers of corpses, a goldsmith, physician, a banker, a cloth dyer and a cloth maker or seller.⁴³ It remains noteworthy, however, that no epitaphs from Beit Shearim include the professions of women.

The mortuary record from elsewhere in Roman Palestine echoes this absence: no epitaphs from surrounding regions clearly name the occupations of the Jewish female deceased. Three possible explanations, among others, might account for this lacuna: first, that nonrabbinic Jewish women never worked outside the home or practiced professions; second, that only the wealthiest women were commemorated in epitaphs, leaving no traces of working women of lower classes in the mortuary record;⁴⁴ or third, that Jewish women worked, but local or cultural standards deemed their professions unsuitable for commemoration. The third explanation appears most likely.⁴⁵ Still, the absence of professional information on epitaphs for regional non-Jewish, as well as Jewish women complicates this picture further to suggest a broader cultural, rather than a particularly Jewish aversion: perhaps Levantine women practiced professions, but their commemorators—whether Jews or non-Jews—largely considered such infor-

9 . Rey-Coquais, "Fortune et rang," 285.

40. Rey-Coquais, *Inscriptions grecques*, nos. 68 and 24B; see also n. 11.

41. Connections between Tyre and Beit Shearim are reviewed in Nachman Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, vol. 3, *The Excavations 1953–1958* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1976), 178–82, 27, 42, 82, 118.

42. In the original publication of Greek inscriptions from Beit Shearim, for example, epitaphs that commemorate men are recorded with roughly twice the frequency of those commemorating women (Schwabe and Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim*, vol. 2).

43. Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, 3:36, 42; Schwabe and Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim*, 2:215, nos. 61, 79, 81, 92, 188, 189, 202.

44. Women's epitaphs and status are considered in Heszer, *Jewish Literacy*, 388 n. 262; Schwabe and Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim*, vol. 2, no. 200.

45. Compare the conclusions of Zabin, "Iudaeae Benemerenti," 278.

mation to be inappropriate for posthumous documentation. Regardless of the precise reason for this pattern, widespread limitations in rabbinic texts and regional inscriptions newly highlight the significance of Matrona's dipinto for investigations of Jewish women in the Levantine marketplace.

Matrona's Dipinto Reconsidered

Matrona's sign in the Tyrian Hippodrome appears locally unexceptional in several respects. Multiple cognate examples exist: in his study of the Hippodrome inscriptions, J.-P. Rey-Coquais has identified thirteen comparable, nonmonumental texts, to which he ascribes similar dates in the fifth or sixth centuries CE. These inscriptions are correspondingly terse; they were painted, in Greek scripts, throughout all areas of the structure to designate seats for spectators and spaces for vendors.⁴⁶ Closer examination of these markings also reveals the conventionality of Matrona's display of a religious symbol beside her inscription: Latin crosses precede four seat inscriptions, while a carving on one seat proclaims: *ὁ τῶν Σαμαριτανῶν*.⁴⁷ These variable symbols and terms exemplify the religious heterogeneity of the spectators, who populated the entertainment complex. But in certain ways, Matrona's dipinto remains unusual: hers is the only known hippodrome inscription to retain a woman's name, and hers is the only vendor text accompanied by a religious symbol, which, incidentally, is significantly larger than the crosses drawn nearby.⁴⁸

Comparisons with other hippodrome inscriptions thus yield two otherwise undocumented observations about Matrona's sign. The first relates to the roles of Jewish and non-Jewish women outside the home and inside regional marketplaces. Renewed readings of several rabbinic texts have suggested that some Jewish women worked and sold wares in Levantine markets, even if such activities largely elude documentation in epitaphs. Christian literature and Tyrian inscriptions, in conjunction, ascribe trades to non-Jewish women in Levantine marketplaces. Matrona's dipinto ultimately echoes information from these sources by documenting one woman's occupation as a purple-seller in Tyre. But the discovery context of the inscription additionally vivifies the atmosphere in which she worked: inside a complex and decidedly public commercial environment—a raucous hippodrome—filled with ill-behaved spectators

46. Part of a similar vendor's text is preserved ("*Τόπος | Τοῦ . . .*"); another reads "[*Τ*όπος Σίμωνος | -----|-----"; Rey Coquais "Inscriptions," 333, nos. 11–12.

47. Rey Coquais, "Inscriptions," 332, no. 9= *IJOIII*, *Syr*11.

48. Dimensions of these symbols are indicated, by scale, in Rey Coquais, "Inscriptions," 329–33.

of all sorts, who were drawn to the chaotic atmosphere of the horse races.⁴⁹ This workplace might have been unusual for most Jewish and non-Jewish women. Still, the discovery of Matrona's dipinto offers a precedent: it suggests that employment in such an environment was a *possibility* for regional Jewish and non-Jewish women alike.

A second observation relates to the position of Jews in Tyre more broadly. Presence of the menorah on Matrona's inscription constitutes explicit evidence, *in situ*, for Jewish presence in late ancient Tyre.⁵⁰ Given contemporary literary accounts of religious animosities throughout the Roman east, moreover, the visual prominence of this sign suggests something significant—that relations between some local Jewish, Samaritan, and Christian populations were sufficiently functional that the application of a large Jewish symbol—sometime in the fifth or sixth centuries—would not constitute a commercial liability for an associated vendor.⁵¹ However humble is Matrona's dipinto, then, it singlehandedly inspires new considerations about the professional lives of Levantine Jewish women and about the lives of Jews in late Roman Tyre.

49. Rabbinic and Christian authors associated circuses with impropriety (Weiss, *Public Spectacles*, 195–254).

θ . The dipinto disappeared before the publication of Rey-Coquais, "Inscriptions," 333.

§ . Legal and literary accounts remain sparse and incorporate evidence from contiguous regions; *Cod. Theod.* 13.15.18; 16.18.16; *Nov. Just.* no. 139; Malalas, *Chron.* 386 and 395.

Ungendering Andrea

DANIEL ULLUCCI

Rhodes College

Musonius Rufus (ca. 30–100 CE) was acclaimed as the “Roman Socrates” by his contemporaries, but time has not been kind to the philosopher. His teachings have been preserved only in brief excerpts, and modern scholars have shown tepid interest in the fragments that do survive. Much of this scholarship focuses on two discourses preserved in an anthology by Stobaeus (fifth century CE)—“That Women Too Should Study Philosophy” and “Should Daughters Receive the Same Education as Sons?”¹ Scholarship on these discourses is, on the whole, of two types: those who wish to praise Musonius for his progressive views on women and those who wish to castigate him for offering a dilute, or “incomplete,” feminism.² This paper does not seek to praise Musonius, or to bury him.

I will focus on Musonius’s use of the term *ἀνδρεία* (courage/manliness) and the acts of *ἀνδρεία* that are appropriate to women. I argue that, while Musonius is certainly no feminist in the modern sense, his statements on female *ἀνδρεία* do present a telling contrast with his general views on women and with the views of two of his rough contemporaries Philo and Clement of Alexandria. Further, it is important to frame these statements in the context of the Roman Stoicism of the early empire. By the first century CE, Stoic philosophy, particularly among the Roman elite,

*This work began as a seminar paper in Ross Kraemer’s “Gender in the Ancient Mediterranean” class at Brown University. I am immensely grateful for the support, guidance, and knowledge I have gained from Ross over my years as her student.

1. Fragment numbers refer to Otto Hense, *C. Musonii Rufi Reliquiae* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1905). A table collating Hense’s numbers with Stobaeus is found in Cora E. Lutz, *Musonius Rufus, “The Roman Socrates”* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 146–47. Fragment titles are from Lutz.

2. For a summary of this scholarship, see David Engel, “Women’s Role in the Home and the State: Stoic Theory Reconsidered,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 101 (2003): 267–88.

had become strongly conservative. The Stoic idea of duty (καθήκον), the acceptance of fate, and the indifference/insignificance of everything but virtue combined to form an ideology that strongly supported established social roles and hierarchies. The extant fragments of Musonius generally fit this model, with the exception of his views on ἀνδρεία.

For the sake of brevity, I will skip a discussion of the life of Musonius, about which little is known. I also will skip a full discussion of the extant texts, which are mostly uncontextualized extracts made by a fifth-century compiler whose sources and modus operandi are unknown. The question of how well our texts represent the real teachings of Musonius is a difficult one, and it cannot be fully addressed here.³

Women in the Teachings of Musonius

In “That Women Too Should Study Philosophy” (F3 = Stob. *Anthol.* 2.31.126), Musonius begins with the assertion that men and women have the same bodily senses and inclinations toward virtue.⁴ He proceeds to present a number of attributes that a good woman must possess. She must be (1) good at household management (οἰκονομικήν), (2) self-controlled (σώφρονα), (3) just (δικαία), and (4) courageous/manly (ἀνδρειοτέραν) (F3 10 line 241 line 11⁵). He concludes that the study of philosophy is the only, or at least the best, way to teach these characteristics. Thus, women, to be the best women possible, must learn philosophy. He then anticipates objections to this view:

By Zeus, some say that women who associate with philosophers are bound to be arrogant and presumptuous, abandoning their own household duties to fraternize with men, practicing speeches, acting like sophists, and analyzing syllogisms. They say that these women should be home spinning wool. But I would never expect a woman, or indeed a man, who peruses philosophy to neglect his or her appropriate work. (F3 12 lines 5–15)⁶

Here he rejects the idea that philosophy will turn women into sophists, because proper philosophy does not even have that effect on men.

In “Should Daughters Receive the Same Education as Sons?” (F4 =

3. For brief summaries, see Cynthia King, *Musonius Rufus: Lectures and Sayings* (Charlston: CreateSpace, 2011) 1–19; Lutz, *Musonius*, 3–30.

4. This is an important assertion since, in Stoic thinking, bodily senses provide accurate knowledge of the world. See A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley eds., *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 241–59.

5. In citing Musonius I have used fragment numbers with page and line numbers from Hense’s edition. Note that the latter do not match Lutz.

6. All translations of Musonius are my own, following the text of Hense unless noted.

Stob. *Anthol.* 2.31.123), Musonius addresses the same question from a different angle. An interlocutor asks if sons and daughters ought to receive the same education. He replies that male and female horses and dogs receive the same training, asserting that virtue is the same for men and women. Since the attainment of virtue is the common goal of philosophy for both men and women alike, the process of education should be the same as well. Musonius then offers a defense of the need for women to study philosophy that closely parallels the defense given in *That Women Too Should Study Philosophy*.⁷

As many have pointed out, nothing Musonius says in either fragment is particularly novel. Much of it had been propounded before by philosophers such as Plato. Further, Musonius's statements are hardly progressive, despite arguments to the contrary.⁷ In an essay tellingly entitled *The Incomplete Feminism of Musonius Rufus*,⁸ Martha Nussbaum responds to those who would see Musonius as a proto-feminist. Time after time, Nussbaum shows that what, at first glance, might seem radically feminist, is not. She shows that in several instances Musonius is actually more conservative than philosophers who came before him.⁸

Despite arguing for equality in education, it is clear that Musonius does not envision an equality of labor; women learn philosophy to perform their tasks as women, mainly caring for the household and managing slaves and children. Musonius does not imagine a world in which women (or men) break out of their normative social roles. For Musonius, these roles are natural and obvious; properly educated individuals understand this and do not seek to contravene natural laws. He argues, again replying to an imagined interlocutor:

Someone will say, Really, do you want men to learn spinning along with women and women to practice gymnastics along with men!" No, I do not want that, but I do say that since, in humans, the male nature is stronger and the women's weaker, work should be assigned according to the nature of each. (F4 16 line 15–17 line 7)

Musonius summarizes his feelings on the issue succinctly, "the doctrines of [Stoic] philosophy urge the woman to accept her fate and work with her own hands" (F3 13 lines 1–3).

7. For the interpretation of Musonius as a feminist, see William Klassen, "Musonius Rufus, Jesus and Paul: Three First Century Feminists," in *From Jesus to Paul: Studies in Honour of Francis Wright Beare* (ed. Peter Richardson and John Hurd; Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984), 185–206.

8. Martha Nussbaum, "The Incomplete Feminism of Musonius Rufus," in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece and Rome* (ed. Martha Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 283–326; David Engel has made a similar argument; see Engel, "Women's Role," 267–88.

Musonius's Statement in the Context of Roman Stoicism

In contextualizing Musonius's statements, I am not attempting to mitigate his misogyny, but rather to show the way his views on gender were tied to Stoic views on nature. This will also serve to highlight his statements on *ἀνδρεία* below.

The Stoic concept of duties (*τὰ καθήκοντα*) is critical for understanding Musonius's views.⁹ Stoic doctrine held that the only thing in life that mattered was virtue; all other things were indifferent (*ἀδιάφορον*). Fate controlled the universe and circumstances of the individual. However, because the only thing that mattered was virtue, the vagaries of fate, like almost everything else, were insignificant. There was no bad fate, because virtue (or a noble death) was always available. Living a good life meant internalizing what actions were appropriate given one's circumstances. The wise Stoic was never disturbed by the slings and arrows of fate because one could live virtuously as a slave just as well as one could as a king. All of the trappings of rank, privilege, and even bodily comfort, were indifferent to virtue.

It is clear that this ideology could lead to deeply conservative social views (though it did not always). Since all of the *realia* of social inequality were indifferent, achieving equality was not a goal. Even more than this, questioning or challenging inequities could be seen as irrational—a raging against immovable fate or the very nature of the universe. James Francis's work shows how Stoic philosophy, by the early Imperial period, was used to reinforce Roman social norms.¹⁰ Public philosophers, like Musonius's own student Epictetus and the philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius, raised Roman social norms to the level of Stoic duties.¹¹ Musonius is part of this trend, and, as Francis shows, his constant stress on moderation and his statements on women fit this model.¹² David Engel also highlights this point by comparing Musonius's views on slavery to his views on women. In each case, systemic inequality is to be accepted as ultimately indifferent, not overcome.¹³

I want to argue that there is one area where Musonius departs from this conservative stance. In discussing how women display courage, he

9. For a short and lucid discussion of *καθήκοντα*, see Troels Engberg-Pederson, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 71–72.

10. James A. Francis, *Subversive Virtue: Asceticism and Authority in the Second-Century Pagan World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 1–19; Engel, "Women's Role," 267–275.

11. Francis, *Subversive Virtue*, 19–52.

12. *Ibid.*, 11–19.

13. Engel, "Women's Role," 280–88.

makes a number of statements about what would constitute duties for women, suggesting that women with *ἀνδρεία* will act in ways that Roman society normally understood to be inappropriate. In “That Women Too Should Study Philosophy,” he says:

Now certainly it is right for an educated woman to be more courageous/manly (*ἀνδαιοτέραν*) than an uneducated one, and for one trained in philosophy to be more courageous/manly than one not trained. Also, it is right that she not submit to anything shameful because of fear of death or dislike of hardship. Furthermore, it is right that she not be intimidated by anyone just because they are of noble birth, or wealthy, or powerful, not even, by Zeus, he is the Tyrant of the city! (F3 11 lines 11–16)

Musonius believes that women with *ἀνδρεία* will stand against men of authority if circumstances demand it, even if it means hardship or death.

In “Should Daughters Receive the Same Education as Sons?” he is even more explicit:

Someone may say that courage/manliness (*ἀνδρείαν*) is a virtue appropriate only to men. This is not so. For, to be the best, a woman must *man-up* (*ἀνδρῖζεσθαι*) and be free of cowardice, so as not to be swayed by suffering or fear. How can she be said to have self-control, if someone, by threat of fear or pain, can make her endure shame? (F4 15 lines 4–11)¹⁴

He goes on to say that women must be able to defend their children just as hens protect their chicks. Simon Goldhill has pointed out that this goes beyond what previous philosophers like Plato were willing to grant in terms of courageous actions by women.¹⁵

Lest his audience miss his point and think he is speaking metaphorically, Musonius shows that he is speaking of physical fighting. He brings up the famous example of the Amazons:

The race of Amazons demonstrated, when they defeated many tribes in war, that women have some military skill. So if some of this courage is lacking in other women, it is due to lack of use and practice, not because they were not born with it. (F4 15 lines 16–19)¹⁶

These passages lead to a remarkable conclusion. Musonius does not see *ἀνδρεία*, the archetypal masculine word, derived from the word for man in both Greek (*ἀνδρός/ἀνδρεία*) and Latin (*vir/virtus*), as gendered. Both

14. The colloquialism *man-up* seems to me the best translation of *ἀνδρῖζεσθαι* here. Simon Goldhill points out that the term *ἀνδρῖζεσθαι* can mean to “play the man” sexually, that is, to be the penetrating partner (*Foucault’s Virginité: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], 137–38).

15. *Ibid.*, 141.

16. Goldhill points out that the positive reference to the Amazons here is rare (*Foucault’s Virginité*, 142).

sexes posses ἀνδρεία by nature, and it prompts the same actions/duties (τὰ καθήκοντα) in both sexes (i.e., refusal to yield or compromise virtue when threatened, self-preservation, and, for women in particular, preservation of children). If women do not display ἀνδρεία, it is because they have been mis-habituated. This is the way the Stoics explain all actions that humans perform that are contrary to nature—mis-education by a corrupt society.¹⁷

Musonius does not, in general, challenge the social roles of women or men, nor does he attempt to blur standard Roman categories of gender.¹⁸ In the case of female ἀνδρεία, however, we do see Musonius taking a stand on what is appropriate to women and, in the process, challenging Roman gender assumptions. It is a rare instance of Musonius's Stoic duties clashing with Roman social norms.¹⁹

Contrasting Musonius with two other writers of the early empire, Philo and Clement of Alexandria, shows this.²⁰ Philo and Clement come from very different social and religious contexts; however, they are similar in that they are both deeply influenced by Greek and Roman philosophical traditions. Thus, they provide a fitting contrast to Musonius's writings on ἀνδρεία.

Philo Judaeus (ca. 25 BCE–8 CE) addresses the question of appropriate female behavior in *Special Laws*, with a concrete example from his own time. Apparently women in Philo's Alexandria had developed a habit of coming to the aid of their husbands in petty scuffles. This scandalizes Philo; he writes:

The audacity of women who when men are exchanging angry words or blows hasten to join in, under the pretext of assisting their husbands

17. For a discussion of the Stoic understanding of society and the passions and how they contribute to actions contrary to nature, see Long and Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 1:410–23.

18. For extensive examples of how Musonius does not challenge the status quo, see Nussbaum, "Incomplete Feminism."

19. Another interesting example of Musonius challenging gender distinctions comes in fragment 4, where he argues that heavy work is for men and light work for women. He concedes that some men may be more suited to light work and some women may be capable of heavy work. This suggests that Musonius is thinking of "heavy" and "light" work not in terms of "male" and "female" work but in terms of "strong workers" and "weak workers." He says that strong and weak usually break along gender lines but that there are exceptions.

20. The Roman Stoic Seneca (ca. 4 BCE/65 CE) also provides a useful contrast to Musonius on women. C. E. Manning argues that Seneca understood *officia/kathēkon* as gender specific. He attributes this to Seneca's understanding of specific nature (i.e., what is appropriate to an individual is determined by their place in the social structure, including gender, as this is the individual's specific nature). Unfortunately, Seneca does not speak explicitly about female ἀνδρεία and, thus, I do not include him along with Philo and Clement above. In all likelihood, however, Seneca would not have approved of Musonius's views on women. For Manning's treatment of women in Seneca, see C. E. Manning, "Seneca and the Stoics on the Equality of the Sexes," *Mnemosyne* 26 (1973): 170–76.

in the fray, is reprehensible and shameless in a high degree. And so in wars and campaigns and emergencies which threaten the whole country they are not allowed to take their place according to the judgment of the law, having in view the fitness of things, which it was resolved to keep unshaken always and everywhere and considered to be in itself more valuable than victory or liberty or success of any kind. (*Special Laws* 3.172)²¹

Philo regards all fighting by women to be intolerable. He argues that the idea of women fighting is so distasteful that they have been banned from fighting with the army, even in cases of emergency.

Musonius is certainly not encouraging women to get involved in petty fighting of the type to which Philo alludes. However, because of his ideas on female ἀνδρεία, he is not scandalized by the idea of women fighting. Whereas Philo would apparently rather see the city defeated than see women fighting, Musonius voices no misgivings about the mythic Amazons.

Philo's views on fighting women are even more evident in another passage from *Special Laws*:

If indeed a woman, learning that her husband is being outraged, is overcome by the wifely feeling inspired by her love for him and forced by the stress of the emotion to hasten to his assistance, she must not unsex herself by a boldness beyond what nature permits but limit herself to the ways in which a woman can help. For it would be an awful catastrophe if any woman in her wish to rescue her husband from outrage should outrage herself by befouling her own life with the disgrace and heavy reproaches which boldness carried to an extreme entails. (*Special Laws* 3.173)

Philo accepts that women will be compelled to act to protect their husbands. Their actions, however, must be restrained by their gender. The woman must respond with actions that are appropriate to a woman. Whereas Musonius argues that ἀνδρεία causes the same actions in both sexes, Philo stresses that some actions are appropriate to women and others are appropriate only to men. Philo is so incensed by the idea of women fighting with men that he suggests that if a woman grabs a man's genitals in a fight she should have her hand severed (*Special Laws* 3.175).

The Christian writer Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215 CE) provides a valuable contrast to Musonius because it is virtually certain that Clement knew Musonius's work.²² It is even possible, though at present

21. Translations of Philo are from Ross Kraemer, ed., *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Source Book* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 32.

22. Donald Kinder has explored Clement's writings on women in relation to Musonius. Ironically, Kinder produces arguments on Clement that are remarkably similar to Nussbaum's arguments on Musonius. These two works, in turn, are remarkably similar to

unprovable, that Clement quotes or paraphrases large passages from Musonius.²³

Clement's *Stromateis* 4.8 is so similar to Musonius's fragments 3 and 4 that it is highly probable that Clement used Musonius as a model. Clement argues in unmistakably Musonian language that men and women have the same capacity for virtue. He is not willing, however, to agree with Musonius in all cases. On the issue of female ἀνδρεία, he diverges. He agrees with Musonius that men and women must be willing to face death for the sake of virtue, but he never speaks about women taking an active role in expressing ἀνδρεία. In fact, he argues, "For we do not train women for manliness (ἀνδρείας) in war like some Amazons" (*Stromateis* 4.8.61.3).²⁴ It is striking to see the Amazons come up again in a text that is already so clearly indebted to Musonius. If it is true that Clement is following Musonius in this passage, then his castigation of the Amazons is a direct refutation of Musonius's statements that women should display the same ἀνδρεία as men. I think this is very likely the case.

Clement picked up the issue of female ἀνδρεία from Musonius, but, not agreeing with the latter's conclusion, he altered the ending. Instead of praising the Amazons, he castigates them. Then he recounts a number of stories that deal with women acting like men: Sarmatian women fight in wars "no less than men"; the women of Sacae also fight and even shoot arrows backwards while pretending to retreat just like men; and women near Iberia do heavy manual labor like men, even when they are pregnant and about to give birth (*Stromateis* 4.8.62). Instead of putting these stories forward as examples of female strength and ability, as Musonius had done with the Amazons, Clement casts these women negatively. His point is that women should not have ἀνδρεία like men; they should not be fighting and should not be doing heavy labor, particularly when pregnant, only "barbarian" women do such things.

If, as I have argued, Clement knew Musonius, then we have a clear example of Musonius's views on female ἀνδρεία being rejected by a later author. Even if it cannot be unquestionably proven that Clement knew Musonius, he is an example of a writer who believes that women should be trained in philosophy but does not go as far in challenging societal views on ἀνδρεία, as Musonius did.²⁵

Manning's work on Seneca mentioned above. Each deals with the same issues and comes to the same conclusion: none of these authors is as feminist as they first appear. See Donald Kinder, "Clement of Alexandria: Conflicting Views on Women," *Second Century: A Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7 (1989–90): 213–20.

23. For a discussion of this possibility, see Paul Wendland, *Quaestiones Musonianae* (Berlin: Mayer & Muller, 1886); Charles P. Pomeroy, "Musonius in Clement," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 13 (1901): 191–200.

24. All translations of Clement are my own.

25. Clement's views on women and sex in relation to Judaism, Greek and Roman philosophical traditions, and Christianity have been addressed by Kathy L. Gaca, who argues

Conclusions

On the whole, as Nussbaum, Engel, and Francis have argued, Musonius is no social progressive. This is due to the Stoic idea that social circumstances and hierarchies were indifferent to virtue. On the point of female *ἀνδρεία*, however, we do see Musonius taking a stance that would have clashed with Roman social norms. This suggests that Musonius is not simply, or only, couching standard Roman misogyny in Stoic terminology, an accusation we might make against Marcus Aurelius.²⁶ Rather, he is thinking through the implications of the Stoic concept of duty for women. The question is not whether his feminism is incomplete; Musonius has no feminism, as least not in the contemporary sense. What is most interesting about Musonius is the way his Stoic ideology interacts with his social views. Musonius wants courageous women who could fight tyrants but also be content as housewives, albeit the *best* kind of housewives. It is important to point out that this tension, contradiction, or perhaps irony, is just as present in Musonius's view of men. He wants men who contemplate the universe and practice perfect Stoic self-control but who are also completely content to be slaves. For the Stoic, it is all indifferent.

Yet, by arguing that *ἀνδρεία* provokes the same actions in both men and women, Musonius expanded the range of actions appropriate to women in comparison to Roman norms and other thinkers like Philo and Clement. In doing this, he rejected the idea that *ἀνδρεία* is a gendered characteristic, thus bringing into question the *manliness* of manliness.

We see a remarkably similar mix of gender assumptions in some Christian texts. Specifically, the women of the Apocryphal Acts are women after Musonius's heart. They frequently stand up to powerful men in both the social and the literal arenas, yet they defer to Christian male religious leaders and established roles within the church. As Ross Kraemer has shown again and again, we must be wary of seeking modern feminist ideals in ancient texts. Ancient views on women are often far more complex and foreign (from our perspective) than they at first appear.²⁷

that Clement's fear of the power of sexuality causes him to create strong controls on sexual activities, especially the ever-dangerous sexual woman. Gaca does not directly address ways in which Clement's views on sexuality affect his views on women in other areas, but surely they do. See Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 40; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 247–72.

26. Francis, *Subversive Virtue*, 21–52.

27. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Index of Ancient Sources

OLD TESTAMENT/ HEBREW BIBLE		Numbers		1 Kings	
		12	225	18:36–40	18
		12145	225		
Genesis		122	225	2 Kings	
126	15	20:1	228	1:8	4
220	223	20:1–13	94	4:3–7	227
3	19	20:1–2	224		
3:14–15	138	20:1	225, 227	1 Chronicles	
12:11–20	17	20:2–11	227	5:29 [Eng. 6:3]	224
14:18–20	96	20:2	227	292	19
18145	91	20:20	227	2 Chronicles	
199	18	20:21	227	20:7	93n21
20:1–7	18	21:16–18	224		
26641	18	21:16	227	Esther	
37:1–11	209	21:17	228	13:8–17	246
9	18	21:20	228	14:3–4	246
		26:59	224	14:11	246
Exodus				15	245
2:4–9	225	Deuteronomy			
2:4	225	6	185	Esther (Greek)	
15:11 LXX	27	10:18	187n7	11:5–9	245
15:20–21	224	14:29	187n7	14:1–2	249
16:1–15	94	15:11	187	14:5–11	248
17:1–7	94	16:11	187n7	15:1	249
17:6	227	16:14	187n7		
1916	18	17:19	187n7	Psalms	
22:28 LXX	28	22:23–24	142	18:14	18
23:7	142	24:8–9	225	29:7	18
38	97	24:19–21	187n7	68	241
		25:5	187n7	68:4b	239
Leviticus		26:12–13	187n7	68:5	187n7
21	188n9			683b	28
9:24	18			683	18
1012	18	Judges		95:5 LXX	27
19	185	8	19	121:6	241
199	188	1922	18	137	247
2018	226			137:1	111
21:5	97	2 Samuel		137:4–6	111
232	188	23	202	146:9	187n7

Proverbs		NEW TESTAMENT	1:3	175, 176,
19	223			181n18
15:25	187n7	Matthew	2228	96
19:17	22	2:4–6	96, 98	188
		3:14–15	3n2	6n10
Qohelet		33	191	97n38
7:1	228	618	186	187
		10:38	187	187
		10:41–42	22	175
Song of Songs		12:42	238	187
12	28	16:24	187	186
1:6	240	19:10–12	187	187
4:12	235	19:21	187	191
8:5	240	19:27	187	187
		21:43	239	187
Isaiah		25:12	17	22
1:17	187n7	25:34–40	22	
6	64	26:11	187	John
6.1–6	63		120	2
69	63	Mark	1:29–34	3n2
41:8	93n21	1	4, 7	187
54:6	235	1:3	4	2
		1:4	4	24
Jeremiah		1:6	4	24
7:6	187n7	1:14–15	4	24
22	245	1:14	6	28
22:3	187n7	68	185	28
49:11	187n7	8:34	187	
		9:41	22	Acts
Ezekiel		10:17–22	186n5	1:1–3
1610	2	10:21	185, 187	176, 177n6,
1613	2	10:25	185	187n7
1618	2	10:28	187	175
17:3	53n19	10:45	186n5	19
2616	2	126	186	4
		12:28–34	186	19
		12:38–40	189, 192	4
Hosea		12:41–44	183	4
13	23	12:44b	185	4
		132	192	10
Micah		13	189	16:13–15
6:4	224, 227	14:5	187	175
		14:7	187	269
		14:58	187	269
Zechariah		14:71	17	3n2
7:10	187n7		22	4
			22:6	4
Malachi		Luke	22:7	4
3:5	187n7	1:1–4	176, 176n5	4

22:12–16	4	Hebrews	36–41	137
22:17–21	5	7	97 41	139
26:13	4		56	137, 138
26:14	4	James	57	137
26:15	4	1:27	187n7 63	19
		223	9a 21	
Romans			Susanna θ'	
11143	82	1 John 5:12	24 8	141
1:7	82		9	142
6:1–14	86	APOCRYPHA/	11	141
9–11	240	DEUTEROCANONICALS	14	141
1128	28		19–20	141
14:1–15:6	81	Judith	20	141
16	79, 81, 81n12,	2:9	245 23	141
	82, 85	4:10	246 24	142
16:7	175	4:11–12	246 35	142
		4:9	246 41	142
		9:13	247 56	141
1 Corinthians		10:2–4	249 57	142
8:4	28	13:15	245 60	142
86	28			
91	5 6	Wisdom		
1019	28	7:17	28 16061	128n13
15	5	13	28	
18	5	123	28	
			2 Maccabees	
			6	128
2 Corinthians		Susanna	6:8–7:42	123
5:2–4	21	1	244 610	128n13
		2–3	244 620	126
Galatians		5	245 7	128
11142	5	21–24	245 7:20–21	126
111	6	23	247 7:21	130
1:13–14	32n21	32	26 7:25–27	130
1:14	6, 6n10	42–43	247 7:41	129
1156	5	54–58	247	
11621	5			
			4 Maccabees	
2	3	Susanna OG	1142	126
2:14	30	9	19 4:25	128n13
3:24	237	10–14	137 7:18–23	126
3:28	173	19	137 8129	123
		22–23	137 12149	123
Colossians		23	137 12:6–7	130
23	26	28–29	137 14:10–18:24	123
		32	137 15	126
1 Timothy		3	18 15:7	126
1.11–14	159	34	137 15:13–17	129
5:3–5	187n7	3	19 156	126
5:16	187n7	36–44	137 123	126

4 Maccabees (<i>cont.</i>)	110	65	4Q271	
129	126	111	65	3 7–10 51n9
18	126		3045	5n 10
13	126	<i>T. Solomon</i>	3 13–15	52n14
16:1–14	126	2	29	
16:14	127	4	259	4Q391
16:1623	129	7	259	1318 a 19
17:1	129	13	25, 28	
18:7–8	130	13:7	259	4Q405
18:1049	129			14–15 i 3 53n19
				14–15 i 6 53n19
PSEUDEPIGRAPHIA				15–16 4 53n19
				1QM
1 Enoch				5.6 53n19 4Q560 256, 260,
15:6–7	173	5.9	53n19	261, 262
98:2	173	5.14	53n19	
99:5	173	7.11	53n19	11Q17
104:2	173			4.10 53n19
104:4	173	1QS		5.3 53n19
104:6	173	6.24–7.25	51n11	5.5 53n19
				7.13 53n19
<i>Apocalypse of Zosimus</i>		1QSa		9.7–8 53n20
(<i>History of the</i>		1.11	52n12, 53n18	9.7 53n19
<i>Rechabites</i>)		1.16	53n18	
14:4–5	174n36	1.20	53n18	CD
				4.19–5.6 54n21
<i>Aristeas</i>				4.20–5.11 51n8
§1–8	117	4Q265	51n11	5.8–11 56n27
§15	117			9.22 52n14
§16	118	4Q266		9.23 52n14
§31	119	10 ii+ i	5n 11	13.7–19 50n6
§138	118			13.17 50n6
§139	119	4Q267		16.10–12 56
§144	118	7 12–14	51n9	
§150	118	9 vi	5n 11	
§293–294	118	9 vi 4–5	51n7	JOSEPHUS AND PHILO
§307	117			
§308–311	119	4Q269		Josephus
§310	119	9 13	5n 9	<i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>
§312	117	9 4–8	51n10	1.18–26 94n26
		9 7–8	52n14	3.181–186 97n41
<i>Joseph and Aseneth</i>				14.7.2 31n19
15.1–2	137	4Q270		17.141 270
		5 14–17	51n9	18.116–119 4n5
<i>Testament of Adam</i>		5 17–21	51n10	18.118 4n5
113	62	5 21	52n14	<i>Contra Apion</i>
1:4–5	63	7 i 12–13	51n7	1.37–40 105
1:6–12	64	7 i 13–15	53n15	2.175–181 143
16	65	7 i	51n11	2.204 143

<i>Jewish War</i>		<i>b. 'Erubin</i>	5	266
2.18.2	31	53b–54a	202 9:4	269
2.175–177	192	64b	270	
3.352–356	105		<i>m. Niddah</i>	
6	104	<i>b. Ketubot</i>	25	226
6.282 (6.5.2 §282)	183n3	86b	269	
6.310–313	105		<i>m. Peah</i>	
6.387–391	184	<i>b. Megillah</i>	1.1	188
7	101	14a	226	
7.123	107		<i>m. Qiddušin</i>	
7.150	101, 107	<i>b. Qiddušin</i>	1:7	195
7.155	107	3b	203 111	195
<i>Life</i>		40a	74n37 3:13	270
9	6n10			
11	6	<i>b. Šabbat</i>	<i>m. Šeqalim</i>	
12	7	1b	202 6.5	191
13	7			
		<i>b. Sanhedrin</i>	<i>m. Temurah</i>	
Philo		67a	270 6:2	270
<i>Hypothetica</i>				
7.11–14	143	<i>b. Soṭah</i>	<i>t. Baba Qamma</i>	
<i>De vita Mosis</i>		11b	113	269
2.2	94n26	12a	226 11:4	269
2.41–42	31	12b4a	226	
2.117	97n41		<i>t. Ketubot</i>	
<i>Quaestiones et</i>		<i>m. 'Abodah Zarah</i>	4.7	199
<i>solutiones in Exodum</i>		112	268n29 4:9	266
2.5	28	1:3	27n10	
<i>Special Laws</i>			<i>y. Avodah Zarah</i>	
3.172	281	<i>m. Abot</i>	5.4 [44d]	28n12
3.173	281	2:7	270	
3.175	281		<i>y. Qiddušin</i>	
		<i>m. Baba Qamma</i>	4:11	270
		109	269	
TALMUD/			<i>y. Soṭah</i>	
MISHNAH/TOSEPHTA		<i>m. Hallah</i>	1:4	270
		2:7	269 16d	270
<i>b. 'Abodah Zarah</i>				
18a–b	270	<i>m. Hullin</i>		
		2.4	70n19	
<i>b. Baba Qamma</i>				
119a	269	<i>m. Kelim</i>		
		16:7	270	
<i>b. Berakot</i>		<i>m. Ketubot</i>		
17a	196	189	266 1.9.1	73n32
62b	196	4:4	270 5.7.10	228
72b	269	4:5	268 7.1.3	226
			7.1.4	228

RABBINIC WRITINGS

Abot de Rabbi Nathan

A161§8 6b 6

Ecclesiastes Rabbah

<i>Exodus Rabbah</i>		3.30	131	VI.18	16
113	226	3.32	130	VI.21	16
1:17	226	3.33	130	VII	11n9
48.4	226	3.34	130	VII.3	15
		3.35	130		
<i>Genesis Rabbah</i>		3.36	131	Ambrose	
17:3	223	3.37	127	<i>Epistles</i>	
182	23	3.38	130	40	38
		3.39	131	40.14	39
<i>Leviticus Rabbah</i>		3.43	131	40.8	38
3.5	188	4	17	41	38
3.17	197	4.2	24	41.1	38
13:5	73n32	4.5–6.8	24	42.23	37
		4.8	21	<i>Expositio evangelii</i>	
<i>Mekilta Pisha</i>		4.9	21, 24	<i>secundum Lucam</i>	
1.60–62	231	4.10	21, 24	2.96	92n14
		4.12	20		
<i>Mekilta Shirata</i>		4.13	20, 21, 24	Augustine	
10:58–67	226			<i>City of God</i>	
		<i>Acts of Thomas</i>		16.29	92n14
<i>Midrash Mishle</i>		108.9–10	21n17	18.46	97n42
31.10	201	108–13	21n17	22:8–10	270
		109.29	21n17	<i>Confessions</i>	
<i>Numbers Rabbah</i>		111.62	21n17	6.2.2	97n43
1.2	227, 228	113.97–98	21n17	<i>Contra Cresconium</i>	
1822	228			<i>grammaticum</i>	
		<i>Acts of Peter</i>		3.28.21	157
<i>Pesiqta deRab Kanana</i>		1	10n4	<i>Contra epistolam</i>	
Sup. 3:2	68n6, 70n19	23–28	10n4	<i>Parmeniani</i>	
				1.3	157n7
		<i>Acts of Philip</i>		<i>Contra Faustum</i>	
<i>Song Rabbah</i>		II	10, 11	9.2	96n36
4:5	227	II.10	10	<i>De doctrina christiana</i>	
4.13	228	V.11	13, 14	1.2–7	93n23
		V.14	14	<i>Enarrationes</i>	
EARLY CHRISTIAN TEXTS		V.15	14	<i>in Psalmos</i>	
		V.19	13	56.9	98n46
<i>2 Clement</i>		V.21	14	<i>Epistles</i>	
12.2	21	VV II	9, 10, 11, 11n9, 11	43.17	157
				43.25	157
<i>Acts of Paul and Thecla</i>		V.6	11, 12	<i>Sermons</i>	
3	17	V.7	11, 12	5.5	37n3
3.19	20	V.9	13, 14	62.12.18	37n4
3.20	130, 131	VI.2	12		
3.25	20, 127	VI.5	12	<i>Chronicle of Edessa</i>	
3.27–28	130	VI.6	12	§	9
3.27	131	VI.13	15	84.90–103	39
3.28–30	131	VI.15	15		

Clement of Alexandria		Gregory the Great		<i>Martyrdom of Polycarp</i>	
<i>Paidagogus</i>		<i>Epistles</i>		3.2	23
6.43.3	236	1.34	42	941	23
6.43.4	236	2.6	42		
<i>Stromateis</i>		9.6	42	Methodius	
4.8	282	9.38	42	<i>Symposium sive</i>	
4.8.61.3	282			<i>Convivium decem</i>	
4.8.62	282	Ignatius		<i>virginum</i>	
		<i>Letter to the Magnesians</i>		Oration 2.t.2	180n15
Commodian		10.2	47		
<i>Instructiones</i>		8.1	47	Optatus	
1.37.10	30n16			<i>Against the Donatists</i>	
		Irenaeus		1.1	160
		<i>Adversus haereses</i>		1.9	160n22
Cyril of Alexandria		4.26.3	135	1.11–12	155n2
<i>De adoratione</i>				1.15	161
3.92.3	30n16	Jerome		1.16	161, 156
		<i>Epistles</i>		1.18	157
Ephrem		133.4	159n21	1.19	157
<i>Letter to Publius</i>				1.21	161
#12	22n18	John Chrysostom		2.4	161
		<i>Ad populum</i>		3.9	161
Epiphanius		<i>Antiochenum de statuis</i>			
<i>Panarion</i>		19.1	268n29	Origen	
79.8	160	49. 188	268n29	<i>Commentarius in</i>	
				<i>Canticum</i>	
Eusebius		Justin Martyr		1.1.4–5	236
<i>Demonstratio evangelica</i>		<i>1 Apology</i>		1.2.4	236
1.2.8	93n19	14	241	1.2.7	236
1.2.10	93n18	54.2–6	108	1.2.8	236
<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>		<i>2 Apology</i>		1.2.9	236
1.2.8	92n14	2.1–20	101	1.2.13	237
1.4.5–6	99			1.2.20	236
5.1.3–5.2.8	24	Lactantius		1.2.22	236
<i>Praeparatio evangelica</i>		<i>Epitome divinarum</i>		1.3.1	237
1.2	99n49	<i>institutionum</i>		1.4.4	236
7.6.1–2	95n34	1.6.12	106	1.4.16	236
7.7	93n22			2.1	239
7.8.22	93n21	Leo the Great		2.1.1	237
9.27.1–37	112	<i>Sermons</i>		2.1.2	237
		5.3	97n43	2.1.3	237, 238
		33.3	98	2.1.4	237, 238
Gelasian Sacramentary				2.1.6	237
I.93	46	<i>Life of Antony</i>		2.1.8	238
		9	65	2.1.10	238
<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>				2.1.14	238
22	21	<i>Life of Simon Stylites</i>		2.1.16	238
114	173		40, 45	2.1.18–19	239

<i>In Canticum (cont.)</i>		<i>De baptismo</i>	Aristotle	
2.1.22	239	17.5	<i>Rhetoric</i>	
2.1.23	239	<i>De idololatria</i>	1.15	152n30
2.1.25	239	10	27n10	2.12.1–13.4 138
2.1.28	239	16	27n10, 28n13	2.12.3–5 138
2.1.30	239	18	27n10	2.12.7 138
2.1.42	240	19	27n10	2.12.8 138
2.1.44	240	20–23	27n10	2.12.9–11 138
2.1.46	240			2.12.9 138
2.1.56	240, 241	Theodoric letters		
2.1.57	240, 241	(Cassiodorus edition)	Artapanus	
2.2.1	240	4.43	(apud Eusebium)	
2.2.2	240		<i>On the Jews</i>	
2.8.3	237	<i>Vita Innocentii</i>	9.23.1–4	115
2.9.1ff.	236	2	27.4	113
3.3.9	236		27.6	113
Prol. 1.1	233n2, 235	Zonaras	27.32	114
Prol. 1.4	234n7	<i>Epitome historiarum</i>	27.35	114
Prol. 4.4	236	11.16	105n10	
Prol. 4.5	236			
<i>Contra Celsum</i>		GREEK AND ROMAN	Cassius Dio	
3.44	159	CLASSICAL AUTHORS	57.18.3–5	106
3.59	159		66.1.1–4	105
4.33	31n20	Aelian		
7.3	106	<i>Varia historia</i>	Catullus	
<i>Epistula ad Africanum</i>		12.35	70	150n24
5	234	Aeschylus		
<i>Homiliae in Leviticum</i>		Agamemnon	Damascius	
5.8	30n17	1285	<i>Vita Isidoris</i>	
<i>De principiis</i>		<i>Choephoroi</i>	9B	92n16
2.9.5	240	977–980	<i>Orations</i>	
<i>Selecta in Exodum</i>			29.26	152n29
12.46	30n17	Ammianus Marcellinus	39.3–4	149n15
		22.13	39.3	152nn29, 32
Sidonius Apollinaris			39.26	152n29
<i>Epistulae</i>		Andocides	40.10–11	152n29
4.11.1	92n16	4	45.58–61	148n13
			49.57	152n30
Socrates		Aristophanes	49.65	152n30
<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>		<i>Lysistrata</i>	52.30	152n30
7.13	39	18–238	54.40–41	152n30
7.16	47	190–204	54.40	152n30
		914–915	55.27	152n29
			57	151n25
Tertullian		<i>Thesmophoriazusae</i>	57.59	148n13
<i>Ad nationes</i>		225		
1.13	30n16	254		
1.3–4	30n16	270		
<i>Ad Scapulam</i>		517	Dio Chrysostom	
5.1	23	519	20	65
			74.9	153n36

Diodorus Siculus		Hesiod		<i>Should Daughters</i>	
10.20.2–3	142	<i>Theogony</i>		<i>Receive the Same</i>	
10.20.2	141	50612	19n 19	<i>Education as Sons?</i>	
10.20–22	136	<i>Works and Days</i>		F4 15.4–11	279
		60405	19n 19	F4 15.16–19	279
				F4 16.15–17	277
Dionysius of				<i>That Women Too Should</i>	
Halicarnassus		Homer		<i>Study Philosophy</i>	
<i>Antiquitates romanae</i>		<i>Iliad</i>		F3 11.11–16	279
4.64.1–85.4	136n10	19.107–13	149n15	F3 12.5–15	276
4.64.2	136n10			F3 13.1–3	277
4.64.4	140	John Malalas			
4.65.1	142	<i>Chronographia</i>			
4.65.2–4	142	15.4	41	Olympiodorus of Thebes	
4.66.1	141	386	273n51	frag. 28	92n16
4.67.2	138	395	273n51		
8.41.3	180n16			Ovid	
		Juvenal		<i>Fasti</i>	
Euripides		<i>Satires</i>		2.721–852	136
<i>Hippolytus</i>		6.542–47	270	2.849	138
575–600	149	14	33	Pausanias	
612		14.96	31n19	10.12.9	106
<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>					
736–737	149	Livy		Plato	
<i>Medea</i>		<i>Ab urbe condita libri</i>		<i>Leges</i>	
2023	10, 10n 18	1.19.3	136n9	917	153n34
21	10n 19	1.57–60	136n9	948	152n30
160463	10	1.57.10	141	<i>Philebus</i>	
161	10n 19	1.58.2	142	9e	9a 20
168–170	150n19	1.58.3–4	141	<i>Respublica</i>	
316	149n15	1.58.5	141	615	26n5
439–440	150n19	1.59.3	138	<i>Symposium</i>	
492–495	150, 150n19	1.59.8	141	183B	148n11
744–755	149n15	4.20	136n9		
		25.23	106n13	Plutarch	
Isaeus		39.8.3–4	101	<i>Morales</i>	
2	15n 25	39.16.8–9	83	140D	26n5
7	151n25				
8	15n 25	Lycurgus		Procopius	
9.18	148n13	1	15n 25	<i>On Buildings</i>	
10.10	153n36	1.76–77	147n7	6.2	41
12.9	152n31				
		Lysias		<i>Scholia in Iliadem</i>	
Isocrates		1.93.20	149n15	6.160.2	180n16
1.13	148n13				
		Musonius Rufus		Seneca	
Herodotus		<i>Dissertationes</i>		<i>Epistulae</i>	
1.153	153n34	3	129n15		65

Seneca, <i>Ep. (cont.)</i>		<i>CIL</i>		16.8.20	43, 45
24.14	125	6.11602	266n15	16.8.21	45
66.12	124			16.8.21	47n51
66.32	124	<i>IG</i>		16.8.25	40
101.10–13	125n6	14.1346	181n18	16.8.25	45
101.13	125	Rom 3.581	181n18		
Sophocles		<i>IJO</i>		Justinian	
Fr. 811	150n24	1:177–80	33	<i>Digest</i>	
		1:303–7	33	50.2.3.3	28n12
Stobaeus		2.348–55	33	<i>Novella</i>	
<i>Anthology</i>		3, Syr11	272n47	37	41
2.31.123	277	3:17–18	264n8	139	273n51
		3:17	263n3	Law Code of Gortyn	
Suetonius		3:19	264n5	III.5–9	152n29
<i>Augustus</i>					
31.1	106	P. Baden		Sitt al Hasan	
<i>Tiberius</i>		4 51	180n15	legal document	
8	83	P. Bodl.		1–20	216–17
<i>Vespasian</i>		1	180n15		
4.5–6	105	P. Count.		MEDIEVAL JEWISH LETTERS	
7.1	103n6	23	180n15		
		P. Oxy.		‘Izza al-‘Ibbillaniya letter	
Tacitus		9.1176	180n15	2.2	221
<i>Annales</i>		2108.6	181n18	2.9	222
2.85.11–17	83	P. Petrie		2.11	222
15.44.12–17	101	2 43	180n15		
<i>Historiae</i>		3 117	180n15	Nagid David ben Daniel	
4.82	103n6	P. Yadin		letter	
5.13	105	16	181 3	1143	221
		P.Lond.		14–15	221
Valerius Maximus		6.1923	179n11		
6.1.1	134, 136	P.Ness.		Najmiya letter to father	
		3.46	178n10	3	218
Virgil				5	218
<i>Aeneid</i>		LEGAL WRITINGS		1243	218
6.72	106n13			17	218
		Codex justinianus			
PAPYRI/		1.3	97n43	Umm Salama letter	
INSCRIPTION COLLECTIONS		Codex theodosianus		1	220
		13.15.18	273n51	3	220
BGU		16.18.16	273n51	11	220
4.1049	178n10	16.8.18	47n52		
891	181n18	16.8.26	45		
		7.8.2	43, 44		
<i>CII</i>		16.4.2	39		
991	265 11	16.5.15	39		

Index of Subjects

- Adam, and hearing of sounds
 - before and after the Fall, 63
- Amazons, in Musonius and Clement of Alexandria, 279, 281
- angels, gender of, 23
- anti-Judaism, and Christian attacks
 - on synagogues and Jews, 46, 47
- apocalypses, American, types of, 166
- apocalypticism, and gender binariness, 172, 173
- apocryphal acts, and conversion of Roman women, 10
- Aristeas, Letter of*
 - on exodus from Egypt, 119
 - and translation of the Septuagint, 116, 117
- art, medieval Christian, depiction of Jews, 89–100
- Artapanus, 1124–6
 - on story of Moses, 113, 114
- Augustine of Hippo
 - depiction of Jews as bookbearers, 97, 98
 - description of Lucilla, 157
 - distinction between Jews and Hebrews, 95, 96
 - Jews as spiritually blind, and depiction in medieval art, 89
 - philosophical approach to Hebrew Scriptures, 93
- authority of women, in *Damascus Document*, 525
- Bannus, and John the Baptist, 6
- baptism of Jesus
 - as commissioning or spiritual initiation, 4
 - as historical, 3, 4
- Beit Midrash, as seat of male learning, 196
- bishops, relation to local Roman authorities, 44
- blackness, moral and physical, 240, 241
- bookbearers, depiction of Jews as, 97, 98
- bride
 - development from childhood to adulthood, in Origen's *Commentary on Song*, 236, 237
 - as individual soul or church, in *Song of Songs*, 23
 - prepubescent, in *Song of Songs*, as Israel, 237
 - in *Song of Songs*, as Ethiopian woman, and despised by Jews, 237, 238
- Brocadelli da Narni, Lucia, and authentic voice of women, 2051
- Bruriah, and teaching of sons, 201, 202
- Cairo Genizah, contents of, 213, 214
- celibacy
 - differing views of Christians and rabbis, 188
 - in Second Temple period, 187, 188

- celibacy and marriage, in ancient Judaism, 49–58
- Christians, relation to Hebrews, 99
- city, Roman, as family-based religious institution, 27
- civic affairs, as domain of men, 146, 150, 151
- civil trials, and testimony of women, 15, 12
- Clement of Alexandria, contrast with Musonius Rufus on gender, 281, 282
- clothing
 - change of, reflecting change in status, 21, 22
 - signification of, in medieval Christian art, 90–94, 96–98, 100
 - significance of changing/disrobing, in Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 249, 250
- competition, dominated by men, 145
- conversion of pagans, 3
- converts, Jewish, obfuscation of identity, 10, 11, 12, 13
- converts and resisters, in *Acts of Philip*, 10
- courage
 - in Greco-Roman philosophy, 124–25
- courage/manliness (*ἀνδρεία*)
 - possessed equally by men and women, 279, 280, 281, 283
 - and women, in Musonius Rufus, 275, 279
- courtroom, women's absence from, 12
- criminal trials, and testimony of women, 15
- cup of Miriam, 229, 20, 23
 - and cup of Elijah, 20
 - and women's place in Judaism, 20
- cyborg, and feminist science fiction, 171, 172
- Damascus Document*, marriage practices and regulations in, 50–54
- demonesses
 - in grid and group, 25
 - in *Testament of Solomon*, 28
- demons
 - and gender, 262
 - male and female in Qumran, 260, 261
- diaspora, as component of Jewish identity, 110
- diaspora Jews, involvement in pagan cult and culture, 2, 3
- dissimilarity, and historicity, 3
- divination, Roman interest in, 82, 83
- divinatory and prophetic writings, interest in, in Flavian Rome, 109
- divinity of Jesus, Jewish and Christian debate on, 14, 15
- divorce, 215216: in *Damascus Document*, 6
- Donatism
 - female origins of, 156, 157, 161, 162
 - male participation in, 161
- donor inscriptions, information about women gleaned from, 266, 267
- dualism, cosmic, and gender, 260, 261, 262
- Dura Europos synagogue, depiction of biblical figures in, 94
- duty, Stoic concept of, and women, 278, 283
- dystopian apocalypticism, 165, 166

- E.T. (movie character), as forced migrant, 243
- E.T. (movie), and postexilic stories of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 243, 244
- education
 and equality of men and women, 277
 as productive of virtue, 142
- Egyptian Jews, in Artapanus, 115
- Egyptian Judaism, knowledge of, through Artapanus, 112-16
- Egyptian religion, in Flavian ideology, 103, 104
- Egyptians, as dependent on Moses for culture and civilization, 115
- elders and youth, contrast between, 138, 19
- endurance, 123, 124
 in 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees, 125-27
 in Greco-Roman philosophy, 124-25
 linked with national victory over oppression, 125
 linked with resurrection and immortality, 125, 127, 131
 and martyrdom, 127, 128
 of mother of Jewish martyrs, 126
- epsilon/ēta* confusion, 178
- error, female proclivity for, 160
- ethnicity
 early Christian attitude toward, 241, 242
 in Origen's *Commentary on Canticles*, 233-42
- Eusebius
 on Christians as a restored Hebrew *ethnos*, 99
 on connection between Greek philosophers and Hebrew patriarchs and prophets, 92, 93
 on distinction between Hebrews and Jews, 95-99
 on Hebrews as a religiously positive category, 99
 on the patriarchs, 93
- exile, as setting of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 244, 245, 247, 248
- exiles, maintenance of identity by, 247, 248
- fate, Stoic doctrine of, 278
- fathers and mothers, complaints against, in *Damascus Document*, 2, 3
- female redeemer figures, 165
- female voices, in Christian tradition, 206, 207
- femaleness, as prone to error, 160
- females. *See also* women
 and characteristics of demons, 253-57
 as resistant to conversion in *Acts of Philip*, 9, 10, 13-16
- food, and identity, 74
- food laws, explanation of, in *Letter of Aristeas*, 118, 119
- gender
 in ancient Judaism, considerations of Dead Sea scrolls, 49-58
 disruption of, as feature of dystopian apocalypticism, 165, 166, 167, 168, 172, 173
 in *Hunger Game Trilogy*, 165-166, 167, 168, 171, 172
 and oaths, 148-51
 and power, 68
 role of, in story of Susanna, 13, 136, 137, 140, 142
 significance of, in stories of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 248, 249, 250

gender transcendence
 in *Hunger Games Trilogy*, 170, 172, 173, 174
 as postapocalyptic state, 173
 gendered expectations, challenges to, 128, 129, 10
 genderlessness, and apocalypticism, 173
 gentiles
 attitude of Jews toward, 237, 238, 239, 240
 and bride of Song of Songs, 237, 238, 239, 240
 gestures, of Jews in medieval Christian art, 91
 goddesses, and oaths of women, 148
 Godfearers, 25292
 godfearing, range of meaning of, 3
 gods
 and humans, interaction in Roman antiquity, 26, 27
 and oaths of men, 147
 greeting, in Romans (book), 16, 81, 84, 85
 grid and group (Mary Douglas), 254–62

 Hebrews, as a religiously positive category, 99
 Hebrews and Jews, distinction between, 95
 hierarchy, human-divine, in Roman society, 26, 27
 Hildegard of Bingen, authentic female voice of, 206
 home
 as female domain, 266, 268
 versus marketplace, 268
 as setting for mothers teaching sons, 197
 homeland, longing for, in post-exilic literature, 247

Horarium
 sensory landscape of, 65
 in *Testament of Adam*, 61, 62
 households, and addressees of letter to the Romans, 8586
The Hunger Game Trilogy, and gender and apocalypticism, 165–74

 initiation, as component of spiritual biography of first-century sage, 4
Ioudaioi, in texts about expulsion from Rome, 82, 83
 itacism, in papyri, and patron of Luke-Acts, 178
Iudaei, in texts about expulsion from Rome, 82, 83

 Jewish law, deposition in palace complex on Palatine, 107
 Jewish males, conversion of, 10, 16
 Jewish religion, in Flavian ideology, 103, 104, 106, 107
 Jewish writings
 interest in, in Flavian Rome, 1038
 oracular character of, 104, 105, 106

 Jews
 in the *Acts of Philip*, 946
 attitude toward gentiles, 237, 238, 239, 240
 as blind to identity of Christ, depicted in art, 97, 98
 clothing of, in medieval Christian art, 90
 conversion of, in *Acts of Philip*, 9, 10
 diaspora, content to live away from Jerusalem and Judea, 115116
 distinctiveness of, in Egypt, 118, 119

- expulsion from Rome in 49, 81, 82
- forced conversion of, 37, 39, 41, 42
- in god-congested Roman environment, 27, 28, 29
- harmonious existence in Egypt with gentiles, 118, 119
- identity of those expelled from Rome, 82, 83
- knowledge of Christian Scriptures, 15
- living in Alexandrian/Egyptian cultural context, 115116, 120
- oppression of, in Christian empire, 91
- violence of Christians against, 36–48
- as visually distinct in medieval Christian art, 89
- Jews and gentiles, shared values in Egypt, 118
- John the Baptist
 - ascetic character of, 4
 - and Bannus, 6
- Joseph, as parrying the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, 68, 69
- Joseph and Aseneth*, and tale of Susanna, 134
- Josephus
 - and oracular character of Jewish writings, 104, 105, 106
 - spiritual initiation of, 6, 7
- Judaism
 - in Christian Greek empire, 47, 48
 - in Egyptian diaspora, 115116
 - viewed as threat to Christians, 47, 48
- Judaizers, pagans as, 32
- Judean religion, and Judean ethnicity, 79, 80
- Judean War, significance for
 - Flavian dynasty, 102
- Judean writings
 - interest of Romans in, 101, 102
 - on par with Sibylline books, in Flavian Rome, 106, 107, 108
- Judeans, as ethnic people, 79, 80
- Judeo-Arabic, 213
- Justin Martyr, on Christ as fulfillment of Judean prophecies, 108
- killer wife, 215216
- Kraemer, Ross
 - on Christian critique of Greco-Roman culture, 123
 - on female authority in antiquity, 223
 - on fluid nature of religious identity in antiquity, 59
 - on limitations and possibilities of historical sources and methods, 77
 - on patron of Luke-Acts as a woman, 175
 - and the term *G* *odfearers*, 25
 - and use of gender in examinations of the ancient world, 54, 57
 - and use of grid and group concepts, 2526
 - on women in ancient society, 133, 145, 146, 165, 183, 184, 185, 195, 233, 253, 254
 - work on novel religious teachings, 101
- kratiste*, as applicable only to males, 180
- landscape studies, 61
- law (Jewish), brought from the Jerusalem temple to Rome, after Judean War, 101, 102, 106, 107

- legal documents, and women in
 - medieval Jewish community, 214, 215, 216
- Leo the Great, theology of,
 - depicted in art, 91
- letter writing, of women in medieval Jewish community, 214, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221
- letters
 - medieval Jewish, 212
 - nature of greetings in, 81, 82
- liberation, and Passover, 228, 229
- literacy, of men and women, 214
- Lucilla, and the Donatist schism, 153
- Lucretia, appearance in Latin and Greek literature, 131
- Luke-Acts
 - author/compiler as a woman, 176
 - interest in women, 176
 - patron as female, 176, 177, 182
- maleness, and heresy, 160
- marketplace, exclusion of women
 - from, 266
- marriage and celibacy, in ancient Judaism, 49–58
- marriage customs, 215, 216
- marriage practices and regulations
 - in *Damascus Document*, 50–54
 - in *Rule of the Congregation*, 5, 2
- martyrdom
 - differing views of Christians and rabbis, 188
 - and endurance, 127, 128
 - and role of mothers: in 2 and 4 Maccabees, 127–30; in *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, 103
 - and role of Roman authorities, 23, 24
 - in Second Temple period, 187
 - of widow (in tale of widow's mite), 187, 188
- material goods, divestment of, in Mark, 185, 186, 188
- Matrona dipinto, 263, 272, 273
- men
 - as capable of controlling their inclinations, 67
 - speaking for women, inversion of, 208, 211
- menorah, in Matrona dipinto, 264, 265, 273
- migrant, E.T. as, 243
- Miriam. *See also* cup of Miriam; Miriam's well
 - in Origen's interpretation of Song of Songs, 28, 29
 - and Passover celebration, 229, 230, 231
 - positive and negative portrayals of, 223, 224
 - as precedent for women clergy, 223
 - priestly genealogy of, 224
- Miriam's well, 223, 224, 226, 228, 230
 - and Passover table, 229
- mono-genderedness, and apocalypticism, 173
- mortuary inscriptions, information
 - about women gleaned from, 267, 270, 271, 272
- Moses
 - benefactions to humankind, 113
 - elevation above Egyptian deities and heroes by Artapanus, 113, 114, 115
 - as Hermes/Thoth, 114
 - and Sesostris, 114, 115
 - as teacher of Orpheus, 113, 115
- mothers
 - and daughters, minimal representation in literary sources, 197
 - endurance of, 126, 127

- and instrumental teaching of
 - Torah, 199, 200, 201
- Jewish, as teachers of children, 195–204
- manly courage of, 132
- Musonius Rufus, views on women, 275
- nakedness, in story of Thecla, 21
- novels, postexilic Jewish, 243, 244, 245
- oath(s)
 - challenges to, and women, 12
 - effective, of men, 147
 - and gender, 148–51
 - and the gods, 147
 - ineffective, of women, 147
 - language of, 147, 148
 - of men, and relationship to the gods, 148, 149
 - and sacrifices, 147
 - subversion of, by women, 148–51
 - widow's, 217
 - of women: in classical Greek plays, 149; in oratorical and commercial texts, 11, 12, 153; as prayer, 148; as subversion of the norm, 148
- oath taking, and women, 145–54, 217
- Obyzouth, gendered traits in *Testament of Solomon*, 28, 29
- Optatus
 - account of Lucilla, 163
 - scholarly readings of, 157–59
- Origen
 - Commentary on Song*, 233–42; and Jewish-Christian exegesis, 234, 235
 - and use of Hebrew text and Greek translation of Bible, 234
- pagans
 - conversion to Christianity, 33
 - as Godfearers, 3
 - involvement with former gods after conversion, 33
 - in Jewish synagogues, 29, 0, 3
 - as Judaizers, 31, 32
 - in specifically Jewish places, 29, 0, 3
- pallium*, signification in medieval Christian art, 90, 91, 92, 94
- parsimony, in historical interpretation, 77, 78, 86
- Passover, and liberation, 228, 229
- patriarchs, association with philosophers, 92, 93
- patrons, female, 181
- Paul
 - and Jesus, similarities of spiritual initiation, 6, 7
 - knowledge of Gospels, 5
 - spiritual initiation of, 4, 5
 - and Thecla, 17–24
- Philo
 - contrasted with Musonius Rufus on gender, 280, 281
 - on women and fighting, 280, 281
- philosophers, Greek, association of patriarchs with, 92, 93
- philosophy, women's study of, 276, 277
- pietas*, in human-divine hierarchy, 26
- piety, and gender, in tales of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 20, 25
- pig, as metonym for Rome and Romans, 73, 74
- poor, exploitation of, 191
- poverty
 - differing views of Christians and rabbis, 188, 189
 - in Tanakh, 186, 187
 - as virtue, 187, 188

prayer

- and gender, in tales of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 26, 25
- and rescue, of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 246, 247
- women's oaths as, 148

priests, Jewish, depiction in medieval Jewish art, 97

professions, of Jewish women outside the home, 266, 267, 268, 269

- as maidservants, 271
- in the marketplace, 269
- as musicians and mourners, 270
- as prostitutes, 271
- as sorceresses, 271

Rabbi Aqiba

- as paragon of self-control, 73
- temptation by two women, and self-restraint, 70–74

Rabbi Sadok, self-restraint of, 69, 71, 72

race

- in Origen's *Commentary on Canticles*, 233–42

Origen's perception of, 241

reciprocity, for good actions, 22, 23, 24

relics, veneration of, 19

religion

- false, and women, 146
- foreign, in Flavian ideology, 102–7
- proper, as domain of men, 146
- and violence, 358

religious authority, and Roman law, 44, 45

religious identity, and aural imagination in *Testament of Adam*, 966

resurrection, miracle of, performed by Philip, 15

rider amulets, 255, 257

Romanness, emphasis on, in conversion stories, 11–14

Romans (letter of Paul)

- identity of addressees, 83, 84
- reconstruction of historical setting, 8586
- standard account of historical setting, 79

Santa Maria Maggiore (basilica), depiction of biblical history on mosaic panels, 90–92, 94

schism, and heresy, 15

Septuagint, legend of translation in *Letter of Aristeas*, 116, 117

Sesostris, and Moses, 114, 115

sexual behavior, marital, in *Damascus Document*, 6, 5

silence, and religious identity, 64, 65

social networks

- and households, 84, 85, 86
- and letter to Romans, 84, 85, 86
- son of Abaye, and mothers teaching sons, 202, 203, 204

Song of Songs

- Origen's commentary on, 233–42

rabbinic interpretation of, 23

sonic dimensions, in *Testament of Adam*, 62, 63, 64

sonic emplacement, 61

sound, and construction of religious identity in late antiquity, 59, 60, 63, 64, 65

sound studies, 60

Stoicism, Roman

- in early empire, 275, 276
- views on nature, and gender, 278

storytelling, postexilic, exile and gender in, 243–51

Suetonius, on oracular character of Judean writings, 105

- Susanna
 and Aseneth, 136, 137
 feminist concerns in story of, 133–43
 and Lucretia, 134–42
 tale of, and *Joseph and Aseneth*, 134
 tale of, different versions of, 135, 141
- synagogue(s)
 converted to churches, 37, 39, 40, 41
 destruction of, 38–43, 45, 46
 in first-century Judaism, 80
 lack of mention in Paul, 80
 laws protecting, 40, 43, 44, 45
 pagans in, 29, 0, 1
 protected by Roman legislation, 43, 44
- Tacitus, on oracular character of Judean writings, 105
- temple
 attitude of Jesus toward, 190–92
 condemnation of, in widow's mite tale, 18993
 relationship to Rome, 192, 193
- temptation, as part of human world, 67
- Testament of Adam*, provenance and date, 62
- Thecla
 endurance of, 127
 and the governor, 19–24
 martyr's baptism of, 18, 19
 and Paul, 17–24
 and resurrection, 11, 12
- Theophile/Theophila as female name, 179
- threat, as setting of Esther, Judith, and Susanna, 244, 245
- Torah study
 as exclusively male, 197, 198, 23
- immature exempted from portions of, 23
- ritual and instrumental, 198201
- Tyre, and production of purple dye, 264, 272
- tzedakah*, and care for the poor, 186, 188
- Vespasian
 attitude toward Jewish law, 107
 confirmed as emperor by Judean religion and texts, 105, 106, 107
- Vibia Perpetua, authentic female voice of, 206
- violence, of Christians against Jews and their synagogues, 36–48
- virtue(s)
 masculine and feminine, 124, 125
 women with same inclination toward as men, 276, 277, 283
- wells
 and feminine archetype, 226
 miraculous, 226, 227, 228
- widow (in tale of widow's mite)
 as exploited victim, 189
 as moral exemplar, 185
 as representative of 'ānāwîm, 185
 as unreliable witness, 193
 and woman who anoints Jesus, 187
- widow's mite
 anti-Roman reading of, 192
 revisionist reading of, 18993
 tale of, as condemnation of temple, 18993
 traditional reading of, 1889
- wife of Moses, in Origen's interpretation of Song of Songs, 28, 29

women

authority of, constraints on, in
 Dead Sea Scrolls, 55, 56
 biblical, conflicting rabbinic
 interpretations of, 23
 capacity for virtue, 133–43
 as centerpieces of heresies, 19,
 160
 Christian, exemplifying mascu-
 line virtues, 123, 124
 conflicting views of, in biblical
 and rabbinic tradition,
 223–27
 daily lives of, difficulty of recon-
 structing, 265, 266
 good, attributes of, according to
 Musonius, 276
 as heads of households, 85
 inability to participate in civic
 affairs, 146, 150, 151
 inability to participate in proper
 religion, 146
 as incapable of controlling their
 inclinations, 67
 knowledgeable, role of, in
 Damascus Document, 2
 in legal documents of medieval
 Jewish community, 214, 215,
 216
 and letter writing in medieval
 Jewish community, 214, 217–
 21
 limited ability to conduct busi-
 ness transactions, 13
 need to study philosophy, 276,
 277

and oath taking, 145–54
 positions of, in synagogue hier-
 archies, 266, 267
 as primary transgressors, 19,
 160, 161, 162: and story of
 Lucilla, 19, 160, 161
 professions of, in antiquity,
 263–73
 as reliable witnesses 214–22: in
 Damascus Document and *Rule*
 of the Congregation, 54, 55, 56,
 8
 Roman, association with pigs,
 73, 74
 self-sacrifice of, 185, 186, 187
 social location of, 254–62
 as sources of impurity and
 shame, 252, 60
 as teachers of sons, 201–4
 in teaching of Musonius Rufus,
 276–77
 as tempters, 67, 68
 titles of, in donor inscriptions
 and epithets, 266, 267
 and Torah study, 197, 198, 199
 as trustworthy and knowledge-
 able, in Dead Sea Scrolls, 52,
 53, 54, 55, 56, 57
 usefulness as rhetorical tools,
 162, 163
 as usual converts in apocryphal
 acts, 10
 utterances controlled by men,
 205, 206, 207
 work, women's, 268