Buried History

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Buried History is the annual journal of the Australian Institute of Archaeology. It publishes papers and reviews based on the results of research relating to Eastern Mediterranean, Near Eastern and Classical archaeology and epigraphy, and the biblical text. Papers are refereed in accordance with Australian HERDC specifications. Opinions expressed are those of the authors concerned, and are not necessarily shared by the Australian Institute of Archaeology.

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Editorial

We are pleased that *Buried History* again has a range of contributions, from the primarily archaeological to the potentially more controversial relationship between material culture and text. Indeed this time 'theology' is actually considered.

Professor William Dever and Pam Gaber visited Australia in April 2012 as guests of the Australian Institute of Archaeology and we are pleased to be able to include the Petrie Oration that Professor Dever delivered. The theme, the relationship between field archaeology and Biblical archaeology, is one that has engaged Bill for over forty years. While some may consider this topic to be old ground, it is important to be aware of the journey that has been travelled so that we do not pass that way again. Professor Dever inherited the archaeological tradition of William Foxwell Albright and George Ernest Wright, and he has passed it on to almost thirty PhD students who now teach throughout the world. The recently arrived head of the Archaeological Program at La Trobe University, Stephen Falconer, is one such student. Bill, with the support of Pam, who has her own teaching and field archaeological career, continues to publish profusely and speak generously.

Alan Mugridge's paper derives from his doctoral work completed at the University of New England on early Christian manuscripts. The Institute was pleased to support him in his work. Originally Alan was a mathematics teacher before studying at Moore Theological College. After a period of parish ministry and missionary service he joined the faculty of the Sydney Bible and Missionary College in 1993, where he continues to teach.

Carolina Quintana is a teaching assistant in the Universidad de Buenos Aires and in the Instituto Superior del Profesorado Joaquín V. González. She graduated from Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, Argentina, and is currently a researcher in the Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente (CEHAO), which belongs to Universidad Católica Argentina (UCA). Her paper on the characterization of the A-Group of ancient Nubia derives from research she completed as a CONICET's scholarship holder and PhD student at the Universidad de Buenos Aires.

The title of Professor Arbino's paper may appear rather presumptuous, the very idea that *Buried History* could offer advice to one of the most successful archaeological organisations in the world is of course ridiculous. However, when he read an abbreviated form of the paper at last year's ASOR Annual Meeting in Chicago, Professor Tim Harrison, who is the President of ASOR and a member of the our Editorial Board, agreed with me that the paper should be given broader circulation. We are pleased that Gary agreed. Gary P. Arbino, is Professor of Archaeology and Old Testament Interpretation at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, where he has taught since 1994. His excavation experience in the Middle East has included Tel Miqne-Ekron, Tall al-Umeryi, Beth Shemesh and Tel Rehov. Since 2006 he has served as Senior Field Archaeologist in the renewed excavations at Tel Gezer. He is also Curator of The Marian Eakins Archaeological Collection at Golden Gate Seminary. He is active in professional organizations including the Society of Biblical Literature, National Association of Professors of Hebrew, and American Schools of Oriental Research, for which he has served as Trustee since 2004. The subject he addresses is increasingly relevant for many American archaeologists who find themselves on the faculties of seminaries that support field archaeology but also have theological imperatives to satisfy.

Dr Anne Gardner has kindly reviewed two books. Originally trained at Edinburgh University, she has taught religious studies and history for many years at La Trobe University and is now a Senior Research Fellow at Monash University. She has written on various aspects of the Hebrew Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls as well as the history and archaeology of Ancient Israel. She has a major work on Jerusalem up to the tenth century BCE in preparation

The final review brings this edition full circle. Has the volume of collected essays entitled *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith* turned the wheel back to a time before that dealt with by Professor Dever? Some may say yes, that by framing archaeology with theological concepts, we have regressed over fifty years. However it may not be as simple as that; there are details in the content of the book that could lead one to conclude otherwise. However, the fact remains that some important archaeological contributions may have been buried in the process.

As always I remain ever in the debt of our contributors, peer reviewers, and our Editorial Board.

Christopher J Davey

Reflections on the Death of Biblical Archaeology

William G. Dever

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Introduction

I am sometimes accused of killing 'Biblical archaeology' with my efforts at reforming our discipline beginning nearly 40 years ago. I'm flattered that anyone might think that I had such influence. The fact of the matter, however, is that I merely observed the death of 'Biblical archaeology' and was one of the first to write its obituary (Dever 1972, 1974, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1992, 1993, 2000, 2003b, 2010; cf. also Moorey 1991 and Davis 2004 for overviews).

A Discipline 'Comes of Age'

There were enormous controversies over Biblical archaeology in the 1970s, but by the mid-1980s traditional American-style Biblical archaeology was dead. It continued as an amateur pursuit, a popular pastime, not only in America but elsewhere.[1] But meanwhile Syro-Palestinian archaeology had 'come of age' as a mature discipline. Yet today it seems to me that we face extraordinary disciplinary anxieties. What went wrong?

Victims of Our Own Success?

One can assess a revolution in large part by its slogans and its success. The three 'watchwords' of the revolution that began in the early 1970s, and soon gained momentum, were *specialisation, professionalisation and secularisation*. Let's see how they fared.

Figure 1: *Professor William Albright with William Dever at Gezer 1969. Photo: author*

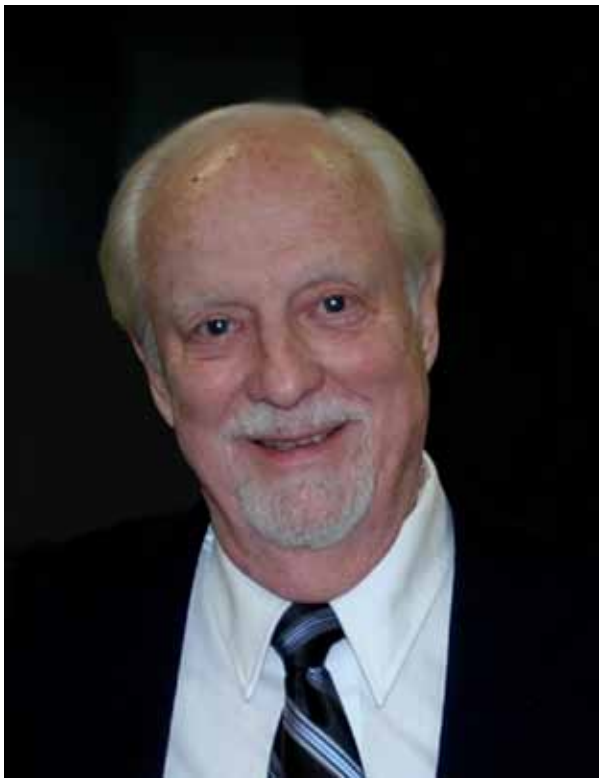

Figure 2: *Professor William G. Dever, 2010.*

Specialisation

The old archaeology embraced everything, and thus proved competent in nothing. It tried to encompass the whole 'Biblical World', and more. As Albright (1969: 1) put it famously: 'I shall use the term "biblical archaeology" here to refer to all Bible Lands – from India to Spain, and from southern Russia to South Arabia and to the whole history of those lands from about 10,000 B.C., or even earlier, to the present time.' Such a grand scope was never realistic, not even for a genius like Albright, and today no-one would dream of it. As our field expanded exponentially in the 1980s and 1990s, it became necessary to specialise, both intellectually and practically. Today there is no doubt that we have become highly specialised – some archaeologists make their reputation on a single site, a single topic, even a single pottery style. This concentration may produce impressive expertise, but it makes scholarly consensus and synthesis daunting, if not impossible.

Figure 3: *Dame Kathleen Kenyon at Gezer in 1967 with William Dever looking on. Photo: the author*

Professionalisation

When I began in the field 50 years ago, we Americans were all amateurs. Even our teachers – all clergymen, no women – had no academic or professional training in archaeology, nor did they teach the subject primarily. Their degrees were in theology or biblical studies. At best, this generation was self-taught in archaeological field methods, such as they were. A few, like Joe Callaway or Larry Toombs, had trained with Kenyon, and in the early 1970s Paul Lapp had begun to rethink digging techniques through his acquaintance with Henk Franken excavating at Deir ʻAllā. But up until about 1980, there was not so much as a single word written by an American on *real* method; that is, archaeological theory. Thus, we were completely isolated from the general world of professional archaeology, which had been undergoing sweeping theoretical revolution ever since the 'New Archaeology' burst onto the scene in the late 1960s.[2] In particular, the positivist scientific orientation, and the depreciation of history and the role of ideology – the 'vulgar materialism' – made the New Archaeology unpalatable to most of us (and the Israelis ignored it completely).

In the last 25 years or so, all has changed – and for the better. As for professionalism, today we Americans have at least 30 Ph.D.s in archaeology and anthropology, and perhaps 20–30 more in training (although no jobs).[3] As for diversity, take my Arizona doctoral program as an example. Of my 28 Ph.D.s, nearly half are women, one is African-American, one is Hispanic, and only two are ordained clergyman. All are employed, and while they have to teach related subjects to survive, they are all doing fieldwork as best they can, and they all teach archaeology as a discipline. That is true of the profession overall. No-one working in our field today is an 'amateur'. Ernest Wright's (1947: 74) 'armchair archaeology' is defunct.[4] We still need amateurs as volunteers on summer digs, of course, or as enthusiastic supporters. But the field has become professional for us Americans, and others as well, as it had always been in Israel, and was becoming so in Jordan.

Secularisation

The principal reason for the death of American-style 'Biblical archaeology' was that its agenda was theological rather than archaeological. And the agenda was not achieved, in retrospect could not have been achieved. Today, all that remains of the 'house that Albright built' are its foundations, and they are too ruined to build upon. Consider the 'historicity of the Patriarchs'; the centrality of 'Moses and monotheism'; the 'Exodus and the conquest' as historical epochs; the 'Golden Age of Solomon'; the uniqueness and superiority of Israelite religion. These elements of a grand synthesis – at the very heart of the Israelite cultural tradition (and ours?) – have all disappeared. We now understand finally that archaeology cannot answer these questions; it can only pose them.[5]

For better or worse, the marriage of archaeology and theology has been dissolved. It is not a question of whether the Bible should be used as one source of history-writing (the main goal of archaeology), but only a question of how. And, by consensus today, the answer is a secular one. Biblical texts are to be used critically, exactly as

Figure 4: *Shechem 1965, from the left, William Dever, Professor George Ernest Wright, Nelson Glueck and H. Darrell Lance. Photo: the author*

Figure 5: *Pere Roland De Vaux with William Dever at Gezer 1969. Photo: the author*

any of the other ancient Near Eastern texts. Nevertheless, despite a general methodological consensus, some Israelis have fallen into criticising each other for being either 'too Biblical', or 'not Biblical enough'.[6] Meanwhile, in wider circles, there is a growing recognition, even among Biblicists, that even at best the biblical texts are now 'secondary' sources (with Lester Grabbe, Ernest Axel Knauf and others). In future, it is the archaeological data that will be our primary source for writing any new and better histories of ancient Israel, or for that matter, of Jordan, Syria, or anywhere else in the Levant.[7]

Let me summarise the changes over the past 40 years that I have sketched all too briefly, measuring the results against the aims. The 'revolution' succeeded, despite resistance. But we may have become the victims of our own success. We have become specialised – too much so. We have become professional, but we have far too many well-trained young archaeologists for the available jobs. We have become secular – but controversy over the actual use of the Bible still exercises us. In particular, the dialogue between two independent, autonomous professional disciplines – archaeology and biblical studies – which I envisioned in my very first foray into the discussion in 1973, seems further from realisation than ever. Even at the ASOR (American Schools of Oriental Research) and SBL (Society of Biblical Literature) meetings, perhaps the only possible venue, we are mostly talking past each other.

To use a metaphor with which we all are familiar, the 'revolution' is not over. The early skirmishes may be past, the initial battles won, some ground gained. But the real war has scarcely begun. Perhaps the hero of my favourite American comedy strip, Pogo, was right: 'We have met the enemy; and he is us.'

Disciplinary Anxieties

My charting the revolutional changes that have taken place in our discipline over the past 40 years is unsettling to many. I find myself with some reservations, even a bit of nostalgia for simpler times. But the revolution, such as it was, was inevitable, beyond anyone's control. And in the end, we have to hope that the present uncertainties are only further growing pains as we truly come of age. But if I perceive our situation correctly, these are 'disciplinary anxieties' that we Americans, and others, must face.

First, there is what I would call the 'Balkanisation' of our field. In the 1960s American archaeologists began excavating in Jordan, and in 1968 ACOR opened in Amman. In the 1970s we began working seriously in Cyprus, and in 1978 CAARI opened in Nicosia. All along, ASOR had hoped to open a school in Damascus, and although that was never possible, some American fieldwork did go on in Syria. American archaeologists who had excavated in Israel turned to Egypt. Finally, in the last few years major American projects have been launched in Turkey under ASOR auspices (see Harrison [2009] at Tell Ta'yinat; Schloen & Fink [2009] at Zincirli). Hopkins – Albright's old school, with a new position in what most of us thought would be 'Syro-Palestinian' archaeology – has just hired someone who has been excavating in Yemen. We are all over the map! And the map is changing.

These developments are reflected, as we would expect, in ASOR's programs and papers at the Annual Meetings, separate now from the SBL meetings, and as well in publications like *BASOR* and *NEA*. It may seem ironic that I have some misgivings about all this expansion; after all, I was one of the first to call for broadening our discipline beyond the confines of 'Biblical Israel' nearly 40 years ago. Why not welcome these further developments in scope?

My concern, simply put, is that we may have lost our centre, and we have done so not as a result of a deliberate and well-articulated strategy, but mostly by default. Let us be candid, the fact that so many American excavators have decamped from Israel in the last generation or so is not due to a reasoned argument that the 'centre'

Figure 6: *Professor Yigael Yadin with William Dever (left) and Darrell Lance and Nelson Glueck at Shechem 1965. Photo: the author.*

lies elsewhere. It is rather because archaeology is less competitive and much cheaper for Americans in these countries. And more recently, as Israelis have come (quite properly) to dominate archaeology in their own country, we Americans have been marginalised. In future, it is clear that excavation licenses will be granted to Americans only as co-directors, and only if they can demonstrate that they have professional backing, personnel, resources and institutes. Few young American or foreign archaeologists will be able to qualify. And none are likely to direct their own excavations. In any case, the continuing recession at home jeopardises all field projects, even most academic positions. These developments may well have been inevitable, beyond our control. I cannot ignore them; but neither do I have to celebrate them. If we are to face our dilemma seriously, we must offer a defensible rationale for a strategy that will otherwise seem only strategic withdrawal.

At worst, I fear that there will be little left of a 'discipline', if that word means anything, only a series of loosely related inquiries into the past in the Mediterranean world. And what is left will hardly be 'ours' any longer. I have written more than a dozen putative 'state-of-the-art' essays in the past 40 years (e.g. Dever 1972, 1974, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1992, 1993, 2000, 2003b, 2010), but today an overview of our field is simply impossible. We cannot even agree on a name for it. Which leads me to the next point.

'Levantine' Archaeology and the 'New Pragmatism'

My uneasiness with all this has only been exacerbated by a close reading of the most recent 'state-of-the-art' treatment, a volume edited by Tom Levy (2010) entitled *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*. My problems begin with the title. How can our branch of archaeology be simultaneously 'historical', 'biblical' and, as it turns out, 'Levantine'? And how exactly will the 'new pragmatism' ensure our future? Does 'pragmatic' – if that means 'doing what works' – really work? And is there anything really new here?

I offer the following observation with due respect, because I have long been an avid supporter of Levy, a former student and Gezerite (a past site supervisor at Gezer). I know all but one of the contributors to the volume personally and professionally. And the concluding chapter is my own. I also note that part of the problem with this volume is that it originated in a symposium in 2006 marking the inauguration of Levy' s position at UC San Diego, endowed as a chair styled the 'Archaeology of Ancient Israel and Neighboring Lands'. The volume, and especially the title and the chapters by Levy himself, is clearly an attempt to rationalise a position that looks like Biblical archaeology – held by a self-acclaimed prehistorian. Aaron Burke's (2010) long essay plays into the California 'success story', but ignores much else. Most of the other chapters stand on their own and are quite useful. I applaud Levy's attempt, but I doubt its success. The book raises more questions than answers. It does not point the way toward the 'future' of the title, but is a step backward.

Levy and several of the other authors advocate redefining our field as 'Levantine archaeology'. Indeed some, like Burke, think that such a revolution has already occurred. Here the thrust is to replace the term preferred by myself and many other Americans until recently – 'Syro-Palestinian archaeology' – as obsolete, even originally ill-conceived. These 'young Turks' might have noticed that this 'old Turk' abandoned that term some years ago in print, but only because it has now become hopelessly politically compromised, not because it was wrong in principle (Burke 2010; Levy 2010a; cf. Dever 2003a). Here I have serious reservations, which can be summarised as follows.

1. If 'Biblical archaeology' was too narrow, 'Levantine' is too broad. It suggests a revival of Albright's old description above, a definition without a distinction. The region might be characterised geographically as 'Levant' or 'Southern Levant'. But practically speaking, no-one can be a 'Levantine archaeologist'. We risk knowing more and more about less and less, until we know everything about nothing. Some degree of specialisation is required for professional competence.

2. Even if we adopt the term 'Levant' for the region, does it include western Turkey; Egypt beyond the Delta; anything of eastern Syria; and, in particular, Cyprus, where ASOR has a great stake? And what about Israel? I don't know any Israelis who want to be caricatured as 'Levantine'.

Originally the term 'Levant' was used to characterise the eastern provinces of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in the 18th–19th centuries, the heartland of which was Syria-Palestine at the time. (Anyone want to apply for an excavation permit there for next summer?)

3. The term 'Levant' scarcely rings a bell for most Americans, and even for those who are well educated, it has negative connotations. It will definitely be a hard sell – not only for the general public, but especially for the academic administrators and institutions that really determine our future. We need jobs, and I doubt that they will be styled 'Levantine'.

4. Broadening our field to the whole of the Levant, however conceived, will likely mean the depreciation of the centre that has defined American and European archaeology in the Middle East for more than a century: ancient Palestine, or modem Israel, Jordan, and, if possible, the West Bank. Long ago I meant to broaden our intellectual and theoretical horizons – but not at the risk of losing sight of the centre. It is true that we cannot any longer predominate in Israel, but we must maintain a foothold there.

Meanwhile, as we struggle, many Israeli archaeologists are attempting to co-opt the discipline as their style of 'Biblical archaeology'. This is confusing, since for Israelis the term carries none of the theological baggage that it does for us and most Europeans. It is also inaccurate: it does not describe what Israelis actually do overall. Why should prehistory, the archaeology of the Bronze Age, or for that matter Classical archaeology be called 'Biblical archaeology'? (For various views, cf. Bunimovitz & Faust 2010; Burke 2010; Levy 2010a; Joffe 2010.) As for the term 'Biblical archaeology' in Jordan, Syria, Turkey or Cyprus, forget it. In my opinion, the term 'Biblical archaeology' should be retained for the dialogue between two disciplines.

5. Finally, reconstructing our discipline as a pan-Mediterranean 'Levantine archaeology' goes against all the trends in archaeology elsewhere in the region, as well as current Americanist and European theory. Today, the growing emphasis is on local or 'indigenous archaeologies'. A recent book entitled *Mediterranean Crossroads* specifically disavows a 'totalising Mediterranean archaeology', as both impractical and intellectually unustifiable (Antoniadou & Pace 2007).

That coincides perfectly with my recent call to cut the Gordian Knot of terminology by referring simply to the 'archaeology of Israel', 'of Jordan', 'of Syria', and so on. There is no other rational way out of our terminological impasse. And such neutral terms are now being adopted in other branches of archaeology, in the Mediterranean region and elsewhere. 'Levantine' is a step backward (cf. above and Burke 2010; Levy 2010a; Dever 2003a).

The most recent overview of American theory and practice is entitled *Contemporary Archaeology in Theory: The New Pragmatism* (Preucel & Mzrowski 2010). The essays in this volume are even more pertinent for a critique of the Levy volume. Here the 'new pragmatism' is put forward as a model with much greater sophistication and more suggestions for its application.

The New Pragmatism

The major thrust of Levy's introductory chapter in the volume that we have been discussing is his advocacy of a 'new pragmatism'. He alludes briefly to such founders of this uniquely American philosophy as William James, Charles Sanders Pierce and John Dewey. But he does not discuss these philosophers or cite their works, using only secondary sources. (And by now he is back to describing 'Biblical archaeology'.) As Levy puts it, pragmatism means concentrating on 'what works'. In reading on, however, it becomes clear that for Levy this means almost exclusively the application of recent scientific and quantitative means of gathering on-site data, such as total station mapping and digitised information systems – what we might call 'archaeometrics'. These new technological methods obviously do work. Levy publishes an impressive plan of his gate fortress, showing the exact find-spots of all metallurgical fragments. But technology cannot tell us what these data mean, nor will it ever do so (Levy 2010a: 17, fig. 6).

Levy overlooks the major literature on pragmatism, which stresses that it is not simply a 'bag of tricks'. It is fundamentally a subjective epistemology, a view of Truth. This philosophy holds that the truth of any particular idea can be verified only by the results of its application in practice, as observed by a community of practitioners. It seems clear to me that this is reductionist – the very opposite of the trends of the last 25 years to seek the 'meaning of things', the essential, inherent truth of material culture remains.

That provocative and widely influential movement is often called 'cognitive' or 'cognitive processual' archaeology. Its theory of knowledge ought to be one that is at least congenial to us in our branch of humanistic archaeology. The movement is usually associated with Michael Shanks, Christopher Tilley, Ian Hodder, Colin Renfrew and others (cf. Shanks & Tilley 1987; Tilley 1989; Renfrew 1994; Hodder 2006: 17). Yet there are no references to any of these stimulating archaeological thinkers in Levy's chapter, and scarcely elsewhere either. Levy's 'new pragmatism' is not only not new, it is not even up to date. To be fair, he does list a number of recent works in our field that have tested some anthropological models. But none of this 'testing' employs any criteria for determining 'what works'.

My real objection to Levy's notion of 'pragmatism', which none of the other authors take up, is that it seems to be a retrenchment, a retreat from theory, to a more attractive, simpler 'results-oriented' archaeology. He denies that. But the point is that without robust theory – an epistemology – there is no way of knowing what 'working' means; no criteria for evaluating anything. In the end, there is no 'truth of things', only a notion of their utility. [8]

At worst, that becomes mere expedience. We may all be weary of 40 years of theoretical discussion that often seemed to go nowhere. But the alternative is not to reject theory, to revert to the 'know-nothing' archaeology of 40 years ago.

We cannot go back in time, relive our so-called 'days of innocence'. We must go forward, finding more appropriate bodies of theory – perhaps even developing for the first time our own indigenous and proper archaeological theories. Science indeed can help us to gather, record, analyse and present our burgeoning data. But science will never be a substitute for the sharp eye in the dirt, the steady hand, the restless and inquiring mind, the intuition that comes from a profound understanding of the human condition.

Science will not save us. And neither will settling for second-best – a vague idea of 'what works'. Works how? For whom? And for how long? Calling for 'relevance' without some point of reference is not only a banality, it is an absurdity, an insult to our intelligence. The history

of archaeology is filled with pseudo-scientific, pragmatic archaeologies that have had monstrous results. We must have a nobler vision – and concrete ways to realise it.

The Goals of a True Pragmatism

The pragmatism of Preucel and Mzrowski and their collaborators has been around in the literature since the mid-1980s, and is far more comprehensive than what we have seen (above). It allows for a great diversity of views, for a 'moderate relativism'. But it also focuses on two very practical goals: 1) a new postprocessual emphasis on history writing, and on the role of the individual, in contrast to the mechanistic view of culture in the 'New Archaeology'; and 2) a new insistence on social action – on relevance – that will ensure our survival in a world of diminishing resources.

Speaking of 'relevance', Brown University's Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology headlines its current bulletin called *Inventory* 'Archaeology Saves the World – or at Least Tries'. That showcases a 'Cultural Heritage' project in Turkey, for which only one member of the governing board is an academic. Brown is also administering a 1.5 million dollar heritage project at Apollonia-Arsuf, on the coast of Israel. Will someone tell me how any of this is in America's vital interests, or helps to support our archaeology in an era of diminishing resources? (The endowed Levy Institute at New York University has not yet contibuted to the field.)[9]

Several of the authors in the Levy volume assume the overall goal of history-writing, especially with reference to the possible uses of the biblical texts. But among the archaeologists, I find no discussion whatsoever of historiography; or any awareness of the complexities of contemporary biblical scholarship; or any concrete examples of how archaeology might contribute to writing new and better histories of ancient Israel (forget about the New Testament era). As for the major challenge posed for history today – postmodernism and its denial of any knowledge of the past – Levy (and Tara Carter) can only opine that 'mutualism' is the right response. No-one who has read any postmodernist literature over the past 50 years could make such a statement. You cannot reason with postmodernists, because they begin by rejecting reason. There is no 'dialogue'. (For an introduction to postmodernism and the challenge to both archaeology and biblical studies, see Dever 2001 and extensive literature therein.)

As for my own 2001 book, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?*, Levy dismisses it as 'pandering' to the public. (Carter thinks all this discussion about postmodernism is simply 'intellectual squabbling'; Levy 2010a: 10; Carter & Levy 2010: 207.) They should have done their homework, read James Barr's (2001) magisterial *History and Ideology in the Old Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium*; or John Collins' (2005) *The Bible after Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age*. If you anticipate any dialogue, you must know your would-be partner.

It is at this point – dialogue – that I shall be bold enough to suggest some goals for those circles where I think the future of any style of 'Biblical' or other Near Eastern archaeology may lie. Here, at least, postmodernism's nihilism is stoutly resisted; and both the Old and the New Testament are still taken seriously, presuming some history that can still become the ground of faith (see my remarks in Dever 2003b).

For the study of the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible, the most obvious desideratum is new, more satisfying, histories of ancient Israel, histories that will do full justice to the vast array of new knowledge that we have come into possession of in the last 20–30 years due to the maturation of archaeology as a discipline. The facts are these: all current histories of ancient Israel are obsolete; neither in America, Europe, or Israel, where skepticism reigns in the mainstream, are new histories likely to be undertaken by biblical scholars; and there is a growing recognition that henceforth it is the archaeological data, not the textual data, that will constitute our 'primary source'. (Grabbe 2007 provides a prolegomenon from the perspective of a leading biblical scholar.)

The last proposition is demonstrable, because the archaeological data are more contemporary, more varied and comprehensive, less subject to bias and much more dynamic, expanding exponentially. In future, it would even be possible to write a 'secular history', in effect a history of ancient Israel and Judah without the Bible, or at least using the Bible and other texts as secondary sources.

'New Testament' archaeology can scarcely be said to exist thus far as a professional discipline, since from the beginning Biblical archaeology was concerned almost exclusively with Bronze and Iron Ages, and thus the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible. Admittedly, the historical and theological issues here seem less amenable to archaeological investigation. In the Old Testament, such issues as the historicity of the Patriarchs; Moses and the Sinai covenant; the exodus and conquest; the rise of the Monarchy; and the evolution of monotheism – all these had to do with long, complex historical epochs that archaeology might be expected to illuminate.

The fundamental doctrines of the New Testament, by contrast, are not really subject to archaeological and historical confirmation. These would include the virgin birth of Jesus, the miracles of his public ministry, his identification as the Messiah, his bodily resurrection and ascent to heaven, salvation by blood atonement, the descent of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the early church. What could archaeology possibly contribute to these beliefs? The answer is context – what archaeology, and only archaeology, contributes (for my attempt, see Dever forthcoming).

Archaeology in recent years has already begun to excavate early synagogues, churches and monasteries (not the usual 'holy places', most of which are bogus). In particular, the Galilean Jewish context of Jesus' life and early ministry is now much better known than formerly. We also have a vastly better understanding of Herodian Jerusalem, due to recent excavations. What we do not have yet is a concept of the larger world of Syria, Cyprus and Asia Minor, where the crucial missionary journeys of Paul spread Christianity beyond provincial Palestine for the first time. Syria is closed to us, and Turkey poses problems. But the excavations at Kourion in Cyprus, now being undertaken by American scholars and co-sponsored by the Australian Institute of Archaeology, point the way to the future.

Conclusion

I am well aware of the irony that once 'a prophet of the new archaeology', as Finkelstein dubbed me, I now appear to have become a defender of tradition, a Luddite. Thomas Kuhn may be right after all. These may be primarily generational conflicts, and at my age, I may simply be obsolete. But I have a longer perspective on our field than almost anyone. And I ask you to join me in reflecting further on the death of American-style Biblical archaeology, and what may outlive it. My generation has done its best. It may have failed in some respects. But the revolution must continue. I console myself with the wise words of the Pirke Abot (3rd century C.E. Rabbinic text):

You are not required to complete the work,
But neither are you free to desist from it.

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Endnotes

1 For the clearest obituary of Biblical archaeology, see Dever 1985, 1993; cf. Bunimovitz 1995. The agenda there prevailed until challenged by some of the essays in Levy 2010, especially those of Burke, Levy, and Bunimovitz and Faust.

2 On the New Archaeology in our field, see Dever 1981 and references therein; to update the general discussion, with critiques, see Preucel & Mzrowski 2010.

3 Burke (2010: 84–9) is much too optimistic. The job crisis is real, and it is increasing.

4 After his field experience at Shechem in the 1960s, Wright's view became much more professional (cf. Davis 2004: 137–40).

5 Cf. Krister Stendahl (1962), who first pointed this out with reference to Biblical theology.

6 On early Israeli views of archaeological theory see Mazar 1988 and Stern 1988. Bunimovitz 1995 is now more sanguine; cf. also Bunimovitz & Faust 2010.

7 For the few biblical scholars who acknowledge that the archaeological data can now be primary sources, see Knauf 2008; Grabbe 2007.

8 David Schloen (2001) has attempted to develop a specifically 'archaeological hermeneutic,' but in my judgment with little success. He examines more than 30 theories, only to discard them when it comes to doing archaeology. Most other archaeologists, however, simply ignore epistemology.

9 The Levy Institute has announced a position, but has not hired anyone.

Learning and Faith: On calling papyri 'school texts' and 'Christian'

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Abstract: This article is a review of those papyri, including wooden tablets and ostraca, which are listed as (certainly or possibly) 'school texts' on *LDAB*, whose religious orientation is given as 'Christian,' and which may have been written up to the end of IV AD. It is concluded that some papyri should not be considered here, since they cannot be classed primarily as school texts, their dating is too late, there is no reason to call them 'Christian,' or there is little known about them – although, as a whole, the Christian school texts deserve special consideration in the palaeography of early Christian papyri. It is also shown, however, that some of these papyri have only a tenuous connection with Christian faith, since they only include words that belong to 'a Christian milieu,' while others have a much stronger claim to be called Christian because they contain parts of known Christian works. The designation of this group of papyri as both 'school texts' and 'Christian' is no simple matter; and some implications of this are drawn, especially with regard to using some of these papyri in the textual criticism of the Greek OT, as well as the NT.

Introduction

Amongst the numerous papyri that survive from antiquity, 'school texts' form a small but significant group, in particular, those which have been identified as 'Christian.' However, a number of issues arise with regard to both of these labels; and in this article I seek to discuss their meaning and appropriateness as descriptions of papyri which were possibly written any time up to the end of IV AD. 'School texts' are usually taken to mean manuscripts deriving from a school (or, learning) context, although they sometimes include material written by teachers as well as students, and indeed students of varying degrees of writing expertise, from elementary to quite practised.[1] We will discuss below the assumptions that are often made in calling these manuscripts 'school texts.'

At least from the time of Constantine's confession of Christian faith early in the fourth century, if not earlier, Christian texts were used in certain learning contexts in various ways, along with classical and other texts (see esp. Morgan, 1997). Spelling exercises included words or names that belonged to well-known figures in the Bible, and 'Christian' words and texts were used in writing exercises. The parts of Christian texts included or referred to in the early period are from those which were later included in the official 'canon,' but of course certain Gnostic or Arian groups may well have used some of their own materials, as well as other texts consonant with the view of the official Christian churches amongst the 'orthodox' churches.

Thus, a number of extant papyri comprising students' exercises, or teachers' models of handwriting etc., contain texts with Christian content and have consequently come to be labelled 'Christian' by papyrologists. Some even appear on standard lists of OT and NT manuscripts. For example, a part of a codex of wooden tablets containing a section of Psalm 146 in Greek (LXX) has been given the number **2175** on Rahlfs' list of Greek OT manuscripts. Part of a codex containing some of Paul's letters with Latin glosses is given the number 𝔓[99] on the Gregory-Aland catalogue of Greek NT papyri. And this is quite understandable because, insofar as these papyri provide evidence for the text of the Old or New Testaments, they testify to the form of the biblical text current at a particular time and place; however, this matter will receive further comment in the conclusion to this study.

Yet, in what sense are they 'school texts'? Indeed, in what sense are they 'Christian'? In this article I offer a description of a number of these manuscripts, and then some reflections with regard to their classification by modern editors as 'school texts' and as 'Christian.' I also suggest certain assumptions involved, and implications that follow, from calling them 'school texts' with Christian content. I will confine this study to papyri whose religious affiliation include the label 'Christian' in the *Leuven Database of Ancient Books* (*LDAB*), and which are listed as being definitely or possibly 'school texts.' We will examine only those whose dating falls in II – IV AD on *LDAB*, although the possible date of some extends later than that. I have tried to be as complete as possible, so I have included ostraca and manuscripts with Greek writing but whose Christian texts are in Coptic.

Manuscripts will be listed in the *LDAB* order, and cited by their published number or, if this does not exist, their inventory number in the institution that holds them. Apart from their entry number on *LDAB*, I will also note, as applicable, their number in Cribiore's *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, Pack's *Greek and Latin Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt*, the Mertens-Pack[3] database, van Haelst's *Catalogue*, K. Treu's 'Christliche Papyri' and C. Römer's 'Christliche Texte', Rahlfs' *Verzeichnis*[2], Aland's *Repertorium* I, and the Gregory-Aland list of New Testament manuscripts.[2] For each MS a sample of the text is given, and plates of

some manuscripts are provided. Translations are given, chapter numbers and versification following the LXX or NT text, where applicable.

The descriptions of handwriting are derived from Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers and Students*, if they appear there, but photographs of manuscripts have been examined in all cases. For the purposes of categorising the handwriting Cribiore (1996, 111-12) distinguished between four definite types:

1. 'Zero-grade hand' – the least skilled hand of a complete novice, who does not know letters and sometimes confuses them.

2. 'Alphabetic hand' – the hand of a learner, who writes accurately but slowly, sometimes using multi-stroke letters instead of one stroke.

3. 'Evolving hand' – the hand of a practised pupil, although still somewhat uneven.

4. 'Rapid hand' – the well-developed hand of an advanced student, or perhaps a teacher.

Cribiore (1996) gives examples of which school texts fit into these categories, and the reader is referred to her book for further details.

No	*LDAB No*	*Date (AD)*	*Language(s)*	*Material*	*Form*
1	2418	end III	Greek, Coptic (Akhmimic)	Wooden tablets	Codex
2	2746	IV	Greek	Wooden tablets	Codex
3	2747	IV	Greek	Wooden tablets	Codex
4	2763	mid III – mid IV	Coptic (Sub-akhmimic)	Papyrus	Codex
5	3025	early IV	Greek	Papyrus	Sheet
6	3030	IV	Greek, Latin	Papyrus	Codex
7	3136	III (V?)	Greek	Papyrus	Roll
8	3172	IV	Greek	Wooden tablet	Tablet
9	3215	IV/V	Greek	Papyrus	Codex
10	3473	III-IV	Greek	Papyrus	Roll
11	5269	mid III – mid IV	Greek	Papyrus	Sheet
12	5680	IV	Greek	Ostracon	
13	5736	2nd half IV	Greek	Papyrus	Sheet
14	5786	IV/V (probably later)	Greek	Wooden tablets	Codex
15	5825	IV-VI	Greek	Ostracon	
16	5872	IV-VII	Greek	Ostracon	
17	107875	IV	Coptic (Bohairic)	Papyrus	Codex

Table 1: *Summary of manuscripts*

Catalogue of Manuscripts[3]

The manuscripts to be discussed are listed in Table 1.

1. Codex of seven wooden tablets including Psalm 46:3-10

Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms: *T. Bodl. Gr. Inscr.* 3019; *LDAB* **2418**; Cribiore (1996) **388**; *CPP* **0255**; Pack **2732**; M-P³ **2732**. See W.E. Crum, *Mélanges Maspero* vol. 2 (1934-37), pl. XLVII, Cairo: IFAO, 73-76; L.Th. Lefort, in *Muséon* 48 (1935) 234-35; P.J. Parsons, A School-Book from the Sayce Collection, *ZPE* 6 (1970) 133-49, pl. VIII; Morgan (1998) 184-85

This codex of seven wooden tablets (23.8 x 11.0 cm; one missing),[4] dated to end III AD, contains a number of grammatical and arithmetic school exercises in Greek, a paraphrase of Homer, *Iliad* 1.1-16 in Greek, and Psalm 46.3-10 in Coptic (Akhmimic). At least three hands are discernible, all student's hands, the majority of the text (Cribiore's *m*. 2) being 'rapid' but uneven, with some rubbing out and inkblots (see plates in Crum and Parsons). The text of Psalm 46:3-10 is given in Text 1 below (following Crum 76; cf pl. 6).

The format of this manuscript (a codex of wooden tablets), the unsteady writing hands, as well as the varied contents

Col. 1	
3. ϫⲉⲡϫⲁϊⲥ ϫⲉⲥⲓ ⲟⲩⲟⲧⲉⲡⲉ ⲟⲩⲛⲁⲕ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣⲟ ⲓϫⲉⲛⲛⲉⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ (above: ⲡⲕⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲃ)	3. For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared A great king over the whole earth.
4. ⲁⲃⲑⲉⲃⲱ ⲛⲉⲛⲗⲁⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲛ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲑⲛⲟⲩⲣⲏⲧⲉ	4. He subdued people under us, and nations under our feet.
5. ⲁⲃⲥⲱⲧⲡ ⲛⲁⲃ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲃⲕⲗⲏⲣⲟⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ ⲡⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲛ̄ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲟⲩ ⲁ.ⲉⲧⲁⲁⲃⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧⲃ ⲁⲓⲁϥⲁⲗⲙⲁ	5. He chose our inheritance for us, The pride of Jacob whom he loves. Selah
6. ⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲣⲁⲓ ⲉⲟⲩⲗⲱⲗⲁⲓ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲉⲟⲩⲉⲣⲁⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲗⲡⲓⲍ (above: ⲁⲓⲁϥⲁⲗⲙⲟⲥ)	6. God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
7. ϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲉⲡⲉⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲉⲣⲓϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ ϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲉⲡⲉⲛ ⲉⲣⲟⲉⲣⲓϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ	7. Sing praises to God, sing praises. Sing praises to our King, sing praises,
8. ϫⲉⲡⲉⲣⲟ ⲙⲡϫⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲃⲡⲉ ⲡⲉⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ (ϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲉⲟⲩⲙⲉⲧⲣⲉⲙⲉⲛⲏⲧⲃ > deleted)	8. For God is King of all the earth; Sing praises with a psalm.
9. ⲁⲡϫⲁⲓⲥ ⲉⲣ ⲉⲣⲟ ⲉϫⲉⲛⲉⲛⲉⲑⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ (above: ϥⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲉⲛⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲧⲣⲉⲙⲉⲛⲏⲧⲃ) ⲁⲗⲗ̣ . . ⲁⲓ̈ ⲓϫⲉⲛⲡⲉⲃⲑⲣⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲃⲁⲁⲃ	9. God reigns over the nations, God sits on his holy throne.
10. ⲉⲛⲁⲣϫⲱⲛ · · · · ⲙ̣ⲉ̣ⲛ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉⲛⲗⲁⲟⲥ ⲁⲩⲥⲩⲛⲁ̣ⲅⲟⲩ ⲛⲉⲛⲡⲛⲟⲩ[ⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲃⲣⲁⲁⲙ] (Col. 2) ⲉⲛϫⲱⲣⲉ ⲉⲛⲡⲕⲁ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩϫⲉⲓⲥⲁⲓ ⲙⲁⲧⲁ	10. The rulers of the peoples gather with the God of Abraham, Because the strong of the earth are God's, quite exalted.

Text 1: *Tablet 2a (Ps. 46:3-10, verse layout)*

(including mathematical exercises) show that this is indeed a 'school text,' presumably from a learning setting with some degree of formality. The absence of *nomina sacra* in the Psalm text on this papyrus might suggest a Jewish context, even at the end of III AD, although it is also quite possible that it is a Christian one, given the inconsistent use of *nomina sacra* in Christian papyri in the early centuries. In either case, it must have been seen as appropriate for a student to practise writing by copying Homer along with a Psalm from the OT.

2. Codex of five wooden tablets including Psalm 146.1-147.1

Paris, Louvre: *T. Louvre* MND 552 L-K-I-H; *LDAB* **2746**; Pack **1619**; M-P^3 **2643.1** + **2307.1**; van Haelst **239**; Rahlfs **2175**; Cribiore **396**. *Ed.pr.* B. Boyaval, Le cahier scolaire d'Aurelios Papnouthion, *ZPE* 17 (1975) 225-35 (pl. VII-VIII); id., Le cahier de Papnouthion et les autres cahiers scolaires grecs, *RA* (1977) 215-33; C. Pernigotti, 2008 *Menandri Sententiae*, Firenze: Olschki 47, no. 16.

This codex consists of five wooden tablets (of an original eight), each measuring 13.5 x 18.0 cm, in the form of a school exercise book belonging to Aurelios Papnouthion. It was found at Memphis, and is dated to IV AD, perhaps early IV. The tablets contain a variety of school exercises in Greek, namely, the teacher's model and Aurelios' copy of five verses of Menander, and Aurelios writing some metrological signs and ten distichs on figures from history and mythology. Another hand wrote some mathematical exercises, and Aurelios again wrote the text of Psalm 146.1-147.1 and eight lines of iambic trimeters. Aurelios' writing is certainly an unsteady ('evolving') student's hand (see pl. in *ed.pr.*). *Nomina sacra* appearing in the Psalm text are $\overline{\kappa\nu}$ (Tab. 4b.1), $\overline{\kappa\omega}$ (Tab. 4b.13), and $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$ (Tab. 5a.2); $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$ has been restored twice (Tab. 4b.9). Presumably, all of the *nomina sacra* were copied from the model; the superior *makra* are far from straight. There is one instance of κυριος written *in plene* (Tab. 4b.3) and restored in full in Tab. 4b.12; ουρανον also occurs in full (Tab. 4b.16); θεω is restored twice (Tab. 4b.2, 15) by the editor. The text appears to have some errors. The text of Ps. 146.1-10 is provided in Text 2 below.

Since there are no definitely Jewish papyri using *nomina sacra*, this papyrus can be classed as 'Christian' with some confidence. If the texts were given to the student by the teacher, the tablet is 'Christian' only in the sense that, like no. 1, the teacher chose to use an OT text, along with a classical one, as part of a student's writing exercises. Hence, if this codex may be taken as testimony to anyone's religious convictions, it would be the teacher's rather than the student's, although it only provides evidence of an environment in which it was permissible for a teacher to use Christian texts in school – so not under Julian – without giving a clear indication of personal convictions. Thus, Boyaval suggests that the Psalm text and the crosses prove 'l'origine chrétienne du cahier' (Boyoval, 1975, 227); but it is not possible to say more than that about either the student or the teacher.

(1b) αινειτε τον] $\overline{\kappa\nu}$ οτι αγαθον ψαλμον =
τω θεω ημω]ν̣ ηδυντιη ενεσις = (2) ηνκο-
δομων ιερ]ουσαλην ο κυριος =
και τας διασπορ]α̣ς του εισδραηλ επισιναξι
(3) = ο ιωμονος το]υ̣ς συντετριμμενουν
την καρδιαν] = κε δισμευον τας τας
αυ]τ̣ον = (4) ο αριθμον πληθι
αστρων = και π]ασιν αυτυ ονοματα καλω-
ν = (5) μεγας ο $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$] η̣μ̣ον κε μεγαλη εισχυς
αυτου = και της] συνεσεος αυτου ουκ ες-
τιν αριθμ]ο̣ς̣ (6) α̣ναλαββανο πρα-
εις ο $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$ = ταπε]ι̣νο̣ν̣ [δ]ε αμαρτωρους
εως της γης =] (7) εξα[ρξ]ατε το $\overline{\kappa\omega}$
εν εξομο]λ̣ο̣γησ̣ι̣ = ψαλλατε
τω θεω ημων] ε̣ν̣ κιθαρα = (8) το περιπ̣-
αλλοντι το]ν ουρανον εν νεφεραις =
τω ετοιμαζο]ντι την γη υετος = τω
εξανατελλο]ντι εν οραισι χορτον =
(9) διδον]τι κτηνεσι τροφην
αυτων = και τοις ν]ε̣ο̣σ̣σ̣ο̣ις {ου} τον κορακον
τοις επικαλ]ουμενους αυτον =
(10) ουκ εν τη δυναστεια το]υ ιππου θελησι =

(1) Praise the LORD! For a melody is a good thing;
to our God may praise be pleasing.
(2) When the LORD builds Jerusalem,
He will also gather in the dispersed of Israel,
(3) he who heals the broken-hearted
And binds up their fractures.
(4) he who counts multitudes of stars,
And gives names to all of them.
(5) Great is our Lord, and great is his strength,
Of his understanding there is no counting,
(6) when the Lord lifts up the meek,
But brings down sinners to the ground.
(7) Sing to the Lord with acknowledgement,
praise him with the lyre,
(8) the one who decks out the heavens with clouds,
who prepares rain for the earth,
who makes grass grow on the hills,
(9) who give to the animals their food,
to the ravens' young who call on him.
(10) He will not want the strength of the horse.

Text 2: *Tablet 4b (MND I, side 2) (Ps. 146.1b-10a) (Ps. 146.10b-147.1 continues on Tablet 5a, + iambic trimeters)*

3. Codex of two wooden tablets including Psalm 92

Paris, Louvre: *T. Louvre* MND 552 E-F; *LDAB* **2747;** van Haelst **205**; Rahlfs **2174**; Cribiore **397**. *Ed.pr.* B. Boyaval, Psaume 92 sur deux tablettes scolaires, *ZPE* 17 (1975) 145-150.

This notebook comprises two partially preserved wooden tablets (7.5 x 19.0 cm) probably from Antinoopolis, again from a school exercise book in Greek, judging from the unsteady ('alphabetic') hand and the way in which the lines are badly ruled and unevenly spaced (see Boyaval, 1975, pl. Vb). The tablet contains the text of Psalm 92. Various *nomina sacra* occur in the text: κ̅ς̅ (F.4), κ̅ε̅ (E.17, F.8), and κ̅υ̅ (F.11); and κ̅ς̅ has been restored twice by the editor (E.1, 5). The superior *makra* are written quite untidily, as in no. 2 above. The text of Psalm 92 is given below:

	Tablet E		Tablet F
	(1b)[ο κ̅ς̅ εβα]cιλευcε[ν]		οι μετεωριc-
	[ενεδυc]ατο =		μοι της θαλαc<cης>
	[ ] . . . . =		θαυμαστος εν
	[ενεδυ]cατο		ὑψηλοις ο κ̅ς̅ (5) τα
5.	[κ̅ς̅ δυ]ναμιν	5.	μαρτυρια cου
	[και περι]εζωcατο		επιστοθηcαν
	[και γαρ ε]cτερεο-		[c]φ[ο]δ[ρα = τω] οικο cου
	[cεν την ο]ικου[μ]		[πρεπει αγιαcμα] κ̅ε̅
	[ενην ητι]ς ου ςα-		και το κ[α]τοι-
10.	[λευθη]cεται =	10.	[κ]ειν με εν οι-
	(2) [ετοιμο]c ο θρ-		[κ]ω κ̅υ̅ εις μα-
	ονος cου απο		[κ]ροτητα ημε-
	τοτε = απο		[ρ]ων = (vacat)
	του εωνος		(vacat)
15.	cου ει = (3) επηρα-		
	ν οι ποταμοι		
	κ̅ε̅ επηραν υ		
	ποταμοι φο-		
	νην αυτον =		
20.	(4) απο φονον ηδα-		
	τον πολλο-		
	υ = θαυμαστοι		

(1) The Lord reigned, he was dressed splendidly
he was dressed in power and robed himself;
for he established the world, which will not be shaken.

(2) Your throne was ready from that time,
you are from eternity.

(3) The rivers, Lord, lifted up
the rivers lifted up their voices.

(4) Because of the voices of many waters,
the billows of the sea are amazing,
the Lord is amazing on high.

(5) Your testimonies are quite true,
holiness is fitting for your house, Lord,
for a long time.

Here again, the presence of *nomina sacra* would normally be seen as indicating a 'Christian' text of some kind. Indeed, Boyaval suggests these tablets too were written 'en milieu chrétien' (Boyaval, 1975, 146). Hence, these wooden tablets provide us with a third clear example of a 'school text,' presumably from a formal learning setting, in which copying a Psalm was seen by the instructor as an appropriate writing exercise.

4. Papyrus codex - John 10.7-13.38

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library: *P. Beatty Ac.* 1390; *LDAB* **2763**; M-P^3 **2320.13**. *Ed.pr.* W.M. Brashear, W.-P. Funk, J.M. Robinson, R. Smith 1990 *The Chester Beatty Codex Ac. 1390,* Leuven: Peeters.

This papyrus codex, dated mid III – mid IV, contains mathematical school exercises in Greek and then John 10.7-13.38 in Coptic (sub-Akhmimic). Hence, the papyrus does contain a school text, as with no. 1 above (*T.Bodl. Gr.Inscr.* 3019), and that part of it presumably derives from a formal learning setting of some kind, but what of the text of John 10.17-13:38 which follows? The text of the first page with the Gospel section is provided in Text 3.

In assessing this codex, it is important to note that *m.* 2, the hand in which the Gospel text is written, is not the same as *m.* 1, the hand in which the mathematical exercises were written first. The Coptic handwriting is described as 'casual' by the editors (Funk, Smith, in Brashear et al., 59), but also as consistent with the work of a professional scribe accustomed to preparing documents (Funk, Smith, 60), although 'rather incompetent or, at least sometimes, extremely inattentive' (Funk, Smith, 64). A number of inconsistencies and a certain unevenness in layout, as well as frequent corrections and omissions, add to the 'casual' effect of the Gospel section, but the editors' assessment of the hand implies that this second section of the papyrus is probably not a 'school text' at all, even though the first section is. Further, *nomina sacra* are always provided with a superior *makron* and, although only a limited range of these are used (**ιc̄, πєχc̄, πєχρc̄, πєπνα̅**) (Funk, Smith, 76), this would seem to indicate a Christian setting of some kind, rather than a Jewish one, but not necessarily a learning context. Hence, while the codex contains school material (mathematical exercises), the gospel section is probably not a 'school text' in any meaningful sense, since it seems to have been added on blank pages at a later time. The hesitation on the part of *LDAB* expressed by adding a question mark after 'school text' is thus entirely deserved. More likely, someone wishing to produce a copy of this text used a codex with spare pages which was at hand.

9 lines: conclusion of mathematical exercises

10. ⲛⲧⲉⲛⲉⲥⲁⲩ (8) ⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲉⲓ ⲥⲉⲛⲥⲁⲛϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲛⲉ
ⲁⲩⲱ ⲥⲉⲛⲥⲁⲛⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲡⲉⲛ̀ⲙⲁⲛ′ⲉⲥⲁⲩ ⲥⲱⲧⲙ ⲁⲣⲁⲩ
(9) ⲁ
ⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉ ⲡ̄ⲣⲣⲟ ⲉⲣⲉⲱⲁⲟⲩⲉⲉⲓ ⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲥⲟⲩⲛ ⲉ̀ⲓⲧⲟⲟⲧϥ
ϥⲛⲁⲟⲩϫⲉⲉⲓ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲉϥⲛⲁⲃⲱⲕ ⲁⲥⲟⲩⲛ ⲛ̄ϥⲓ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲛϥ
ⲟⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲁ̣ⲙⲁⲛⲉ (10) ⲡⲥⲁⲛϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲙⲁϥⲓ ⲉⲧⲃⲉⲗⲁⲩⲉ
ⲉⲓⲙⲏⲧⲓ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ ⲉϥⲁϫⲓⲟⲩⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛϥⲱⲟⲩⲟⲩⲧ ⲛϥ
ⲥ̀ϯ̣ⲥⲉⲕⲟ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲛⲧⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ ⲉϥⲛⲁϫⲓ ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲱⲥ ⲁⲩⲱ
ⲛ̄ⲥⲉϫⲓⲟⲩⲥⲟ (11) ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲱ̄ⲥ̄ ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩϥ ⲡⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲛⲁ
ⲛⲟⲩϥ ⲱⲁϥⲕⲟⲩ ⲧⲉϯ[ⲩ]ϫⲏ ϩⲁⲛⲛⲉϥⲉⲥⲁⲩ (12) ⲡϫⲁⲉⲓⲃⲉⲕⲉ
ⲁⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲱⲱⲥ ⲉⲛ̀ ⲛ̀ⲉ ⲡⲉⲉⲓ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛⲱϥ ⲉⲛ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲉⲥⲁⲩ
(13) ϫⲉ ⲟⲩϫⲁⲉⲓⲃⲉⲕⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉϥⲣⲁⲟⲩⲱ ⲉⲛ ⲡⲉ
ϩⲁⲛⲛⲉⲥⲁⲩ (14) ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩϥ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲧ̀ⲥⲁⲩ
ⲛⲉⲉ ⲛⲛⲱⲉⲓ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲱⲉⲓ ⲥⲉⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲙⲁⲉⲓ (15) ⲕⲁⲧⲁⲑⲉ ⲉⲧⲉ
ⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲙⲁⲉⲓ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲧ̀ⲥⲁⲩⲛⲉ ⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ
ⲁⲩⲱ ⲧⲛⲁⲕⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲁϯⲩϫⲏ ϩⲁⲛⲉⲥⲁⲩ (16) ⲟⲩⲛⲧⲏⲓ ⲁⲉ
ⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ ϩⲉⲛⲕⲉⲉⲥⲁⲩ ⲉⲥⲉⲛⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲛⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓ
ⲁϩⲉⲥⲁⲩ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲉⲧⲛⲙⲉⲩ ⲁⲛ ⲧⲛⲁⲥⲁ̀ⲩ′ϩⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉ
ⲥⲱⲧⲙ ⲁⲧⲁⲥⲙⲏ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲉⲓⲁϩⲉⲥⲁⲩ ⲛ̄
ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲱⲱⲥ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲧ (17) ⲉⲧⲃⲉⲡⲉⲉⲓ ⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲙⲁⲉⲓ
ⲉ ⲙⲁⲉⲓ ϫⲉ ⲧⲛⲁⲕⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲁϯⲩϫⲏ ϫⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ ⲁⲛ
ⲉⲓⲛⲁϫⲓⲧⲥ (18) ⲙⲛ̄ⲗ̀ⲩⲉⲉ ⲫⲓ ⲙⲁⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲟⲧ ⲁⲗⲗⲁ

of the sheep. (8) All who came are thieves and robbers, but the shepherds did not listen to them.

(9) I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. (10) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (11) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (12) But the hired hand who is not the shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees - and the wolf snatches them and scatters them - (13) because he is a hired hand and the sheep do not matter to him. (14) I am the good shepherd, and I know my own and my own know me, (15) just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold; I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. (17) This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. (18) No one takes it from me, but

Text 4: *fol. 2v, mathematical exercise + John 10:7b-18a*

5. Single papyrus leaf - Romans 1.1-7 (Fig. 1)

Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Library: SM 2218; *LDAB* **3025**; van Haelst **490**; Cribiore **302**; Aland, *Rep. I* NT 10 (= Var 33) = $\mathfrak{P}^{10}$. *P. Oxy.* II 209. Cf. G. Cavallo, H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period A.D. 300-800* (*BICS Suppl.* 47; London: University of London Institute of Classical Studies, 1987) 8, pl. 1a; K. Jaroš, *Das Neue Testament nach den ältesten griechischen Handschriften* (CD-Rom) (Mainz: Ruhpolding, 2006) 4941-46, no. 3.8; Anne-Marie Luijendikj, A New Testament Papyrus and Its Documentary Context: An Early Christian Writing Exercise from the Archive of Leonides (*P.Oxy.* II 209/ $\mathfrak{P}^{10}$), *JBL* 129 (2010) 575-96.

Figure 1: *P. Oxy. II 209, upper portion only (reproduced by permission of Horton Library, Harvard University)* http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/7456384

(1) παυλος• δουλος χρυ ιηυ κλητος αποστολος• [αφ]ωρις
μενος εις ευαγ'γελιον θυ (2) ο [π]ρο[ε]πηγ'γειλατο δια τ̣[ω]ν πρω
φητων αυτου εν γρ[α]φαις αγ'ειαις (3) περι του υυ αυτου του
γενομενου εκ σπ[ε]ρματος δαυδ' κατα σαρκα (4) του οριcθεν
5 τος υυ θυ εν δυναμει κατα πνα αγιωccυνης εξ ανας
τασεως νεκρων ι̣ηυ χρυ του κυ ημων (5) δι ου ε[λαβο]
μεν χαριν και α[π]οστολων εις υπακωον πιστεως εν
πασι τοις εθνες[ι] υπερ του ονοματος [. (6) . . .] ιηυ χρυ (7) πασιν
τους ουσιν εν [ρ]ωμη αγαπητοις θυ κλητοις [αγ]ιοις
10 χαρις ημιν και ε[ιρ]ηνη απο θυ προc ημων και κυ χρυ ιηυ

[+ blank space, 2 lines in documentary hand, space, χιτ – m. 2]

(1) Paul, servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle; set apart for the gospel of God, (2) which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy writings (3) about his son, who came from David physically, (4) but who was designed Son of God in power by the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, (5) through whom we have received grace and apostleship for the obedience of faith among all the gentiles, for the sake of his name [(6)]– Jesus Christ. (7) To all in Rome, who are God's beloved ones, called as saints, be grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Christ Jesus.

Text 5: *Text on the recto of* P.Oxy. *II 209 Rom.1: 1-7.*

This manuscript consists of an almost complete single papyrus leaf (19.9 x 25.1 cm), containing Romans 1.1-7 in Greek (*m.* 1) and two other lines of cursive writing (*m.* 2) mentioning a name but otherwise without clear sense in the large blank space below that on the recto; only one word and some letters (*m.* 1) occur on the verso. The papyrus is dated to early IV AD, and comes from an archive. The following *nomina sacra* appear on the recto: χρυ (ll. 1, 6, 8, 10), ιηυ (ll. 1, 6, 8, 11), θυ (ll. 2, 5, 9, 10), υυ (ll. 3, 5), πνα (l. 5), κυ (ll. 6, 10), and προς (l. 10). The word δαυδ' appears (virtually) *in plene* without a makron (l. 4). A *sicilicus* occurs, as commonly, after a final consonant (δαυδ') or between two identical consonants (-γ'γ-, l. 2), but unusually after γ mid-word (l. 3). The text on the recto of the papyrus is given in Text 5 above (Luijendikj, 576-77).

On the basis of the large uneven ('evolving') hand of *m.* 1, the editors suggest that this papyrus is a writing exercise, and hence a learning ('school') text, as does Luijendijk (2010). While this is probably correct, it is less clear than for nos 1-3 what that learning context was, since it seems to be an isolated sheet. Even if the holes on the left side of the recto are binding holes, which would suggest that it originally belonged to a codex, and while the *nomina sacra* indicate a Christian context of some kind, we can be no more specific about its Christian context than about its learning context. In this case, 'school' is perhaps more specific a label than the evidence allows.

6. Papyrus codex with Greek-Latin lexicon of Pauline epistles and Greek grammar

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library: Ac. 1499; *LDAB* **3030**; *CPP* **0525**; M-P^3 **2161.1**; van Haelst **511**; Aland, *Rep. I*, NT 99 = $\mathfrak{P}^{99}$. *Ed.pr.*: A. Wouters, 1988 *The Chester Beatty codex AC 1499. A Graeco-Latin Lexicon of the Pauline Epistles and a Greek Grammar*, Leuven: Peeters.

This large papyrus codex (13.6 x 16.8 cm) consists of 51 folios, of which 34 are blank, and dates from IV AD, according to the editor. The codex is a language study book, containing the passive conjugation of the verbs ποιέω, βοάω, χρυcόω and πλέκω (13 pages), along with *lemmata* mostly taken from the Greek text of 2 Corinthians (275 *lemmata*), Galatians (85), Ephesians (65) and Romans (1) with Latin glosses (10 pages), and a Latin alphabet. Only one hand is evident throughout the codex, writing with thick upright, mostly regular strokes, perhaps that of an accomplished student or an experienced copyist (Wouters, 1988, 169-91). A number of errors and corrections appear in the codex. A sample of the lexicon part of the codex is given below (fol. 11r, ll. 1-5).

(fr. 11r – Greek-Latin lexicon of 2 Cor 9.2-11.8, 5.13-6.3)
Lines 1-5 (words from 2 Cor 9.2-7)
(2) παρασκευασθαι : praeparata est ″ [... απο περυc?]ιν″
priore ″ ηερεθειcε : provabit (3) ″ κα̣[υχημα : gloria]ṃur ″
(4) απαρασκευαστουc : ïnparatos (5) ″ η[γηcα]μην : exhisti-
mabi ″ προcελθωcι : pergent ″ [προκαταρ]τιcωcιν : praeparent ″
5. πλεονεξιαν : abaritiam (7) ″ εκαcτ̣[oc:] unusquisque ″ προ-
(+ 28 lines to complete page)

(2) to be prepared: *praeparata est*; [since last ye?]ar
priore has stirred up: *provabit* (3) b[oasting: *gloria*]*mur*
(4) unprepared: *inparatos* (5) I c[onsider]ed: *exhisti-*
mabi; they might go to: *pergent*; they [arrange in advance]:*praeparent*
5. greed: *abaritiam*; (7) each: *unusquisque*; dec-

This codex belongs to a learning context of some kind, but it is by no means clear that this was part of a formal 'school'. It is quite possibly the work of a private student, either wishing to extend his linguistic ability in Latin (or Greek) or to understand some of the Pauline letters. Given the centrality and simplicity of the words that occur as *nomina sacra* in the texts excerpted, it is not surprising that they do not occur in this codex, either as *nomina sacra* or *in plene*. Wouters rightly concludes that the codex belonged to 'a Christian milieu' (Wouters, 1988, 167), but it is clear that the writer wished either to extend his linguistic ability in Latin (or Greek) or to understand some of the Pauline letters. The 'school' setting is quite unclear in this case, however the Christian context is apparent.

7. Papyrus fragment of roll - Psalm 1.1-2

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana: inv. PL II 34; *LDAB* **3136**; Cribiore **295**; Treu **85a**; Rahlfs **2158**. R. Pintaudi, Frammento di manuale scolastico (LXX, Ps 1, 1-2), *ZPE* 38 (1980) 259-60. Cf. *P. Laur.* 4.140; P. Orsini 2005 *Manoscritti in maiuscola biblica,* Rome: University of Cassino, 80-81

This small papyrus fragment (4.6 x 3.9 cm) comes from a roll, since it contains parts of Psalm 1.1-2 in Greek on the recto and the verso is blank. The date was given as III AD in the *ed. pr.*, although more recently it has been dated early V AD (Orsini, 80-81). The hand is a practised uncial, some suggest a teacher's hand (see below), and part of a text given to a student in order to practise dividing it into syllables, since the dots which do so were written after the text. One *nomen sacrum*, κ]υ̅, has been partially restored (l. 4), and none appear *in plene*.

(Recto – Psalm 1.1-2)

– – – – – – –

(1) Μακαριος ανηρ, ος ου]κε·πο·ρευ[θη εν βουλη ασεβων
και εν οδω αμαρτ]ω·λων·ου·κε[στη
και επι καθεδραν λ]οι·μων·ου·κ[εκαθισεν
(2) αλλ η εν τω νομω κ]υ̅·το·θε·λη[·]μ[α αυτου
5. και εν τω νομω αυτου] με·λε·τη[σει ημερας και νυκτος
] . . . . . [

– – – – – – – –

(1) Blessed is the man, who does n[ot] li[ve by the counsel of the ungodly
and in the way of sin]ners does not st[and
and in the seat of the p]ernicious does not [sit
(2) but in the law of the L]ord is [his] will
And on his law] he will medita[te day and night

Figure 2: *P. Laur. 4.140 (reproduced by permission of Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence)*

While this papyrus could derive from a 'school book,' in view of the expert hand I would suggest that it is a fragment of a literary roll which was reused by being given to a student to practise syllable division. Again, the question mark after 'school text' on *LDAB* is warranted. This roll may have been a re-used Jewish copy, but in this case the use of the *nomen sacrum* would be highly unusual. Thus, it is more likely to be a 'Christian' copy, perhaps taken from a worn-out codex and used for an exercise in syllable division, unless perhaps it was a copy annotated for public reading.

8. Wooden tablet - Psalm 12.3-5

Milan, Università Statale, *T. Mil. Vogl.* inv. 5; *LDAB* **3172**; Rahlfs **2224**

This unpublished wooden tablet with Psalm 12.3-5 in Greek has the words separated by oblique lines, and the syllables marked off, presumably using the Psalm text as a writing exercise, as in nos 1-3 above, although again it is possible that it has been marked for public reading.[5] Since it has not yet been published, and was only described briefly by Bucking, it should simply be noted tentatively here as a school text from IV AD, belonging to a Christian context, in which the Psalm served this purpose.

9. Papyrus codex - Psalm 32.9-15

Vienna, Austrian National Library, *P. Vindob.* G 29274; *LDAB* **3215**; M-P^3 **2644.2**; van Haelst **136**; Rahlfs **2090**; Cribiore **403**; Aland, *Rep. I*, Var 8. *Ed.pr.*: P. Sanz, *MPER* N.S. 4.24

This manuscript consists of a complete miniature papyrus codex made of four double sheets, each measuring 9.5 x 5.0 cm and dated to IV/V AD. Most pages contain a christogram in some form (☩ or ☦) at the beginning, and the codex contains the Greek text of Psalm 32.9-15 (*m.* 1) and what might be a biblical citation in Coptic (*m.* 2) on p. 16; *m.* 3 then wrote some alphabetic exercises, part of Psalm 32, and then drew a stick figure. The quite unsteady hands are well described as 'evolving' (*m.* 1, *m*. 2) and 'zero-grade' (*m.* 3) (see Cribiore, 1996, pl. LXXV-VI). *Nomina sacra* used are κ̅ς̅ (1r.5, 2r.6, 2v.6, 3v.3, 5v.3), κ̅υ̅ (1v.5), and θ̅ς̅ (2r.6). Like the letters, the superior *makra* are quite uneven. On the other hand ουρανου is written *in plene* (2v.4, 3v.1), as well as ανθρωπειω (for ανθρωπων) (3r.3-4) and ανθρωπω[ν] (3v.6). Some errors have been made in the writing. A sample of the text appears below (fol. 1v), along with an image of the double folio of which it forms a part.

(fol. 1v) Psalm 32.10b-11b:

β	2
☦ αθετει δε λογις	☦ but he thwarts the thou-
μους λαων και	ghts of peoples and
αθετει βουλας	he thwarts the counsels
αρχο᾽ν᾽των. (11) η δε βου	of rulers. (11) But the coun-
5. λη του κυ̅ ̅εις τον	sel of the Lord for-
αιωνα μενει	ever remains
λογις[μοι]	thou[ghts]

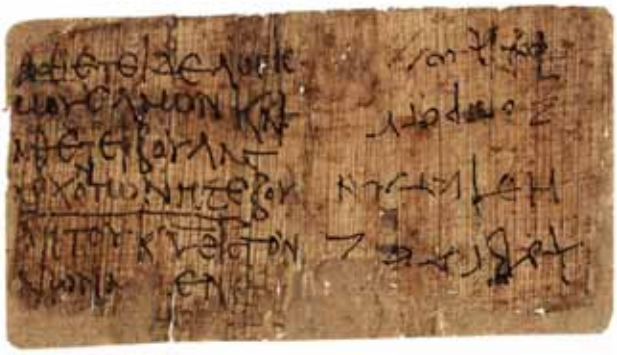


Figure 3: *P. Vindob. G 29274r (fol. 1v, 8v) (photograph courtesy of Austrian National Library)*

Sanz notes that this notebook gives us 'einen Einblick in den Elementarunterricht der griechischen Schule im christlichen Ägypten' (Sanz, 46). This small papyrus 'notebook,' then, appears to have been written by beginning students, one of whom was making their own copy of a Psalm text, presumably for private use. In this sense, it is from a Christian setting, given the nature of the text and the presence of the *nomina sacra*, but it was written by quite elementary writers, and it would be unlikely that the context could have been a 'school' in any formal sense.

10. Fragment of roll - Psalm 11.7-14.4

London, British Library: Pap. 230; *LDAB* **3473**; Cribiore **297** + **298**; van Haelst **109** + M-P^3 **1245**; Rahlfs **2019**; Aland, *Rep. I* **AT 51**. *Ed.pr.*: (anon.), *Athenaeum* 3489 (July-Dec, 1894) 319-21. See also F.G. Kenyon, *Facsimiles of Biblical Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1900) 1; P.Lond.Lit. 207(r) + P.Lond.Lit. 255(v). See also D. Barker, The *Nomina Sacra* in P.Lond.Lit. 207, *Pap. Congr. XXIV* (2007) 93-100

This papyrus manuscript measures 24.5 x 25.7 cm, and comes from III-IV AD. It is a fragment of a roll containing the Greek text of Ps. 11.7-14.4 (written stichometrically) on the recto (*m.* 1) (see Barker, 100), apparently re-used for Isocrates, *Demon.* 26-28 in a less-skilled hand on the verso (*m.* 2). The Psalm text has high points added, probably as syllable dividers, by the same hand as the Isocrates text (*m*. 2). In the Psalm text there is some use of *diaeresis*, *sicilicus* between double letters, and the following *nomina sacra*: κῡ (col. 1.1), κε (col. 1.4; col.2.27), κω (col. 1.26), κν (col. 2.15; col. 2.22), κc (col. 2.19), ανπν and θν (col. 1.35); and κε and θc are restored (col. 1.16), as well as θc (col. 1.30), κc (col. l.30), κυ (col. l.27) and κν (col. 2.37); but δαυειτ (for δαυειδ) appears *in plene* without *makron* (col. l.11; and δαυειδ, col. 1.28; col. 2.26), as do ανθ[ρω]πω[ν] (col. 1.9), θεου (col. 2.9), cωτηρ[ιον] (col. 2.20), and [ιcρα]ηλ / ιcραηλ (col. 2.21, 25). A number of mistakes in the text are corrected by *m.* 1, e.g., ανπν is crossed out and θν added (col. 1.35); but some are left uncorrected. A representative sample of the text, as well as an image of the recto is given Text 10 below.

Cribiore suggests that a teacher may have written the recto of this papyrus as a model, since the large chancery hand does not indicate the work of a student. However, the columnar layout is perhaps more likely to show that it was originally a literary roll containing certain psalms, which was then reused for the Isocrates text on the verso, and later again for a student's exercise of syllable division. If so, it was not originally a 'school text' used for practice in syllable division, but a Psalm roll reused for a literary text, and then again reused in a learning context, with no way of knowing what that learning context was and whether the label 'school' is appropriate. The use of *nomina sacra*, admittedly somewhat inconsistent, can be taken to indicate a Christian context, rather than a Jewish one.

(7) [τα] λογια κῡ λογεια' αγνα	(7) [The] sayings of the Lord are holy sayings
[αργυριον π]επυρωμενον δοκιμον τη γη	[silver] refined by fire, tested by soil
[κεκ]αταρισμενον επταπλασιον (ω above o)	Clean[ed] seven times
(8) [c]υ κε φυλαξεις ημας	(8) You, Lord, will guard us
[και διατηρης]εις ημας απο της γενεας ταυτης	and protect us from this generation
[και εις] τον αιωνα	and forever.
(9) [κυκλω οι α]cεβις περιπατου[cι]ν	(9) [All around the un]godly are walking
[κατα τ]ο υψος' cου επολυ[ωρησας] τους	According to] your exaltation you ca[re] for
[υιο]υς των ανθ[ρω]πω[ν]	the sons of men.
(+ 28 lines to complete column)	

Text 10: *Col. 1, lines 1-9 (Psalm 11.7-9; ed.pr.)*

Figure 4: *P.Lond.Lit. 207r. Reproduced with permission of British Library. © British Library Board (P. Lond. inv. 230r)*

11. Papyrus sheet including words possibly Christian

Cologny, Fondation Bodmer, P. Bodmer LI; LDAB **5269**; *CPP* **290**; M-P^3 **2741.02**. See A. di Bitonto-Kasser, P. Bodmer LI recto: esercizio di divisione sillabica, *MH* 55 (1988) 112-18

This poorly preserved papyrus sheet (12.7 x 20.0 cm) contains an alphabetic word list in Greek as an exercise in syllable division on the recto, and an unidentified literary or para-literary fragment on the verso. There are no words that might have been written as *nomina sacra*. The syllables are divided by an oblique stroke and a blank space. The text on the recto is given below.

P. Bodmer LI (recto)

	Col. 1		Col. 2
	→		
	[ι⸗ ± 1-2]c [	‖	λ]ου⸗ḳaḍ [‖
	[ι]⸗ṗọ̣ν	‖	[λ]ῃ[⸗]νοc [‖
	[ι⸗]κων	‖	[λ]ẹ̣υ⸗κῃḍ [‖
	[ι⸗ ± 1-2]ọc	‖	[λα]ḳ⸗ḳoc [‖
5.	[ι⸗]να ‖ ℒ	‖	[λ]ῃ⸗σ̣τῃc [‖
	[ꝑ—]———ꝑ	‖	ꝑ———ꝑ ‖
	[κ ± 1-2 ⸗]μ̣α	‖ //	μαρ⸗κoc [‖
	[κ ± 1-2 ⸗]ρ̣ọc	‖//	μω⸗ροc [‖
	[κ ± 1-2]⸗ṗoc	‖	μ[ι]⸗μ̣oc [‖
	[κ ± 1-2 ⸗]ṗῃ	‖	μι⸗νọc [‖
10.	[κ ± 1-2]⸗ṿoc	‖	μẹ̣⸗λọc [‖
	[κ ± 1-2 ⸗]ṗoc	‖	μ[. ⸗]κρο[c] ‖
	[κ ± 1-2 ⸗]ḳ . . .	[‖]	μą⸗τυc ‖
	[κ ? ± 3-4] . . .	[‖]	μῃ⸗κoc ‖
		[‖]	. ọ[.] . [.] . ? [‖]

	Col. 1		Col. 2
→			
	[i⸗ ± 1-2]s [	‖	l]ου⸗ḳaṣ [‖
	[i]⸗ṗọn	‖	[l]ệ[⸗]nos [‖
	[i⸗]kôn	‖	[l]ẹu⸗kệṣ [‖
	[i⸗ ± 1-2]ọs	‖	[la]ḳ⸗ḳos [‖
	[i⸗]na ‖ ℒ	‖	[l]ệ⸗ṣṭês [‖
	[ꝑ—]———ꝑ	‖	ꝑ———ꝑ ‖
	[k ± 1-2 ⸗]mạ	‖ //	mạr⸗kos [‖
	[k ± 1-2 ⸗]ṛọs	‖//	mô⸗ros [‖
	[k ± 1-2]⸗ṗos	‖	m[i]⸗mọs [‖
	[k ± 1-2 ⸗]ṗê	‖	mi⸗nọs [‖
	[k ± 1-2]⸗ṇos	‖	me⸗lọs [‖
	[k ± 1-2 ⸗]ṗos	‖	m[. ⸗][kro[s] ‖
	[k ± 1-2 ⸗]ḳ . . .	[‖]	mạr⸗tus ‖
	[k ? ± 3-4] . . .	[‖]	mệ⸗kos ‖
		[‖]	. ọ[.] . [.] . ? [‖]

Thus, this papyrus sheet does appear to be a school text, but is written in a large, confident, although somewhat irregular, hand, and thus a 'school hand' but not that of a beginner (see di Bitonto-Kasser, pl. 1). Some of the words in col. 2 have links with the New Testament (e.g., [λ]ου ⁄ ⳨ας, μαρ⁄κος, μαρ⁄τυς), and on this basis the editor suggested that the papyrus may have been written 'in ambiente cristiano' (di Bitonto-Kasser, 117). However, these words do not definitely indicate a Christian context, and others on the papyrus are not specifically 'Christian' (e.g., [λ]η⁄ⲍⲧης, [λ]ⲉⲩ⁄κης). Therefore, the papyrus may have been a 'Christian text' but, if so, only in a very tenuous sense, although its reuse for the binding of *P. Bodmer XXIII* (Isaiah 47-66, Coptic) may strengthen this ascription. On the whole, this papyrus sheet belongs to a learning context, but may not be Christian.

12. Alphabetic list of names with Old Testament names in Greek

London, University College, Petrie Museum 31896; *LDAB* **5680**; Cribiore **112**; *CPP* **291**; M-P³ **2700.1**. *Ed.Pr.*: *P. Rainer Unterricht Kopt.* (*MPER* N.S. 18) 1990, 104. Cf. *O. Crum* 435; *O. Petrie* 410.

This incomplete ostracon measures 10.6 x 19.3 cm, and is dated to IV AD. It contains 9 lines of an alphabetic list of proper names (none complete), divided into syllables by dashes at mid-letter level, and written in a clear hand. While the hand could be a teacher's, or a student's 'rapid' (practised) hand engaging in a writing exercise (see Cribiore, 1996, pl. XII, no. 112), the content would seem to indicate the latter. The text on the ostracon, as well as a photograph, follows:

MPER 18.104 (*O. Petrie* 410)

]- χος	]- chos
]ο-γος	]o-gos
ζ]η-νω-νος	z]ê-nô-nos
ζω-ι-λος	zô-i-los
5. ζ]α-βου-λων	z]a-bou-lôn
ζ]αν-σου-χος	z]an-sou-chos
ζα]κ-χαι-ος	za]k-chai-os
]ας	]as
]ανς	]aês

This ostracon is likely to have been a student's writing exercise, and in this sense a 'school text,' without indicating the formality of the learning context. However, the basis on which it is called 'Christian,' i.e., two reconstructed names occurring in the Old Testament, – ζ]αβουλων (frequent), ζα]κχαιος (2 Macc 10:19) – is rather flimsy. It could be Jewish, but its setting in IV AD Egypt probably tips the balance in favour of it being written in a Christian context of some kind, although without any indication of the Christian convictions of the writer, or the teacher (if there was one).

Figure 5: *O. Petrie 410 (used with permission of Petrie Museum, University College, London)*

13. Papyrus sheet with Old and New Testament names

Paris, Louvre: inv. E 10285; *LDAB* **5736**; *CPP* **295**; M-P³ **2741.07**. *Ed.Pr.*: W. Clarysse, A. Wouters, Un exercise de syllabification chrétien, in *P. Bingen* (2000) 85-93, no.17; F. Morelli, La raccolta dei P. Bingen, *CdE* 77 (2002) 312-21

This papyrus sheet measures 19.5 x 15.5 cm, and is dated by the editors to the second half of IV AD, although Morelli has dated it later (V-VI AD) (Morelli, 314). It contains a syllabification exercise on the recto, with spacing between syllables, but the verso is blank. It is written in the unsteady ('evolving') hand of a student (see Clarysse, Wouters, 2000, pl. 10, no. 17). There are no words that could have been written as *nomina sacra*.

Like the previous papyrus, this one contains some words that may imply a Christian context (e.g., αδαμ, αβελ, αcηρ, δαυειδ, κηφας, παυλος), although some of these could just as easily indicate a Jewish setting. Again, it includes a range of words that are not specifically Christian (e.g., γιγας, γερων, ορος, υδωρ) and some non-Christian (e.g., ορφευς, καστωρ). However, the predominance of names familiar from the OT and NT, as well as some known from early martyr stories, especially the use of κηφας, would seem to indicate a Christian context for this school exercise.

P. Bingen 17

	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
	Α δαμ	γι γας	Θα μαρ	ξι φος	το μος
	Ạ βελ	γαλα	Θε κλα	Ξερ ξης	Τυ ρος
	[Α] cηρ	γερων	Ï cακ	ξε νος	υρ ταξ
	[Α] χωρ	γαụρας	Ï ωβ	ξυ στηρ	υ μνος
5.	[Α] μως	γο νων	ï θμος	ξαν θος	υ πνος
	[Β]α ρακ	δω ρον	ï χνος	ο ρος	υ λη
	Βα ρουχ	Δο μνος	ïπ πος	ο φις	υ δωρ
	[Β]ι κτωρ	δη μος	Κα στωρ	ορ μος	Φλω ρος
	Βẹ ωρ	δου κος	Κη φας	Ορ φευς	Φαυ στος
10.	[Β]ῃ σας	Δαυ ειδ	κολ πος	ορ κος	Φηστος
		Ε νωχ	Κλη μης	Πετρος	Φοι βη
		Ε νῳς	κρι κος	Παυλος	Φα ραν
		Ερ μη	Λα βαν	ποντος	Χεβρῳν
		Ε σδρα	Λα μεχ	Πουπλος	Χωρηβ
		Ẹ . [.] .	[ ] .	Προκλος	

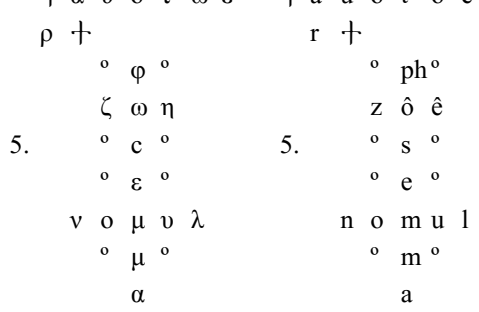
	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
	A dam	giant	Thamar	sword	sharp
	Ạ bel	milk	Thecla	Xerxes	Tyre
	[A] sêr	old (man)	Isaac	foreign	mouse(?)
	[A] chor	haughty	Job	engraving tool	hymn
5.	[A] môs	children	neck(?)	yellow	sleep
	[B]a rak	gift	sole	mountain	forest
	Ba rouch	Domnos	horse	snake	water
	[B]i ktôr	populace	Castor	chain	Phloros
	Bẹ ôr	leader	Cephas	Orpheus	Phaustos
10.	[B]ệ sas	David	chest	oath	Festos
		Enoch	Clemens	Peter	Phoebe
		Enosh	ring	Paul	Pharan
		Hermes(?)	Laban	sea	Hebron
		Ezra	Lamech	Publios	Horeb
		Ẹ . [.] .	[.	Proclos	

14. Nine wooden tablets with Christian words and symbols

Berlin, Egyptian Museum P. 14000: *LDAB* **5786**; M-P^3 **2737**; Cribiore **404**. *Ed.Pr.*: E. Ziebarth 1913^2 *Aus der antiken Schule*, Bonn: Marcus und Weber, 29-31, no. 48; G. Plaumann, *Amtliche Berichte aus den königlichen Kunst-sammlungen* 34 (1913) 214-19; C. Austin 1973 *Comicorum Graecorum fragmenta in papyris reperta*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 333, no. 319; C. Pernigotti, *Menandri Sententiae* (Firenze: Olschki, 2008) 48, no. *889; *SB* 3.6215-18

This codex of wooden tablets (9.5 x 17.5 cm), dated IV/V (but likely later, according to Cribiore, 1996), probably had more than the nine that are extant. They contain school exercises in the form of writing and mathematical exercises, syllable divisions, numbers, a teacher's model of a maxim (of Menander), symbols, some individual letters, as well as two words (φως, ζωη) and the word εμμανομυλ (= εμμανουηλ), both arranged in the form of a cross. The student's hand is always uneven, even though the letters are confidently formed – hence, 'evolving' (See Cribiore, 1996, pl. LXXVII-VIII). There are no words that might have been abbreviated as *nomina sacra*.

(*T. Berol.* 14000: Tab. 3, inside)



Thus, these tablets clearly belonged to a school exercise book, and the writer seems to have used φως with ζωη as a symbol for Christ, and then εμμανομυλ under that – 'God is with us' (Plaumann). Hence, the vocabulary (especially the common combination of φως and ζωη), symbols and layout show that this school text did belong to a Christian milieu in which both classical and Christian texts were used as writing exercises, although little can be said about what that context was, or if teacher or student had Christian convictions.

15. List of words containing Old and New Testament names

Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms: *Coptic Inscr*. 207; *LDAB* **5825**; Cribiore **115**; *CPP* **287**. See *O. Theb. Copt.* 48; *P. Rainer Unterricht Kopt.* (*MPER* N.S. 18) 232

This ostracon measures 8.2 x 13.5 cm, and is dated IV-VI AD. It has Greek nouns written on both sides, divided into syllables, with other letters on the recto. Some names appear on the verso. It is clearly a 'learning text' of some kind, going on the presence of developing word patterns. The hand is quite unpractised ('alphabetic'), with letters of various shapes and sizes (see Cribiore, 1996, pl. XIII, no. 115). The name δα-υειτ is written for δα-υειδ, not being abbreviated as a *nomen sacrum*.

MPER N.S. 18.232

	Recto	Verso		Recto	Verso
	βο μος	μαρκος		altar	Markos
	βα βας	μηνα		father?	Mena
	βι ος	μηẹοαος		life	Mêeoaos(?)
	γιγ γας	ματχο		giant	Matcho(?)
5.	γα μος	(vacat)	5.	wedding	(vacat)
	γα τος			vessel	
	γε δων			Gideon	
	δα υειτ			David	
	δο ρον			gift	
10.	δ.ρ . .		10.	d.r . .	
	. η. . .			.ê..	

This learning text has one word from the OT (δα υειτ), and possibly from the NT (μαρκοc), but the use of μαρκοc would, if anything, indicate a Christian context, rather than a Jewish one. However, little can be said about the nature of that Christian 'learning context,' except that OT and NT words were able to be used.

16. *Limestone ostracon containing 'Christian words'*

Cairo, Egyptian Museum: JE 25/7/48/1; *LDAB* **5872**; *CPP* **320**. *Ed.Pr.* G. Wagner, *O. Bahria*. 1. Cf. *SB* 20.14885.

This ostracon from the Oasis Parva measures 16.1 x 12.7 cm (if the plate in *O. Bahria* is actual size), and dates from IV-VII AD. It is written on both sides and, like no. 15, contains a list of words in alphabetic format, which implies that it was written in a 'learning' context, perhaps a more formal 'school' setting. The hand is a coarse square uncial, and could be described as 'evolving,' if indeed a student's hand.

Some of the words (χεβρων, βαρναβι = βαρναβας, ιωβ) on this ostracon, which was used in a learning context, would seem to indicate a Christian setting. However, it is not possible to say more about that setting or, indeed, the learning context to which it belonged.

SB 20.14885:

	Recto				Verso	
	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 1	Col. 2
	φω . .	χαλας[	αφο . . .	[ ]	αιτος	κολοχας
	φωρ	χρωη	ατϊμος	[ ]	. . .	κα . . . .
	φωνη	χρυcος	απλης	[ ]	. . .	κα[λα]μος
	φως	χρεια	. . [	βασιας	ιωβ	κ . . . ωρια
5.		χεβρων	. . . [	βαρναβι		
		χϊος	. . . [	βαρθ (vacat)		
		χορ . [	. . .	βαρβ (vacat)		
		κ . [	α			
		. . [	αββαχουμ			
10.			αρχων			
			αμαδας			
			αθρεχαc			

	Recto				Verso	
	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 1	Col. 2
	(phô .?)	Chalastra(?)	(apho . . ?)	[ ]	Aitos(?)	Kolochas
	thief	Chrôê(?)	dishonoured	[ ]	. . .	(ka . . . .?)
	sound	gold	aplês	[ ]	. . .	reed
	light	use	. . . [	Basias	Job	(k . . . ôria?)
5.		Hebrôn	. . . [	Barnabas		
		Chios	. . . [	Barth (vacat)		
		(chor . [?)	. . .	Barb (vacat)		
		(k. [?)	(a . . . . .?)			
		. . [	Abbakoum			
10.			ruler			
			Ammatas (?)			
			(athrexas?)			

17. *Eight leaves from papyrus codex including Romans 1.1-8, 13-15 and Job 1.1*

Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Papyrus Collection: inv. 926; *LDAB* **107875**. *Ed.Pr.*: E.M. Husselman, A Bohairic school text on papyrus, *JNES* 6 (1947) 129-51. Cf. M. Hatsitzka, in *P. Rainer Unterricht Kopt.* (*MPER* N.S. 18) no. 207

This papyrus consists of eight papyrus leaves from a codex (17.5 x 27.0 cm), written in Coptic (Bohairic) and containing a syllabary, biblical names and the text of Rom 1.1-8, 13-15 and Job 1:1. The papyrus is dated to IV AD. The hand is not inexpert, but there seems to be another hand as well, perhaps the teacher providing a model. There are some omissions and a small number of corrections. The biblical texts are written carefully, with shading and occasional knots to finish off the letters. A number of *nomina sacra* appear with superior *makra*: ⲓ̅ⲏ̅ⲥ̅ (5v.25, 40; [6r.5]), ⲭ̅ⲥ̅ (5v.26, 40; 6r.5), ⲡ̅ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ (5v.37), ⲟ̅ⲥ̅ (5v.41; 6r.4), and interestingly ⲓ̅ⲱ̅ⲃ̅ (6r.18) is also given a superior makron. A sample of the papyrus follows (fol. 6r), together with a photograph.

(fol. 6r, Rom 1.7, 13-15; lines 1-14 only)

(7) [ⲛⲓⲙⲉⲛⲣ]ⲁ̣ⲧ ⲛ̣ⲧ[ⲉ ⲫ]ⲧ ⲛⲏ ⲉⲑⲁⲍⲉⲙ
[ⲉⲑⲟⲩⲁ̣]ⲃ ⲡⲍⲙⲟⲧ ⲛⲱⲧⲉⲛ
[ⲛⲉⲙ ⲧ]ⲍⲓⲣⲏ[ⲛⲏ] ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲍⲓⲧⲉⲛ
[ⲫⲧ ⲡⲉⲛⲓ]ⲱⲧ ⲛ[ⲉⲙ ⲡ]ⲉⲛ$\overline{\text{ⲥⲥ}}$
5. [$\overline{\text{ⲓⲏⲥ}}$] ⲡ$\overline{\text{ⲭⲥ}}$ (13) ⲓⲥ ⲟⲩⲙ]ⲏⲱ ⲅⲁⲣ
[ⲛⲥⲟⲡ ⲧⲥⲟⲃⲧ ⲙⲙⲟⲓ ⲉⲓ ⲍ]ⲁⲣⲱⲧⲉⲛ
[ⲟⲩⲟⲍ] ⲁⲩ[ⲧⲁⲍⲛⲟ ⲙ]ⲙⲟⲩ ⲱⲁ
[ⲉⲃⲟⲩ]ⲛ ⲉⲧⲛⲟⲩ [ⲍ]ⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲧⲁ
ⲥ̣ⲓ [ⲛⲟ]ⲩⲧⲁⲍ ⲛ[. . ⲃ]ⲉⲛ ⲑⲏⲛⲟⲩ
10. ⲍⲱ[ⲧ]ⲉⲛ ⲙⲫⲣⲏⲧ̣ [ⲙ]ⲛ̣ⲥⲱⲭⲡ
ⲛⲛⲓⲕⲉⲑⲛⲟⲥ (14) ⲛⲓⲟⲩⲓⲁⲁⲓ̈
ⲛⲉⲙ ⲛⲓⲟⲩⲉⲓ̈ⲛⲓⲛ ⲟⲩⲟⲛ ⲉⲣⲟⲓ̈
(15) ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲁⲟⲩⲱⲱ ⲛ[ⲃ]ⲏⲧ
ⲉⲍⲓⲱⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩⲫⲓ ⲛⲱⲧⲉ[ⲛ]
› › › › › › ›
[+ 9 lines [Job 1:1] to complete page]

(7) Loved by God,
called to be saints.
Grace to you and peace
from God and Father
and the Lord Jesus
Christ. (13) that I have
often made plans to
come to you, but was
prevented up
until now. (14) I am
obligated to you also.
(15) So I am ready to
preach the gospel to
you
› › › › › › ›
[+ 9 lines [Job 1:1] to complete page]

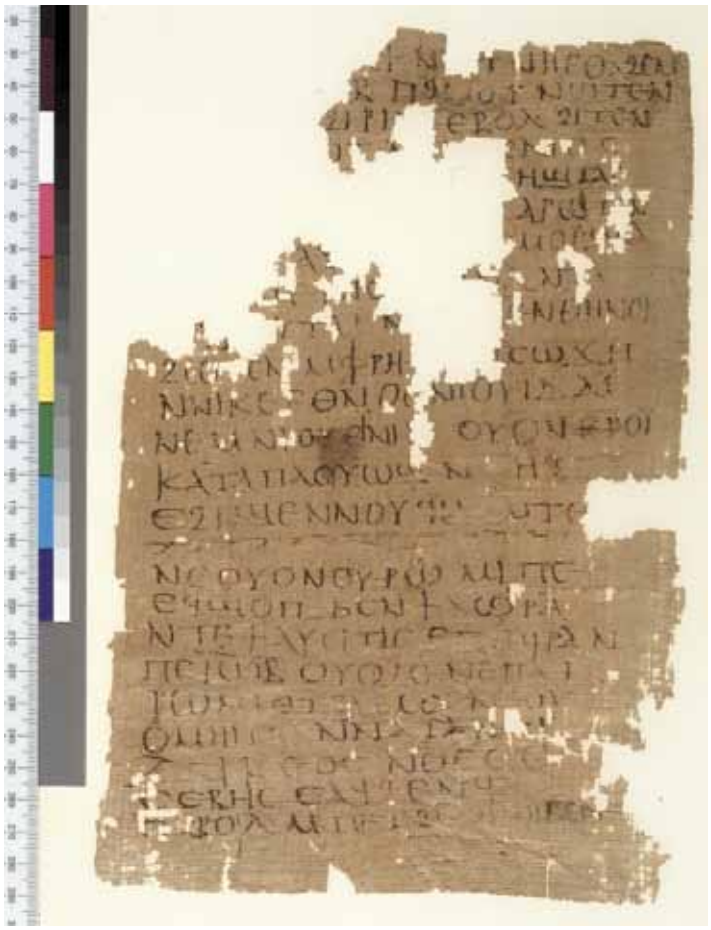


Figure 6: *P. Mich. inv. 926 (fol. 6r) (used with permission of University of Michigan)*

Like the codices of wooden tablets above (nos 1, 2, 3, 8, 14), this papyrus codex includes, among a range of learning exercises, sections of OT and NT text. Whatever the learning context in which this codex was written, it was apparently acceptable to use Christian texts as part of a student's exercises. We know no more about the learning context or the Christian conviction of the student or of the teacher, if there was one.

Issues arising

A number of issues arise as a result of our review of those papyri which might have been written up to the end of IV AD (and possibly beyond), which are called 'school texts,' and whose religious orientation is given as 'Christian.' Firstly, is 'school text' an appropriate description for them all, or might this be a misleading description in some cases, since it could be taken to imply a more formal setting than is warranted? Could it lead to false conclusions being drawn as to their nature and role in education in antiquity? Secondly, what does it mean to call them 'Christian'? Were they written as an expression of Christian conviction, either on the part of the teacher, if there was one, or on the part of the student? If not, what do they imply about the setting in which a Christian text or Christian words could be used in an educational setting, often alongside Classical texts?

Conclusions

With respect to these papyri being called 'school texts,' a number of points should be made. *First*, it appears that, originally, two of them were 'literary' texts, not 'school' texts at all. The quality of the hand in no. **7** and the columnar layout of no. **10** show that initially they were both rolls containing Psalms for reading. It is possible that the syllable division marks on no. **7** might have been added to help a church lector but, if not, they were added as an exercise in syllable division, thus showing that part of a Psalm roll was reused in a learning context. Such rolls were presumably discarded when they had become unusable in public reading contexts, but retrieved for various uses, including educational ones; only later did they find their way to the town rubbish heap, a well known phenomenon, of course, at Oxyrhynchus.

Second, no. **4** was originally a 'school' book containing mathematical exercises in Greek, but a second hand has written substantial portions of John's Gospel (beginning from John 10.7) in a dialect of Coptic on blank pages in the book after the school exercises. This is an instance of the 'reuse' of a codex in quite a different way from nos **7** and **10**. In this case, a Christian text was written in a codex that was initially a school papyrus exercise book. Hence, the Gospel text cannot really be called a 'school text,' even if it is written in a student's exercise book, since the writer placed it there presumably because he or she needed space to write and there were blank pages in a book which was close at hand.

Third, no. **6** was certainly written by someone wanting to learn, as shown by the conjugation of Greek verbs. It is not clear, however, whether the Pauline Greek-Latin phrase section shows that he or she also wanted to learn Latin or Greek, or just extend his or her knowledge of NT Pauline letters. Hence, the papyrus shows that the writer certainly wanted to practise grammar, but it is unclear how the second section fits with this, although a 'school' setting would seem to be unlikely.

Fourth, the writers of no. **9** were quite inexpert, but the small size of the codex, and hence the small amount of text included, would imply a private setting in which a copy of the Psalm text was wanted for some reason. It does not seem to have been a writing exercise, so it should not be called a 'school text,' even though the writers were highly unskilled.

Fifth, a number of the papyri reviewed here were indeed learning exercises, since they include lists of words with small variations, apparently as exercises of some kind. Thus, two papyrus sheets (nos **11** and **13**) and three ostraca (nos **12**, **15** and **16**) have such word lists, presumably to practise some skill. The assumption that the learning was in a formal 'school' does, however, go beyond the evidence.

Sixth, five codices of wooden tablets (nos **1**, **2**, **3**, **8** and **14**) and a papyrus codex (no. **17**) are clearly from a learning context with some formality, which implies that they were 'school texts.' One papyrus sheet (no. **5**) also seems to be a writing exercise, perhaps from a similar codex with a comparable purpose, although it not possible to be more definite about the specific nature of the learning situation in which it was written, since the writers could well have been practising to write on their own.

Hence, with regard to this group of papyri called 'school texts' on *LDAB*, only this last group, along with the first text in no. **4**, were clearly part of a formal 'school setting.' Others belonged to a learning context of some kind, but it is unclear that 'school' is the most appropriate description of that setting. Indeed, the function and context of nos **6** and **9** are not at all obvious, and others were Psalm rolls reused for learning purposes. Thus, as a label for papyri, the designation 'school texts' can cover a range of different kinds of texts, uses and purposes, and is often in need of refinement. Further, even those papyri that were clearly 'school texts' should not be used to support the suggestion that they formed a part of formal 'Christian' educational contexts, since so little is known about the actual circumstances in which they were written.

It is also appropriate to make some observations with regard to describing the religious orientation of these papyri as 'Christian.' *First*, it is often taken as axiomatic that the presence of *nomina sacra* are a clear indication of a papyrus being Christian, rather than Jewish, on the basis that there are no definitely Jewish papyri that employ *nomina sacra*. However, an inscription from late IV AD in the synagogue in Sardis seems to include one *nomen sacrum* (θ̄ῡ), perhaps contradicting the axiom (Edwards 2009; cf Treu 1973); but even this might only show the influence of Christian practices on Jewish ones. Indeed, another abbreviation in the synagogue (κυ for κυριε in Inscr. 71) has no superior makron but a following abbreviation mark (Kroll 2001: 45, cf. fig. 73), so the apparent *nomen sacrum* might just be a Jewish adaption of a Christian practice, just another way of indicating an abbreviation. Hence, no. **1** has been taken to be more

likely Christian in this study, and the presence of *nomina sacra* normally indicative of a Christian papyrus.

Second, the school exercise books that include Christian texts (nos **1**, **2**, **3**, **8**, **14**, **17**, and possibly **5**) show that they belonged to a formal 'school' setting in which it was acceptable for students to use such texts as writing exercises. We do not know if the students chose the texts themselves, or whether the texts were set for them by the instructor, although I would suggest that the latter is more likely in antiquity. It could be asked why a number of these (nos **1**, **2**, **3**, **8**) used Psalm texts, but I am aware of no answer to this question. Further, as we have noted above, the use of Christian texts in such settings shows little with respect to the Christian convictions of either student or teacher.

Third, the writer of no. **4** was certainly wishing to produce a text of (at least part of) John's Gospel, but the only link with a learning situation of any kind was simply that he reused pages from a school exercise book. The writer of no. **6** certainly had some purpose in understanding the Greek (or Latin) of some NT Pauline letters, but using the same 'school' codex in which he had written verb conjugations might have been only accidental. No. **9** shows at least one writer with Christian conviction, although the link with 'learning' is tenuous. In these cases, the writer's Christian conviction is clear, although the link with a learning context is not.

Fourth, nos **7** and **10** appear to have been literary rolls written with Psalm texts, and the presence of *nomina sacra* in both papyri show that they were originally Christian, rather than Jewish. They had probably worn out, and were placed in a fitting storage location, as was the case in some Jewish synagogues, and then reused in learning settings. In this case, they do show that Christian texts were reused for learning, although the connection between 'Christian' and 'learning' in this case is a tenuous one.

Fifth, a small number of papyri (nos **11**, **12**, **13**, **15**, **16**) contain lists of words, with varying degrees of linkage to the OT or NT, and hence to Christian contexts. They cannot be shown to betray Christian conviction on the part of the writers, probably students, and some of them have a very slim claim to contain 'Christian' words at all. In this case, the link between the learning context in which they were written and the Christian conviction of anyone concerned is quite unknown.

Sixth, the use of *nomina sacra* in some school papyri poses the question as to why students were practising such specific Christian content. It implies that, either learning the *nomina sacra* had become a part of learning to write, or the papyri in question might have been a part of a very different learning situation.

Finally, what does it mean to label papyri as 'Christian'? One implication of this study is that certain papyri may only be called 'Christian' in very broad terms, in that they contain a few words that can be seen as specifically Christian, probably because they belong to the period of the post-Constantinian 'Peace of the Church,' and not because they are an expression of the Christian conviction of the author or copyist. On the other hand, some manuscripts are truly school texts and contain known Christian works as part of their learning exercises, although again this indicates little of certainty about the writer. One implication of the latter is that, while these texts are assigned numbers on the lists or OT or NT manuscripts, they may only be used with caution in the task of textual criticism for establishing the original text of those works, since they are, after all, the products of a school student's hand, which was not only somewhat shaky or 'evolving,' but was not necessarily aiming to reproduce a work either for use in a church setting or for posterity. Thus, the manuscripts assigned Rahlfs numbers for Septuagint MSS – no. **2** (**2175**), no. **3** (**2174**), no. **8** (**2224**), and no. **9** (**2090**) – should be used with caution, when attempting to establish the text of the Greek OT. The same can be said for the NT papyri, no. **5** ($\mathfrak{P}^{10}$) and no. **6** ($\mathfrak{P}^{99}$), as well as the Coptic versional evidence supplied by nos. **1**, **4** and **17**. This ought to be a sobering thought for those using such 'Christian' school texts in text critical work on the Greek OT and the NT.

A final implication to be drawn from this study is that the latter group of 'school' or 'learning' manuscripts which include known Christian works should not be used in the study of the palaeography of early Christian manuscripts and the professionalism with which they were reproduced. They should only be retained in such a study as a control group of manuscripts of quite another kind, since they were not copied for the purpose of disseminating those texts, or making the contents available to a wider illiterate group via a church lector reading in the service. They are in a different category altogether.

Alan Mugridge
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Abbreviations

CPP Corpus of Paraliterary Papyri (available at http://cpp.arts.kuleuven.be/)

M-P [3] Mertens-Pack Database of Papyri (available at http://www2.ulg.ac.be/facphl/services/cedopal/pages/mp3anglais.htm)

LDAB Leuven Database of Ancient Books (available at http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab)

LXX Septuagint

NT New Testament

OT Old Testament

Other abbreviations are in accord with the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, available at http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html (June, 2011)

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Endnotes

1 On school texts in the papyri see esp. Cribiore (1996); ead. (2001); T. Morgan (1997); ead. (1998). See also the bibliography available at http://promethee.philo.ulg.ac.be/cedopal/ Bibliographies/Exercices_scolaires_écriture.htm through the Mertens-Pack[3] database.

2 The University of Münster *New Testament. Virtual Manuscript Room* is available at http://intf.uni-muenster.de/vmr/NTVMR/IndexNTVMR.php.

3 A small number of items have been omitted from this study.

a. *LDAB* **85073** (*P. Med. Copto* inv. 247a-b + 251a-b) is a school text comprising 8 leaves, with mathematical and vocabulary items in Coptic (Sahidic), including some Christian vocabulary. It was published as *MPER* XVIII 305a + 290a + *Aeg*. 68 (1988) nos 5, 6 and *Aeg*. 74 (1994) nos 1, 2, and dated consistently VI/VII or VI-VII AD (cf. *SB Kopt.* 2.1257-58). Its dating on *LDAB* as IV AD appears to have been a mistake, so it is omitted from this study.

b. *LDAB* **107876** (*P. Mich.* inv. 4949v) consists of fragments of a Greek-Coptic glossary on the verso of a Greek document (*P. Mich. Copt.*, p. 20; descr.), but it is as yet unpublished. It is dated VIII-X AD on *APIS* and IV-X AD on *LDAB*. In view of the uncertainty of its date – indeed, its probable dating well after IV AD – and since there is no information to indicate any Christian content, it is also set aside here.

c. *LDAB* **113825**. Little is known about this papyrus, other than that it is a papyrus codex in Greek containing a mathematical handbook from IV AD, and that some of its 17 folios are housed at the University of Princeton (Cotsen Library inv. Q 87167). *LDAB* reports that Roger Bagnall is preparing a full edition, but in view of the present paucity of information about its contents, it cannot form a part of this study.

4 In accord with E.G. Turner (1977: 13) I refer to the breadth before the height.

5 Bucking (1997: 136) reports a personal letter from C. Gallazzi to this effect.

The Socio-Economical Character of the A-Group in Lower Nubia (c. 3700-2800 BCE)

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Abstract: This paper aims to define the socio-economic order of the A-Group in Lower Nubia. The nature of this group has been discussed by several researchers using regional archeological data, but no agreement has been reached. Different interpretations are partly the product of diverse definitions of sedentism and nomadism, and of models commonly used to explain the socio-economical character of A-Group communities. These concepts are often loosely applied without clear definition and evidence supporting the models is often lacking. For this reason, the paper begins by defining concepts such as nomadic pastoralism and sedentism, which are central to this investigation. The approach of different ethno-archaeological papers is also a fundamental methodological tool for the paper. After considering theoretical and methodological tools and the study of archaeological material belonging to the A-Group, the paper postulates that this group could have organized itself as a semi-sedentary community, which exploited diverse ecological niches in Lower Nubia.

Introduction

For a long time scholarship has described the relationship between Egypt and Nubia as asymmetrical where Egypt played a role of dominance. This point of view conceived the Nubians[1] as a population incapable of developing a culture of its own, identifying the archeological evidence as the result of the Egyptian influence or as product of the Egyptian interests in the region (Reisner 1910: 313-332; Firth 1912). However, other opinions have arisen since the mid-twentieth century; the increasing numbers of excavations in the region as well as new approaches from the so-called 'New Archaeology' have shown the existence of different native cultural developments (Abkan, A-Group, C-Group, X-Group) in Lower Nubia along of the Nile Valley (Seele 1974; Adams 1977; Save-Soderbergh 1979; Nordstrom 1972). A native culture, the A-Group,[2] inhabited the region from approximately 3700 to 2800 BCE (Säve-Söderbergh 1979; Seele 1974: 29-43; Nordstrom 1972).[3] As soon as scholars became aware of this group, they tried to define its socio-economical order based upon the information provided by archaeological excavations undertaken in the area.

In addition to the different interpretations that have addressed the problem of the A-Group's socio-economic culture, a new perspective has developed since 2000 as a result of the recent excavations conducted in areas remote from the Nile River, such as Wadi Shaw, Sahal and Laqiya (all placed in Laqiya's region, located in the Eastern Sahara). These recent analyses include material from the most distant already mentioned excavations and show a pastoral socio-economic order within the A-Group; earlier views were based on the material recovered from sites located near the Nile and had not resulted in a consensus on this point. In this paper, I propose that the different hypotheses about the archaeological evidence from A-Group sites are related to the existence of diverse ecological niches in Lower Nubia.

Among the earliest analyses, Bruce Trigger supported the idea that the A-Group settled mainly along the river, developing agricultural activities and only leaving the area during floods. Moreover, he stated that 'despite the appearance of unsettled, virtually nomadic, conditions in this and later living sites, there is other evidence suggesting considerably more stability. In particular, there are secondary burials in a large number of graves which appear to have been made some time after the original burial' (Trigger 1965: 69; 1980).

Adopting a different perspective, Hans Åke Nordström considered that the A-Group's economic activities to have been based on small scale agriculture along the banks of the Nile, hunting (mainly fauna from the savannah), fishing and the gathering of plants, fruits and mollusks. Finally, he stated that even though there is no evidence of cattle raising, the development of pastoralist activity should not be dismissed. His opinion is based on the discovery of bones and leather from domestic animals in tombs as well as residential sites and on the existence of pottery '…which is characterized by an abundant temper of finely divided straw or grass (…) is made up of a paste of clay Nile mud mixed with cattle dung' (Nördström, H. A. 1972: 23-24.). In turn, William Adams and Peter Shinnie (Adams 1977: 118-132 and Shinnie 1996: 47) suggested that agriculture was introduced systematically from 4000 BC onwards. However, this activity would not provide a complete subsistence base, and both fishing and hunting were still relevant for these groups. In addition, Andrea Manzo (1999: 42) suggested that the A-Group had an economy mainly based on barley and leguminous plants crops, but activities like hunting, fishing and gathering were common.

David O´Connor and Jacques Reinold (O´Connor 1993: 12-18 and Reinold 2000: 85-87) considered the A-Group to be an agricultural population. O'Connor, however, suggested that there would have been sedentary farm-

ers, while Reinold thought that the presence of houses built with perishable materials or even the usage of stone shelters could symbolize a pattern of settlement with semi-nomadic characteristics. In another interpretation, Sabrina Rampersad (Rampersad 1999, 160-172) theorized that hunting and gathering were the most important activities and both pastoralism and small-scale agriculture were only additional activities.

Recently new excavations in the region of Laqiya by Mathias Lange have influenced authors such as Lasló Török and Nils Anfinset (Lange 2003, 2006, 2007; Török 2009; Anfinset 2010). They have suggested the existence of pastoralists in Lower Nubia. Laqiya is a region that could have sustained water wells for local communities and their pastures for feeding domestic animals. Lange discovered a large quantity of native pottery within many A-Group sites (Lange 2003). He stated that 'Laqiya was part of a settlement area for this cultural group, which the main center was the Northeast of Nile's Valley in Lower Nubia' (Lange 2006: 110). This evidence and the discovery of sites with lumped bones, led Lange to suggest that these settlements could be related to the Nubian pastoralists who used the pastures outside the Nile valley as part of their seasonal transhumance movements (Lange 2006, 2007).

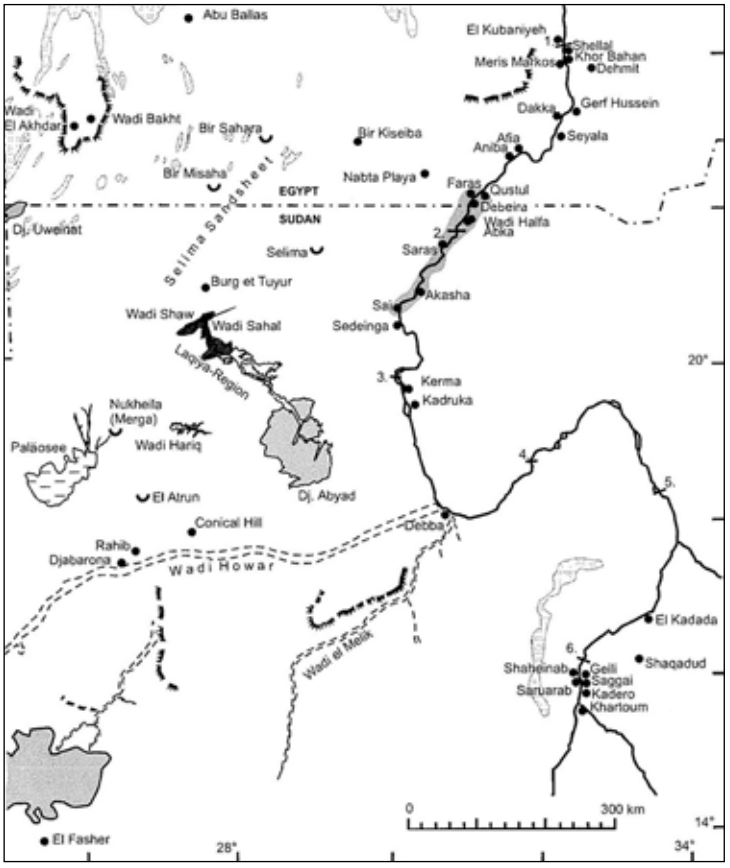

Figure 1: *Map of Nubia (after Lange 2002: 108)*

These discoveries pursuaded Nils Anfinset to see the A-Group as having a socio-economic order related to the pastoralism, and he noted the existence of small scale agricultural activity based on the growing of barley, wheat and legumes. In addition, he proposed that the A-Group were participants in a complex system of exchanges, in which the inhabitants of Lower Nubia were intermediaries between the inhabitants of southern regions and those located in Upper Egypt (Anfinset 2010). A similar point of view is presented by David Wengrow, who suggested that the A-Group depended on the networks of exchanges and had an economy based on cattle raising due to the limits that the environmental conditions placed on agricultural development (Wengrow 2007).

Finally, both László Török and María Carmela Gatto suggested the importance of pastoralism in the A-Group (Török 2009 and Gatto 2001, 2004). As mentioned above, Gatto emphasized the existence of two groups: one, located in the surroundings of Wadi Allaqi and Wadi Korosko, and whose main strategy of subsistence was the exchange with Upper Nilotic groups; the other, located in the Second Cataract area, developed agriculture and grazing activities. Given the presence of livestock dung in pottery and leather remains found in the graves, grazing would have been likely. She added to this information the discovery of two pottery caches in Bir-Sahara, which would indicate for certain the presence of the A-Group in the Egyptian Western Desert (Gatto 2001-2002, 2004).

Geographical Settings

The region occupied by the A-Group integrates the Nile Valley and its immediate hinterland (the Eastern and Western Desert). The Valley is a floodplain of black loamy soil that extends from Nubia to the Delta. The riverside, formed of mud and sand, rises 1.5 - 3 meters above the surrounding plain. The floods occasionally and briefly submerged these river plains because they generally poured into surrounding streams. The floods increased during Mid-Summer (mainly because of Ethiopia's rainy season) and they covered the plains for a period of between between six to ten weeks and sometimes more, until the river level subsided. After the flood, the soil was completely sodden and, being loamy, the humidity was retained for months. Once the plains' soils dried out, the damp mud was suitable for cultivation (Butzer 1995).

Between 4000-3000 BCE, the Nile's floods increased due to the quick accumulation of the sediments in the lower courses of the desert's streams. However, from 3000 BC, the plains that were prone to flooding by the Nile were 6 meters lower (Butzer 1995). Furthermore, the Nile Valley is between two of the world´s driest deserts. In the fourth millennium BCE, the climate of the eastern Sahara became drier and the lakes in Wadi Shaw became seasonal (Lange 2006: 110-111). Nevertheless, in the deserts there is the potential for an occasional concentration of water in wadis, local depressions, or in shallow aquifers, and this is critical for the regional distribution of vegetation.

These water resources surrounding the Nile Valley could have been used by human groups (Redford 2001: 385).

Theoretical concepts

To begin with it is crucial to define the concepts of *sedentism* and *nomadic pastoralism.* These models are commonly used to explain the socio-economical order of the A-Group, but they are often used without being totally clear what they refer to. I define *sedentism* as a system formed from different components that can be, or not, simultaneously present in a community '…there also are different functionally and spatially segmented components of sedentism, ranging from *burial sedentism,* and *ceremonial sedentism* to domestic or *occupational sedentism.* That is, many sites may reflect sedentism in their burial and ceremonial patterning but not necessarily in their occupational patterning and vice versa' (Dillehay, in press). Therefore, I consider a society to be *completely sedentary* when the archaeological remains provide evidence of these three key elements: *burial sedentism, ceremonial sedentism, or* domestic or *occupational sedentism* (Dillehay, in press). All these components should be coordinated and codependent not only on a spatial level, but also on a functional one. If only one element is found, I consider this population *semi*-sedentary: some groups have probably been sedentary in terms of living in a place all year round, but they never developed ceremonialism on a public or monumental scale.

Second, *nomadic pastoralism* is a double concept, constituted by two notions that can be totally independent one of the other: on the one hand, *nomadism*, which implies a cyclic movement in the territory; on the other, *pastoralism*, a subsistence way based in the herding and raising of animals, in this case cattle. I have chosen a combined definition for these concepts as some researchers have recently suggested (Cribb 1991: 17; Lange 2003: 122; Anfinset 2010: 67). Thus, *nomadic pastoralism* should be defined as 'a distinctive form of food production economy in which the extensive mobile pastoralism is the predominant activity, and where the most part of the population is implied in periodic pastoral migrations' (Khazanov 1984:17). These migrations are usually related to diverse strategies applied by pastoralists in relation to economical as well as ecological particularities: they can be connected to cognitive rules that derive from their activities in relation to the residential sites; the possible development of an agricultural activity; the landscape conditions and religious and ritual aspects (Flores Ochoa 1977: 212; Merlino and Rabey 1983: 162; Chang 1992: 65-67).

Aside from all these aspects, it is worth mentioning the necessary and indissoluble connection the pastoral communities have with the outside world. In this sense, the economy was not autarkic. Exchange networks and the dissemination of information played a fundamental role not only on food, but also, in some communities, on prestige goods (Lewis 1965: 328-331; Stenning 1965: 364-370; Ikeya and Fratkin 2005: 1-14; Khazanov 1984: 161; Nielsen 1997/ 1998: 140-145; Lancaster and Lancaster 1998: 25-27).

In turn, I consider the information obtained from the studies on current Nilotic societies and how it may contribute to allow a rechecking of the A-Group's archeological register, which could give a more precise approximation of their socio-economical character. Furthermore, with ethno-archaeological studies, I will discuss the evidence and criteria for the different components of these definitions above, because this is the only way to test them.

Ethno-archeological considerations about pastoralists

Although ethno-archeological approaches to Nilotic pastoralist communities in Nubia are fairly limited, anthropologists have focussed their research on these populations more broadly.[4] Some ethno-archeological studies of pastoralists and agricultural communities located in surrounding areas, mainly in Ethiopia and the East of Africa, have been done (Chang and Koster 1986; David 1971; Gonzalez Ruibal 2006; Fernandez Martínez 2004). These approaches, along with comparable work on Greek and Anatolian populations, allow an analysis of the A-Group's material culture from a comparative perspective, and the identification of the nature of material culture and site typology that are common in pastoralist communities.

In relation to material culture, Roger Cribb established three main criteria to divide the corpus of material: firstly, the mobility of the objects or the possibility of being carried from one place to another; secondly, the difference between perishable and durable equipment; and finally, valuable or unnecessary objects, determined in connection with the object's value (measured in the difficulty or cost to acquire it) (Cribb 1991: 68-69; Appadurai 1991: 17-88). In fact, most of the material possessed by pastoralist communities is portable: tents, axes and shovels. Pottery generally has handles to be carried easily, but it is highly fragile and can be broken easily, whereas metal objects are durable and mostly valued. These objects are usually repaired when they have some kind of imperfection (Cribb 1991: 76; Anfinset 2010).

Claudia Chang and Harold Kosler (1986) identified seven different kinds of sites related to pastoralist communities: residential; grazing; watering wells; movement trails; sheltering and confinement of animals (stables and corrals); storage; and places related to ritual behavior. The discovery of sites with enclosures for domestic animals are considered by these authors as a key sign to characterize a group as pastoralist: '(....) all pastoralists confine their animals at times, regardless of their degree of mobility, and such activity leads to a significant change in the immediate environment of the enclosure through soil compaction and deposition of dung and urine with concomitant changes in soil and vegetation characteristics. This type of site should be particularly attractive to archaeologists. Often through satellite or

aerial reconnaissance such sites can be recognized by differential soil albedo or by vegetation (…)'(Chang and Kosler 1986: 115). Nicholas David, as a result of his ethno-archaeological work with the *fulanis,*[5] analyzed the posts related to animal enclosures and found a pattern (David 1971: 120), whereas Roger Cribb also suggested that animal enclosures are easy to find in nomadic camps and claimed that the most obvious evidence of a pastoralist activity is the finding of bones and animal excrement deposits (Cribb 1991: 69).

The presence of grazing sites is important because they diversify available resources. The modifications introduced on occasions by pastoralist groups suggest that pasture actually existed in different areas. For example, in many Mediterranean regions, stones are used to build corrals. In addition, pastoralists generally dig watering wells and simultaneously build channels to have easier access to the resource. Another remarkable feature is the existence of caves or shelters, which are often storage places for surplus fodder used to feed cattle during periods of shortage (Chang and Kosler 1986: 112-113).

With respect to religious beliefs, the most important ritual sites in nomad pastoralist societies are burials, which can provide data related to gender differentiation, social stratification and exchange networks, among other aspects. In relation to residential sites, David supported the idea that the domestic buildings present different spheres of analyses, one linked to human matters - such as age, gender, kinship bonds, affinity with the inhabitants- and the other to wealth, power and social differentiation (David 1971: 117). These particularities would explain the different size of the structures, the usage of different materials or the finding of diverse material culture. Chang and Kosler (1986: 112) consider pastoralist residential sites to be commonly defined by households built with perishable material, or portable shelters.

Finally, it is relevant to mention that not only ethno-archeological approaches but also anthropological studies have stressed the importance of the small scale horticulture and farming undertaken by pastoralists (Robertshaw and Collet 1983; David 1971: 121-125; Evans Pritchard 1956; Liendhart 1985). Generally, in the temporal pastoralist sites there is no evidence of agricultural products because the seeds of cultigens only survive after a hazardous carbonizing process, so hazard plays an important role in their preservation (Robertshaw and Collet 1983: 73).

The remains of pastoralist communities are difficult to detect in the archeological register of the Nile Valley, so it becomes crucial to consider ethno-archeological information to establish their presence. In this way, it is important to define the socio-economical order of the A-Group through a revised reading of the archeological remains combined with the information provided by ethno-archeological analysis.

Archaeological remains of the A-Group

In this section I introduce a selection and description of sites and archeological remains of the A-Group. It is acknowledged that I have only chosen material that can show socio-economical activities.

The settlement areas of the A-Group were temporarily located near the Nile; however, as mentioned above, some A–Group residential sites were found far from the banks of the Nile, mainly in Laqiya and in the Egyptian Western Desert, at Bir-Sahara (Lange 2006, 2007).

Along the Nile Valley, archaeological teams have registered pottery artifacts, lithic material (mortars and ground stone artifacts), macro-botanical barley remains, leguminous plants and wheat, and some hunting and fishing remains. But it is important to mention that in a few other defined contexts, domestic animals were also found. Moreover, in some residential areas of the Nile Valley, evidence of bonfires (i.e. sites 316 and 340) were found and, in others nearby, individual burials of domestic animals were registered (one burial or tomb in each site) (i.e. sites 371 and 303) (Nördström 1972: 19; Sadr 1991: 84-90; Anfinset 2010: 108).

The residential structures were probably constructed with perishable material, given that a lot of post fragments were recovered in sites (i.e. sites 370 and 316). However, between 3150 to 2800 BCE, domestic construction changed: the structures began to be built with sandstone and boulders probably from the Dakka, Afya, El Riqa, Argin West and Abu Simbel regions (Nordstrom 1972: 134, 140,155, 225; Török 2009: 40-41).

In Laqiya, the evidence is different. Mathis Lange registered abundant A–Group pottery in diverse sites at Wadi Sahal and Wadi Shaw and he identified a type of pottery 'Laqiya type' which did not occur in the Nile valley. To this material culture should be added the discovery of one fire place and a concentration of sherds and bones in Wadi Sahal 82/38-1 and a skull of a domestic cow in Wadi Sahal 82/38-2 (dated around 3000 BCE), but it was not possible to associate it with any other archeological material (Lange 2003: 108). In Wadi Shaw 83/120 two fireplaces, three pits, and some pottery objects were found. From the vicinity of this site, also, a copper awl and palette were registered. In 82/33 site, 36 stone-circles could be connected with housing elements, such as hunts or tents (Lange 2003, 2006). In the site 82/82-2, bones, stones artifacts, pottery sherds, and two fireplaces with remains of charcoal were recovered. Finally, some sheep or goat bones were identified with A- Group pottery in the site Wadi Shaw 82/ 38-3 (Lange 2006).

As mentioned above, two pottery caches from the A-Group were identified in domestic contexts at Bir-Sahara, together with utilitarian pottery related to the Nagada culture. It is worth mentioning that this area was only a water source in the desert, and because of this Gatto associated the discovery with the temporary presence of A-Group individuals who used this location to carry out

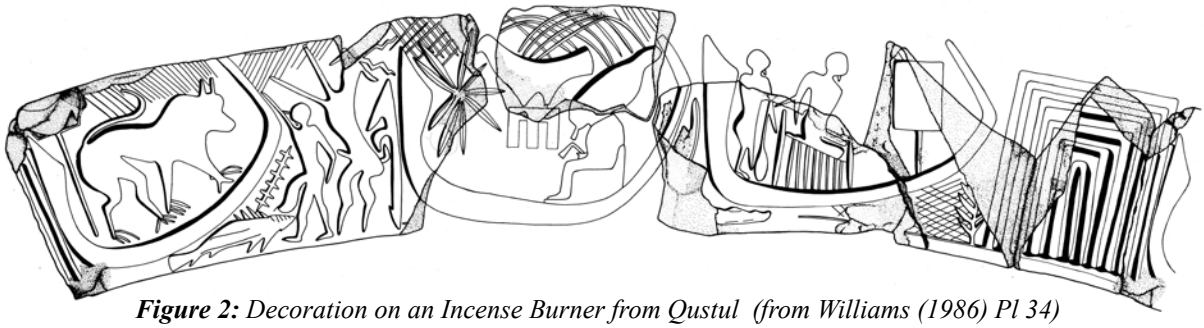

Figure 2: *Decoration on an Incense Burner from Qustul (from Williams (1986) Pl 34)*

exchanges. She suggested that the inhabitants of Lower Nubia used not only pottery of their own but also pottery from other societies (Gatto 2001-2002: 57-60).

Nevertheless, as I have already argued, most of the evidence belongs to burials located along the Nile Valley (in Laqiya and Bir-Sahara no burials were identified). Several funerary sites were used for a long period, for example, cemetery 137 in Sayala and cemetery L in Qustul (Firth 1912: 201; Williams 1986). It is worth mentioning that these burials were exceptional when compared with other A-Group cemeteries because of the presence of goods such as gold-handled maces, copper items, delicate pottery and exotic objects demonstrating the existence of social stratification inside these communities.

Seals and impressions of seals, personal ornaments, stone and clay figurines, organic and mineral materials, objects made of stone, bones, ivory and metal are frequently recovered from tombs of different Nubian A-Group cemeteries (Säve-Söderbergh 1979; Rampersad 1999). More precisely, the cemetery L of Qustul shows the importance of cattle.[6] Independent livestock burials were found there; probably they functioned as a social differentiator among the inhabitants. But only in this site of Lower Nubia does the burial of cattle indicate a high social status. In fact, some other animal remains have also been found there, but their social significance has not yet been established (Flores 1999: 102, 28-31, 74-75; Williams 1986: 14-18).[7] Moreover, in cemetery L a limestone incense burner depicting a Nilotic background scene was found (Figure 2). The scene shows three boats on the river; the third boat was occupied by a large quadruped with a pointed muzzle, which might be a bull (Seele 1974: 38).

The bull symbolized the divine power and virile fertility of a chief in Lower Nubia and ancient Egypt.[8] In Egypt, the Predynastic local rulers and later the kings were associated with this animal (Conrad 1959: 72; Gordon and Schwabe 1988, Wengrow 2001). The iconographic material from the Early Dynastic Period supports this interpretation. For example, on the reverse of the Narmer Palette,[9] a bull representing the king is depicted entering into what seems to be a fortified place and defeating its enemies (Figure 3). Several specialists, Gordon and

Figure 3: *A photograph of the Narmer Palette. Photo: Wikimedia Commons*

Schwabe (1988: 1995), have considered the possibility that the Egyptian royal scepter represents a bull phallus. The discovery of the standardized form of bull's head amulets, some dated as early as Naqada I, the relief-carved bovine heads such as that appearing on the 'Hathor' palette attributed to the late Naqada II period, and the multimedia bull's heads sculpted in rows on 'benches' associated with several First Dynasty mastabas at Saqqara demonstrate the scope of symbolic importance for cattle beyond that of late predynastic and early dynastic 'royal' iconography (Flores 1999: 93). However, as I mentioned before, cattle do not seem to play the role of a differentiator of social status in A-Group communities, with the exception of the L cemetery of Qustul.

In addition to these symbolic aspects, the communities that integrate with the so-called A-Group were not isolated. On the contrary, they participated in a network of exchanges that connected Upper Egypt, the Eastern and Western Deserts, Upper Nubia and Subsaharan Africa. Products such as feathers of exotic birds, ivory, animal leathers and ostrich eggs from the core of Africa were found in funerary contexts both in Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia (Shinnie 1996: 47-52; Manzo 1999).

The products exchanged between the A-Group and the communities located in Upper Egypt were diverse and abundant. On the one hand, the inhabitants of Upper Egypt provided different kinds of food and drinks, such as beer, wine, cheese and oils that were stored in low-quality pottery vessels; linen pieces of cloth, fine pottery and, finally, goods made with materials from other areas such as copper and pottery from Palestine, shellfish from the Red Sea, Mesopotamian cylinder seals and lapis-lazuli from the Iranian plateau (Manzo 1999; Mark 1997). In cemetery L of Qustul, a group of jugs resembling Early Bronze pottery and a cylindrical vessel with a rectangular opening in one side and three big snakes around the container body probably originated in Mesopotamia or western Asia were found (Seele 1974: 30; Williams 1986: 67-107). In turn, Nubian inhabitants probably supplied the Northern societies with products from the Middle East of Africa like ivory, incense, ebony and leather (O' Connor 1993). These goods were probably carried over land and not by boats, because the sinuous course of the Nile and the cataracts were obstacles for an easy fluvial navigation (Redford 2001: 552).

Not many pottery pieces from the A-Group have been found in Upper Egypt, but it is worth mentioning that near the Fort cemetery at Hierakonpolis in one grave (number 8) an A-Group bowl was discovered (Adams 1996). It dated from the Terminal Period and was associated with Upper Egyptian objects from Nagada III. Moreover, two pieces of ostrich eggshell with typical Nubian A- Group decoration, were discovered in grave 2 of Locality 6 at Hierakonpolis (Adams 1996: 3). Gatto pointed out that a few sherds of pottery were identified in the Enclosure of Khasekhemwy and that 'Nubian pottery has also been reported from the Main Deposit in the floodplain town of Nekhen and at the predynastic temple (HK29A)' (Gatto 2009:1). Finally, another pottery piece found came from the Mesopotamian community of Habuka Kabira (3300 BCE) in the Levant. It is possible that it was found so far away because of the exchange networks established among Upper Egypt, the Levant and Mesopotamia.

An analysis of A-Group archeological material according to the ethno-archeological information

In this section, I shall attempt to define the A-Group socio-economic character, taking into account the possible existence of pastoralism in the region and connecting the ethno-archeological information about pastoralist communities with our conceptual definitions and the cultural material of the society in focus.

No traces of corrals have been detected in the excavations carried by different researchers in Lower Nubia during twentieth century (Firth 1912, Seele 1974). Corrals, as I have said, are an indication used by ethno-archeologists to define a society as pastoralist. Moreover, neither bones nor deposits of animal excrement have been found. This evidence is also considered crucial in defining these kinds of communities.[10]

The sites' typology, as emphasized by Chang and Kosler (1986: 112-113), a lot of ritual places (burials) were found at sites that have no specific pastoralist activity. However, we should not reject the presence of cattle as an indicator of social status in the Qustul L cemetery. The discovery of Nubian cultural material could show the existence of pasture areas, but there are no signs of watering wells or construction channels.

A-Group housing sites were built with perishable materials. In fact at a large number of them post fragments have been identified. However, from 3150-2800 BCE other structures were found mainly built with sandstone and boulders. This would imply certain social differentiation (relating this aspect to the prestige goods found in some tombs). Nicholas David (1971) considered that the pastoralists' housing structures were completely related to social matters connected to wealth, power and social differentiation. The lack of structures built of perishable materials would demonstrate more permanence and the capacity to stay for long periods in one place. These sites may represent the existence of ceremonial centers, the presence of elite residences or of central places of exchange.

When considering the discovery of residential sites in three different areas (the Nile Valley, Laqiya and Bir-Sahara), I could conjecture that the A-Group took advantage of different ecological resources. However, we consider that given the quantity of sites found along the Nile, the inhabitants of Lower Nubia settled in their shores, eventually staying in Laqiya and Bir-Sahara. In other words, I suggest that the A-Group was organized with a semi-nomadic order based on settlements along

the shores of the Nile by Lower Nubia. They exploited the diverse ecological riches to satisfy their needs for subsistence. These data reveal the order's complexity, which implies different kinds of exploitation, fishing, hunting, agriculture, exchange and grazing.

A few remarks about pottery are necessary. Generally in pastoralist communities, pottery is rough and has handles, but the A-Group pottery is carefully worked in form and decoration, which indicates several things: that pottery production was a relevant activity in A-Group (not only for funerary purposes but also for domestic ones); secondly, that a standardized production existed; thirdly, that the vessels' sizes would indicate that they were used for storage; and finally, given that the pottery usually did not have handles and there is no evidence to suggest the use of rope slings, this would imply that it was not made to be carried. Regarding the copper objects (awls, chisels, axes, adzes, knife blades), they were considered prestige goods mainly because of their shortage or the context in which they were found. Most of them were recovered from funerary sites, but some of them were also found in residential sites (Anfinset 2010: 155-160).

The fauna remains discovered reveals that hunting and fishing were crucial to feed the inhabitants of Lower Nubia, whereas the absence of domestic animal fossils would suggest the absence of food production based on cattle raising. The development of agricultural activity along the Nile Valley is undeniable, mainly because the settlements were located on the fertile riverbanks and because of the discovery of a macro botanical register in some places.

The importance of the A-Group's network with 'the outside world' has been shown through the abundant quantity of Upper Egyptian objects found in different places, such as some Mesopotamian and Levantine pieces that were found in the L cemetery. I should also take into account Gatto's hypothesis, which says that Bir-Sahara is an A-Group exchange center. As we have seen, the role that exchange played was very important, however these networks deserve a more detailed analysis which exceeds this work.

To sum up, there is no conclusive evidence to define the socio-economical order of the A-Group as nomadic-pastoralist. In fact, the absence of yards, domestic animals, food production, corrals, rough pottery with handles and watering wells, among other aspects, makes its classification difficult. The A-Group probably had a semi-sedentary order because, according to our definition, we found 'burial sedentism', which was reflected in some funerary sites reused by generations and also the exploitation of ecological niches to develop diverse activities such as fishing, hunting, harvest, exchanging, farming with a possible and incipient cattle/livestock grazing because of the evidence found in the region of Laqiya of Bir-Sahara. The fact that most of the residential and funerary sites were found along the Nile could be a sign that most of the population took advantage of the shore's resources and the fertile land to develop their agricultural activities, whereas little groups migrated during certain periods to graze in Laqiya, and to exchange in Bir-Sahara.

Conclusion

The inhabitants of Lower Nubia exploited several different ecological niches. They moved along the Nile not only to develop agricultural activities but also to exploit riverine resources and to undertake exchange activities facilitated by the river. The evidence, also, points to the develop of different activities in areas far away from the Nile river such as a incipient grazing in the Laqiya aregion and exchange networks at Bir-Sahara. So, I argue that the communities that integrated A-Group activities had a semi-sedentary order: on one hand, they reused sites over generations (funerary sites) while on the other hand, they exploited different ecological niches to develop diverse activities. Thus, the Nubian A-Group was fully aware of their environment and they took advantage of all the resources available to them.

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Endnotes

1 The 'Nubians' –and predynastic periods, the Egyptians – did not constitute an unified socio-political entity, but they were configured in small communal organizations, so references to the Nubians (and to the Egyptians before the emergence of the State) are an ethno-cultural definition rather than a political one. Moreover, the inhabitants of the First Cataract were called Nagadans because the discovery of Egyptian objects and pottery could be linked to a group who had similar practices to the Nagadans. So, Maria Carmela Gatto believed that they could be Nagadans (Gatto 2004).

2 These names were proposed by G. Reisner (1910), who established the names A, B, C and X-Groups to designate the new cultures he discovered at the beginning of the Twentieth century. Later on, it was recognized that the B-Group did not exist (Smith 1991). Despite the fact most Nubiologists followed Reisner's nomenclature, William Adams (1977) introduced the term 'horizon' to avoid the social connotation that the use of the concept 'group' implies.

3 Due to differences in the material culture discovered at different sites, some researchers (i.e. Carmela Gatto) preferred to use the concept of 'A-Groups' rather than A-Group to define the people who lived in Lower Nubia during the fourth millennium. Maria Carmela Gatto (2004) re-examined the evidence, especially the funerary record, and noticed differences in the typology of tomb shafts, pottery and evidence associated with the burials such as grave goods. So, she considered the 'A-Group' culture to be not homogeneous, mainly because in Lower Nubia there were at least two groups with the same cultural background but with different characteristics in the cultural material. One of these groups was localized in the Wadi Allaqi and its hinterland, and the other in the Second Cataract Region. Pottery and palettes related to predynastic Egypt were discovered in the first region, which probably indicates that trading was the most important subsistence activity. Regarding the Cataract Region, Maria Carmela Gatto suggested that the cattle skins found in the graves and dung found in some kinds of pottery could be linked to an agro-pastoral subsistence pattern. Nevertheless, I prefer to use the traditional term 'A-Group' because I consider that a definitive adoption of the plural needs a more extensive analysis that exceeds the aims of this article.

4 Shahack-Gross, Marshall, Ryan, Weiner 2004 consider the Maasai pastoralists as a Nilotic group. Some anthropological works are: Evans-Pritchard 1956, 1962; Liendhart 1985; Hutchison 1992.

5 The fulani was integrated by some groups that developed different activities considering the natural problems and social pressure. Because of that, some of them had a nomadic and pastoralist life style, and others were sedentary farmers (Stenning 1960).

6 The site is too small, it had 33 tombs which some of them were important because of their big size and also because they had abundant prestige goods. To have a deeper point of view of this site and its objects see Seele (1974: 29-43) and Williams (1986).

7 Both in ancient societies and the current ones, cattle is a sign of social status. However, one important difference between both of them is: possibly in Egypt and in Nubia for sure, cattle was remarked for emphasizing the social importance of people after their death; in the current societies, oxes, cows and bulls are indicators of social differentiation in life. Nowadays, men's richness such as their social position depends of the quantity of cattle. This situation happens because cattle mediates in every social and individual aspects; first, between men relationship, divine and ancestors; secondly, in the humans' conflicts; thirdly, in the connections established between the lineage groups; finally in the individual's growth and development (Burton 1978, 1979; Liendhart 1985: 18-34, 249-289).

8 Currently, in the pastoralist communities located in Nile's Valley, the bull also symbolizes the chief's divine powers. This animal is considered a dominant male that exerts the power over women and inhabitants that integrate the group. According to the Dinka, this animal is connected with the family's father and the older man of the camp, so it reflects two functions: procreation and organization (father and chief). Moreover, regarding to the battle and conflict, the Dinkas identify bulls as good warriors and because of this, men try to be compared with them. Similar conceptions have the Nuer communities (Liendhart 1985: 82; Beidelman 1966: 460).

9 This object makes reference to King Narmer who is considered the first king of the First Dynasty, which dated around 3150 B.C. (Redford 2001: 494-495). It should be notes that this date is not accepted by all researchers.

10 In Upper Egypt, during Nagada I and II, the existence of pastoralist activity was taking in account because of the discovery of a premises' system similar to a corral delimited by trenches and orifices (to put posts). Moreover, bones and excrement deposits were found in HK29 in Upper Egypt (Friedman 1996: 24; Wengrow 2007: 103-104).

Evangelical Theology, Biblical Archaeology and American Schools of Oriental Research's continuing relevance[1]

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Abstract: The relationship between theologically-centered biblical studies and archaeology has not always been smooth and American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) has often been involved in the debates. While methodological solutions have been regularly discussed, the theological impulses that give rise to the specific readings that archaeologists and historians find so very troubling have received little attention. This paper seeks to make a small contribution to that deficit by articulating the twin theological commitments of Authority and Inspiration and how these shape the conversation from the perspectives of Evangelicals and those utilizing Theological Interpretation. Five modest suggestions for archaeologists' engagement with those theologically committed are offered.

Introduction

Indiana Jones once famously said: 'Archaeology is the search for fact... not truth. If its truth you're looking for, Dr. Tyree's philosophy class is right down the hall.'[2]

Over the past two centuries, Archaeology and the Bible have had a difficult relationship. Numerous treatments of this history have been proffered and the details need not be rehearsed here. Suffice it to say that this relationship – however defined – has been frequently characterized more by the worldview of the participants than anything intrinsic to the *realia* or the texts themselves.

Discussions of the theoretical connection between the work of the archaeologist and that of the confessional biblical scholar tend to be brief and summarized by labels. From the archaeologist and historian we read terms like: 'religious interests,' 'Christian viewpoints,' 'fundamentalist,' or perhaps most dismissive 'theologian.' And from the confessional biblical scholar and theologian we see labels such as: 'liberal,' 'secular,' 'anti-Bible,' and perhaps most pejorative 'academic.' This reductionism often seems to represent a basic misunderstanding of the other's work – archaeologists believe that theologians, searching for an elusive 'truth,' are stuck in post-modern ideological interpretations that eschew solid evidence in favor of biased literary constructs; theologians believe that archaeologists and historians are delusional in their assumption of objective truth and thus are presenting speculative, biased, interpretive reconstructions of the past which are no better than the biblical theological interpretation of the same past.

Theology as Key

Solutions to this impasse have focused almost exclusively on the methodological aspects, specifically how one integrates the results of archaeology and history with the literary text.[3] However, the theological impulses that give rise to the specific readings that archaeologists and historians find so very troubling have received little attention. This paper seeks to make a small contribution to that deficit.

One may rightly ask: 'why should archaeologists of the Near East care about what Bible scholars and theologians think or do?' The short answer points to the inevitable use of our research by Bible scholars and theologians as well as the public. Some years back, Vaughn noted the importance of this connection stating that '...the task of Old Testament theology should be to incorporate [historical imagination] with narrative ... or rhetorical readings.... If we as archaeologists and historians do not undertake such a task, it may be possible to write a history of Israel today, but the resulting history will be ignored by the larger audience that desires a theological payoff' (2004: 385).

More recently, Joffe wrote that '...Biblical Archaeology's subject matter also stands at the center of two, possibly three, world religions. If nothing else, the positive and negative expectations of the public and fellow professionals are strongly shaped by this fact' (Joffe 2010: 328). He went on to note the explosive growth of more conservative Christian groups and their influence on the market for Near Eastern or Biblical Archaeology.

Scholarly debates aside, it is easy to see that popular interest in Near Eastern archaeology continues in large part due to its connections to the Bible. This is illustrated by the continuing popularity of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, various 'Bible and Archaeology' websites and the American Schools of Oriental Research's (ASOR) own demographic data[4]. Since 1900, ASOR has justifiably and rightly broadened its scope; yet it remains an organization whose specific slice of archaeology is inevitably tied to the lands of the Bible – it is not the American Institute of Archaeology, nor is it the American Schools of *East Asian* or *South American* or *Ancient European* Research, but it is not the Near East Archaeology Society (NEAS)[5], either. The fact remains that a significant portion of ASOR's public, both scholarly and lay, is interested in the Bible

and many of these people are interested because they have a theological investment in the texts.[6] For ASOR to maintain its relevance with this public, archaeological presentation and publication should – at some level – demonstrate an understanding of this theological investment.

A second question likewise needs to be addressed: why should archaeologists need to move beyond a methodological discussion of integration and beyond a simple acknowledgment of theological underpinnings. For much of the 20th Century, the archaeology of the Near East and Biblical Archaeology suffered from a lack of intentional theory; the focus was largely methodological. In the latter part of that century theoretical foundations came more to the fore, especially as they related to removing earlier text-based biases and to the lessening of positivism. This has had the effect of distancing archaeological theory from the biblical text and, more strongly, from theological impulses. The theological issues themselves were often portrayed as 'biased' and 'non-scientific;' not necessarily inaccurate but certainly dismissive. Recently, calls for a theory which includes the biblical text as a source for archaeological investigation have been made[7]. While these seldom, if ever, argue that the theology itself should be considered, clearly biblical texts are understood as documents written, edited and understood from a theological standpoint. Discernment of these theological aspects inherent in the texts is necessary to properly utilize them in archaeological or historical work.

Theological investment by modern readers of the Bible is founded on two key theological commitments. First and foremost is that the Bible is 'Authoritative' and second is that the Bible is 'Divinely Inspired.' The exact nature of these two foundational commitments remains variously defined and many adherents cannot actually articulate firm definitions of them, but these commitments are strongly held, at least sub-consciously or in the abstract.

For most Christians, the primary commitment to the Authority of the Bible results in readings that produce meanings that are believed to be somehow theologically prescriptive (or normative) to contemporary life and thought for the reader. The Bible is not simply an ancient text. In other words, while a descriptive (historical or archaeological) explanation of the Bible is perhaps possible, it is of little or no value except to inform a prescriptive reading. This division stems from the Enlightenment.

Prior to the Enlightenment the history within the Bible, especially the Old Testament, was roughly synonymous with the theology; with the latter giving the meaning of the former. The split between the historical and theological study of the Old Testament was famously articulated by Gabler in 1787. As part of a move away from a controlling theological dogmatism combined with a move toward objectivity through empiricism, Gabler argued that the first task of theology should be descriptive and historical, using secular historical methods, and then followed by prescriptive and dogmatic appreciation. This conception of Biblical Studies was strengthened in the work of de Witte who argued in 1807 that although biblical authors 'falsified' their history for religious reasons, the texts are valuable as 'religious history' – a descriptive task where meaning is first found in the history behind the texts. Growing out of this was, on the one hand, the 'History of Religions' school of interpretation which saw theological formulations about events as human attempts to understand the mysterious whether these be in the Bible or any other text. On the other hand, historical research was seen by others – often those having a stronger commitment to the Authority of the Bible – as providing the necessary empirical foundation for the Bible's unique theological and prescriptive articulations.

The second of these commitments – Divine authorship – is coupled with the first but adds a further dimension. This ancient book is authoritative precisely because it is 'God's Word.' God was somehow involved in the production of this book. Obviously there is a broad diversity of opinion regarding 'how' this took place and there are multiple theories of inspiration, but most Christian groups make some articulation of authority and Divine authorship in their confessions and creeds. Three examples will suffice.

At the more conservative end of the spectrum, Article 1 of The *Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) of the Southern Baptists states: 'The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to Man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.'

Similarly the Presbyterian *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646), in Chapter I, Article IV acknowledges that 'The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, depends not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.'

The Methodists' *Articles of Religion*, (1784) Article V affirms: 'In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the church.' This is further defined in the 2006 *United Methodist Member's Handbook:* 'We say that God speaks to us through the Bible, that it's God's Word. This authority derives from three sources: We hold that the writers of the Bible were inspired, that they were filled with God's Spirit as they wrote the truth to the best of their knowledge. We hold that God was at work in the process of canonization, during which only the most faithful and useful books were adopted as Scripture. We hold that the Holy Spirit works today in our thoughtful study of the Scriptures, especially as we study them together, seeking to relate the old words to life's present realities' (Koehler 2006: 80-81).

The twin commitments of authority and inspiration are foundational for most Christians. Vanhoozer connects these basic affirmations to the ongoing interest in the biblical text among academics, arguing that '...biblical studies needs theology in order to provide a sufficient reason for the academy's continued engagement with the biblical text. Only the assumption that these texts say something of unique importance can ultimately justify the depth of the exegete's engagement (Levenson)' (Vanhoozer 2008: 21).

Evangelical Theology

Evangelical Christians[8] and their theological constructs characteristically utilize a modernist western epistemology. Thus, for them, the two theological commitments will naturally produce a logical corollary affirming the truthfulness and/or accuracy of the text. A standard expression of this is found in the 'Short Statement' in the 1978 Chicago Statement on Inerrancy:

> *4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives. 5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.*

In other words, the historical events depicted in the biblical text are, in fact, actual and historically accurate and the meaning ascribed to them by the biblical author is correct. The result of the connection of the twin theological assumptions to a strong concept of inerrancy, founded on a firm western, modernist, empirical epistemology is that the text takes on an unassailable quality. Therefore, if archaeologists and historians provide data or historical reconstructions that are at odds with the biblical narration, it presents more than a hermeneutic inquiry, it is a theological crisis. Here is the big enemy that theologians struggle to combat – a competing narrative arguing for a historically 'incorrect' or 'false' biblical text and/or non-supernatural *meanings* for events. Thus, as the *Chicago Statement* argues, a dismissal of any event as non-historical potentially undermines all theological statements in the Bible. Longman III, speaking of the Exodus, argues: 'If it didn't really happen, there is no substance to the theological/ethical point being made' (Longman III 2009: 86). Sailhamer firmly connects the biblical meaning to the event, stating that 'An evangelical approach to the events recorded in the OT almost surely would employ not only the notion of God's providence in explaining the causes of biblical events but also the knowledge of the events gathered from ancient records and archaeology.... as long as the information is not incompatible [with Scripture]' (Sailhamer 1992: 16, 21). Kaiser and Silva present the case most strongly, affirming that: 'If the Bible is not accurate in the area of the history it portrays, how can it claim to teach truth in other areas such as matters of the soul and eternity?' (Kaiser and Silva 2007: 111).

So, for at least Evangelicals a discussion of 'history' is of necessity a theological discussion. This is essential to understand -- while archaeologists may be making non-religious academic statements, they are often being heard as making theological ones. Evangelicals <u>are</u> willing to dialogue about descriptive historical issues, but only up to a point, even if they are not always consciously aware of this point.

For modernist Evangelical Christians, then, discussions of historical and archaeological material often focus on whether the data presented can be made to cohere with the literature as interpreted within existing theological commitments. The more theologically significant the historical issue, the stronger the effort. The enduring focus on such issues as the Exodus, the Settlement/Conquest, King David and Resurrection illustrate this. Using the rubrics of empirical investigation, external data is judged against the literature – which is usually given priority due to its theological importance.

This priority stems from Evangelical scholars' literary concerns. Consistent with their grammatico-historical exegetical methodology, they tend to focus on the importance of correctly understanding genre in context. However, uneasy with Sternberg's distinction between fiction and falsehood (Sternberg 1985: 23-35) and mindful of their confessional concerns, often 'genre' is understood simply as 'Historical Narrative.'[9] Although considerable nuance is given by some to the ancient literary aspects of historiography,[10] often, at the end of the day, the biblical text is *de facto* assumed to conform to modernist understandings, especially regarding 'accuracy.' The circular nature of this reasoning is apparent: an 'accurate' history in the text grounds the theological statements of the text which ensure the accuracy of the text.[11]

Specifics of data or literature are thus <u>*not*</u> the real issues; rather the theological foundation is what is being debated under the surface. From this theologically-based empirical reasoning have the modernist Apologists come forth – seeking to use science (or philosophy) to prove that scientific observation of the world can be equated with the biblical literary text. At times the underlying theological commitment is seen in the style of argumentation. The common apologetic claim that archaeology has never disproven an event recorded in the Bible is really not much more than a re-statement of the logical difficulty (or impossibility) of proving a negative. When this is coupled with archaeology's relative weakness for 'proving' specific events (except as providing inferred or circumstantial materials), the result – at least superficially – seems heavily weighted toward biblical historical accuracy. This weakness of archaeological results is also utilized on the other end of the modern academic

spectrum; if archaeology cannot prove a (biblical) event beyond a reasonable doubt, then it did not occur.

Herein is the heart of the maximalist/minimalist debate – with both sides (theological and anti-theological) operating within a generally empirical, positivistic sphere. This has led some to see that Historicism (everything is historically conditioned) and Positivism (Cartesian certainty is attainable) are the natural problems with such debate. Van Leeuwen cogently argues that '...for modern liberals, this external standard [historical critique] proved the Bible 'facts' to be wrong, thus freeing them from the truth claims, the authority, and especially the *meaning* of Scripture. For modernist conservatives, who unwittingly accepted the same epistemological and external standards as their liberal foes, it meant a never-ending, rear-guard defensive action of apology, trying to defend the 'inerrant' factuality of the biblical narratives against a growing army of evidence to the contrary' (Van Leeuwin 2011: 149-150).

Text-Centered Literary Evangelical Exegesis

While many Evangelical scholars seek for integration of artifact into text, some have sought Cartesian certainty in a close and perceived objective reading of the literature alone; a reading that coheres to theological commitments. John Sailhamer has been at the forefront of this movement. Interesting in Sailhamer's work is that while he focuses almost exclusively on literary aspects, he remains theologically committed to the absolute modernist historicity of the text. What Sailhamer is unwilling to allow is any modernist discussion of that assertion. In other words the historicity is *essential* but not open for debate. He argues *for* the historicity, he just does not want to have to argue *about* the historicity.

This results in a generally negative view of archaeology as a whole and a rather utilitarian and apologetic use of its results. Sailhamer's belief regarding archaeology as it relates to the literature of the Bible can be seen in his 1998 Zondervan handbook, *Biblical Archaeology*. In this brief work he presents two uses for biblical archaeology which illustrate well his Evangelical theological foundations coupled with his purely literary focus: '(1) Archaeology has produced a wealth of information relating to the world of the Bible...Are such details important for better understanding of the Bible? Some biblical scholars believe they are. We believe, however, that the biblical texts are sufficiently clear to the alert reader of the Bible.... (2) The science of archaeology has helped demonstrate the historical reliability and trustworthiness of the Bible. Before the rise of the study of biblical archaeology, we really had little means for testing the accuracy of the Bible.... In major and minor historical details, the science of archaeology has shown the Bible to be historically accurate' (Sailhamer 1998: 11-12).

Sailhamer's text-centered approach at the same time dismisses moves at two opposite ends of the discussion of historicity. The first is archaeologist G. E. Wright's theological formulation that became known as the Biblical Theology Movement. This was a response against hyper-literary readings which fictionalized the Bible. It sought a more modernist and objective foundation for faith and a strong connection of text to artifact. This theological movement of the mid-20th Century argued that the locus of revelation and thus meaning was to be found in the 'Mighty Acts of God' - the event itself - understood by archaeology and history and interpreted by the literature. Sailhamer, however, like some Evangelicals, argues that the locus of revelation and meaning are to be found in the text only – the text's recounting and interpretation of events is sufficient.

The second move Sailhamer rejects is Hans Frei's argument that the biblical texts are 'history-like' and thus not necessarily articulating actual history. Although Sailhamer agrees with Frei that meaning is not found in event but narrative, he insists in the necessity of the historicity of those events: 'It is not enough to say that the biblical narratives are 'history-like'....The biblical authors...record what actually happened in human history. One can also say today with confidence that the history recorded in these narratives corresponds to the events themselves' (Sailhamer 1992: 16).

While many Evangelicals are in agreement on both of these points, traditionally only a few have been willing to remove questions of historicity from discussion. However, Sailhamer's hyper-literary readings are becoming increasingly popular among Evangelicals who see the more apologetic defense of biblical historicity as an unfruitful avenue. Thus Sailhamer becomes a bridge between traditional Evangelicals who are willing and able to discuss issues of archaeology and history and others not so inclined. These, and others, are increasingly finding themselves in a mode of exegesis known as Theological Interpretation.

Theological Interpretation

While Sailhamer and Evangelicals in general resist Frei's literary turn and its theological result, other, more mainline theologians and biblical scholars have embraced it. As can be readily seen in the literature, the movement in this direction has become progressively more popular and sustained. It is essential to note that these scholars also hold to the twin commitments of Authority and Inspiration, but often articulate them in less strident and modernist fashion. Trier (2008: 36) joyfully exclaims: 'Whatever else it means, theological exegesis deals with the Bible as a word about God and from God, and that makes this movement an exciting project!'

Within the past 25 years this interpretive movement has struggled to define itself. Known as Theological Interpretation (TI), participants usually see their work as the antithesis of the historical-critical paradigm founded in a descriptive understanding of the Bible and theology.[12] This Enlightenment reading, they argue, created two Bibles – the one understood by the church and the one

dissected by academics. In addition, these scholars deny the 'History of Religions' conception that the Bible is simply one of many ancient texts – rather it is a unique book, divinely inspired and authoritative.

Spurred by the work of Barth and Childs, these theologians and biblical scholars have opted for a return to the Bible as a book of and for the church and embrace the concept of Special Hermeneutic - that one must be a person of faith to correctly interpret it.[13]

Although the trend toward TI has been around for several decades, a cohesive definition for the movement has yet to be articulated in spite of numerous synthetic treatments. In 2005, both the *Dictionary of Theological Interpretation* and the initial volume in the Brazos Theological Commentary Series were published and an *Introduction to Theological Interpretation* came out in 2008. Yet, even recently attempts were still being made to formulate a definition in the pages of Eisenbrauns' *Journal of Theological Interpretation* (published since 2007). In spite of this lack of a formally agreed-upon definition, five common features of this important movement may, however, be traced.

A. TI has a strong commitment to the authority of the Bible in the final forms of the texts within its Christian canonical shape and its locus within the Church.

The strong focus on theology for the church was articulated well by Birch, *et al*: 'To claim these texts as scripture is to acknowledge authority in these texts for the ongoing life of the religious community and its individual members.... To read these texts as scripture is to expect such informing and transforming power' (Birch, *et al* 1999: 18).[14]

The Christian (usually Protestant) canon is the authoritative shape for biblical interpretation, with the New Testament often as the focus. This stems from a Biblical Theology that employs 'Christo-centric reading strategies' with 'Jesus Christ as the key to all the Scriptures' (Trier 2008: 47). It is also important to note that some do argue for a distinct theological reading of the Old Testament, while still understanding that 'connections between the two Testaments are made, as they surely must be, from the side of the New Testament' (Brueggemann 1997: 732).

This commitment to a church-based reading leads naturally to the second common feature.

B. The meaning of the text is to be seen as prescriptive rather than descriptive.

The purpose for reading and interpreting the biblical texts should be for the doctrine and/or the edification of the church and faithful –antiquarian, descriptive or even literary interests are tertiary at best; irrelevant or incorrect at worst. This prescriptive and normative treatment rather than a descriptive/historical one is the central dichotomy between archaeology and theological commitment. The move again is away from purely or predominately historical readings.[15]

C. TI seeks to reconnect Biblical Studies to Theology.

Vanhoozer has cogently affirmed the base position on this issue held by proponents of TI. He states that TI seeks to respond to 'the modern schism between biblical studies and theology, and to the postmodern proliferation of 'advocacy' approaches to reading Scripture where each interpretive community does what is right in its own eyes' (Vanhoozer 2008, 17). He maintains that TI is '...governed by the conviction that God speaks in and through the biblical text' (Vanhoozer 2008: 22) and that submission to theological interpretation will 'heal the debilitating breach that all too often prevents biblical scholars and theologians from talking to each other...' (Vanhoozer 2008: 24). The theological aspect always governs the reading as it did prior to the Enlightenment. This illustrates the pre-critical epistemological foundations of TI.

D. Although appearing to be 'Post-Modern', TI actually seeks to be 'Pre-Critical'.

Similar to postmodern thought, TI argues all interpretation is biased, especially subjective and incomplete historical reconstructions. Therefore, one should seek, as best as possible, to understand the bias of the canonical authors and of earlier interpreters within the faith tradition. This is believed to provide the most accurate reading. It is argued that this was the focus and intent of pre-Enlightenment exegetes: 'Precritical readers hypothesized theologically about potential readings, and these readings passed the test if they showed how orthodoxy illuminated the mysteries of the biblical text and the God to whom it points. The concern was not so much to defend theological reading strategies as to deploy them and see how well they worked' (Trier 2008: 45).

This reflects a pre-modern focus on truth determined by persuasion - rather than empirical proofs. TI seeks: '... memorable, searching, and persuasive readings of the biblical text...' (Moberly 2009: 175). These are found through a 'Spiritual reading' utilizing 'typological' and/or 'allegorical' methods - strategies that the Christian laity employs frequently. Others in the movement are more cautious about such readings but remain committed to the basic rationale (cf. Vanhoozer, 2005: 16).

The essential equation of theology to history in a pre-critical reading is fully affirmed by modern adherents. Van Leeuwen notes that 'For the precritical interpreters of the Reformation..., event, biblical narration, and their meaning had simply been one and the same' (Van Leeuwen 2011: 149).

E. Methodologically, the movement is diverse.

Diversity in methodology has been a hallmark of the movement. It has also been one of the main reasons that TI has been unable to articulate a single definition. There are many reasons for this diversity, but perhaps Green states the issue most succinctly: 'As with other forms of 'interested' exegesis ... theological interpretation is marked less by technique and more by certain sensibili-

ties and aims' (Green 2011: 162). This has resulted in a rather utilitarian hermeneutic framework focused on the resultant theology derived.

Vanhoozer has outlined the methodological concerns and the appropriateness of traditional historical-critical methods. Arguing the relative importance of methodology, he concludes that 'The primary concern with the *outcome* of biblical interpretation affords an interesting vantage point from which to assess the relative contribution of various types of biblical criticism and interpretive approaches' (2008: 24).

Regarding the acceptability of modern critical methods, especially those involving historical (and potentially archaeological) materials, Vanhoozer argues that: '... modern and postmodern tools and methods may be usefully employed in theological interpretation to the extent that they are oriented to illumining the text rather than something that lay 'behind' it...Yet each of these disciplines, though ancillary to the project of interpreting the church's Scripture, stops short of a properly theological criticism to the extent that it brackets out a consideration of divine action....Readings that remain on the historical, literary or sociological levels cannot ultimately do justice to what the texts are actually about' (Vanhoozer 2008: 22). Most proponents reject a reliance on historical-critical methodologies since they not only atomize the text but are often antithetical to theological concerns. Vanhoozer himself is comfortable with at least some aspects of historical-critical methods, but the quote above does highlight his disdain for alternative historical and archaeological reconstructions; a suspicion shared by TI in general.

Archaeology and Theological Interpretation

Because of this foundational suspicion, TI advocates have sought for an understanding of exactly how (or *if*) to integrate history and archaeology into their biblical interpretation. Green (2009: 160-163) has argued that there are three basic facets to the way this integration has been approached.

i. Primarily and foundationally, TI rejects any subjective historically-based 'reconstruction of past events in order to narrate the story of the past' (Green 2009: 160). They refuse any alternative and competing historical narrative that seeks to explain everything with naturalistic, as opposed to theological, causality. This is a logical outgrowth from reading the text with a strong theological commitment to Authority and Inspiration coupled with a focus on the prescriptive or normative dimension of the Bible. As Van Leeuwen summarizes: '...the real problem...is this: when a historical critic claims to have reconstructed, interpreted and written 'what really [objectively] happened behind the text,' and then presents that narrative as 'truer' than the profound biblical narratives about reality, then readers have been given stones for bread' (Van Leeuwen 2011: 155). Underscoring the theological dimension, Vanhoozer decries the '... gap between thin (reductionist) descriptions of biblical history and thick descriptions that take into account the text's own appeals to divine agency' (Vanhoozer 2008: 19).

Although theological exegetes eschew historical reconstructions they will usually insist that certain events recorded in the Bible actually occurred in time and space. Yet, like Sailhamer, they simply do not wish to discuss them or the historical accuracy of the biblical record. Their comfort with Frei's 'history-like' literary category has enabled them to dismiss 'historicity' in favor of 'theology.'

Ironically, no matter how well articulated the point is, theological interpreters are still fundamentally wedded to history - especially as it relates to perceived *essential* events such as the resurrection – and thus open themselves to discussions regarding historicity. The question is really not whether history is an issue, but how willing interpreters are to deal with it. It may be seen as somewhat disingenuous to make strong claims for historicity while refusing to allow investigation into them.[16] The declaration that the biblical text is 'pre-modern' and thus should not be investigated with modernist historical tools also misses the point, since these scholars (and laity) are presenting the text as 'accurate historicity' in a modern context that understands such claims from a modernist point of view. One cannot have it both ways.

Clearly advocates of TI like their Evangelical counterparts are fearful of modernist, mechanistic, and mundane explanations for events that will displace the supernatural reality portrayed by the biblical authors, and perhaps this has led them to throw the baby out with the bathwater. As Green avers: ...'within the church we do not depend on even our most talented historians to portray reality for us; rather, in the church, we recognize that those interpretive winds are already tamed by canon and creed' (Green 2011:167).

ii. Green's second facet maintains that many within TI reject exegetical methods that seek to 'explain the process from historical events to their being textualized within the biblical materials' (Green 2011: 161). Thus historical-critical methods - form, source, redaction, etc. –are usable only as rhetorical indicators of the final form of the text. Again this is due to a focus on the inherent subjectivism in these historical methods and the perceived counterproductive results. While Vanhoozer writes that 'Indeed, historical criticism is itself a confessional tradition that begins with a faith in reason's unprejudiced ability to discover truth' (Vanhoozer 2008: 19), he also notes their usefulness to enable the theological exegete to mine 'nuggets' out of the background dirt of the OT (Vanhoozer 2008: 16).[17] Brueggemann is similarly cautious noting that historical-critical methodologies are helpful and even necessary, but that their basic approach 'intends to fend off church authority and protect freedom for the autonomous interpreter' (Brueggemann 2005: 30).

Evangelicals are also wary about the utilization of these methods, and yet traditionally have incorporated some aspects of them in their exegetical programs; seeking to bolster the historical/cultural bases for their grammatico-historical readings.

iii. Green suggests that where there seems the most ground for profitable interaction is in his third facet. He noted that archaeology and history can and should provide insights into the 'historical situation within which the biblical materials were generated' (Green 2010:161). TI does seek the cultural background for the biblical texts and their receiving communities. This is the aspect of archaeological investigation that provides the most data – *realia* informing the *longue durée*.[18] The use of archaeology for background to the text is a major area where TI and Evangelicals are in agreement. However, archaeologists have at times been uncomfortable in this supporting role. In 1988, Brandfon opined that 'Using archaeological evidence to provide context ultimately reduces archaeological research merely to illustrating the Bible stories' (56). This thinking has been echoed in other places, and is a proper caveat when articulating *methodological* foci. However, it remains true that one can never determine how someone else will choose to utilize the results of research. Since many end users of Near Eastern archaeological research are biblically motivated, it seems more productive to *engage* the end user rather than simply to complain about or dismiss him or her.

Suggestions for archaeologists and ASOR in light of these trends

Advocating such engagement does not imply that archaeologists of the Near East become theologians or that ASOR become NEAS. Rather, such informed engagement should incorporate an understanding of theological commitments and would address issues related to both questions of specific historical 'accuracy' and broader contextual concerns. To that end, five modest suggestions here follow.

i. Archaeologists should be aware of the 'marketing' potential of archaeological data to various groups and subgroups – ASOR does have within its broad tent, lay and scholarly, those broadly Evangelical and those utilizing a more Theological Interpretation. Continuing relevance for the organization will depend on this awareness.

ii. Archaeologists should avoid the *a priori* dismissal of theologically-based readings and those who make them; dialogue is necessary and possible. These are people – scholar and lay – who are committed to the same text archaeologists and historians also study. Yet their study is not simply of the 'timeless' and 'meaningful' 'classic' of academia, but rather as a historically based authoritative and divinely inspired document. This is an important distinction – often glossed over by those dismissive of the perceived quaint superstitions or biased readings of the religious.

iii. Archaeologists should be careful to distinguish between data and interpretation in the presentation and publication of results. Interpretation is often important and necessary, but presenting reconstructions based on data is not necessarily the same as the data itself. Of course those interpreting the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament also need to make such distinctions as well.

iv. Archaeologists should understand that a significant group of readers – mainline, evangelical and Roman Catholic – sees archaeologically and historically derived articulations of 'A History of Israel' to be in possible competition with the theological presentation of the story told by the biblical authors. So, if archaeologists focus their presentation and publications to highlight or sensationalize the 'alternative' history, many in the broadly Christian camp may simply not 'be able' to read it.[19]

v. Archaeologists should attempt to engage biblical readers where they are. Evangelicals are very interested in context and are willing to dialogue about historical issues – as far as theological significance and/or confessional limits will allow. Presentation and publication should try and determine when a theological boundary has been reached and employ more specific and targeted discussion beyond that point. Theological Interpreters, while not interested in historical discussions *per se*, *do* seek clarification of the context of the text through archaeological research and archaeologists can have a great impact in this area.

By engaging with theologically committed readers more intentionally, Near Eastern archaeology and ASOR can add valuable insight into the discussion of 'meaning' in the texts. Archaeologists must be realistic regarding the levels at which this can take place; the focus is not on content so much as on formulation and presentation. Perhaps the call is for archaeologists to nuance with integrity and be cautious about sensationalism. In the end, archaeologists may even have something to say regarding the 'truth' about which Indiana Jones was so wary of teaching.

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Endnotes

1 A shorter version of this paper was originally presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) in Chicago.

2 Although spoken by Harrison Ford, who may have added the name Tyree as an homage to Ford's own philosophy professor (see Brad Duke, *Harrison Ford: The Films*: 159), writing credit for the script of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (LucasFilm & Paramount,1989) is given to Jeffery Boam.

3 Fine recent examples include Levy 2010, Hoffmeier and Millard 2004 and Moreland 2003.

4 Although some of the ASOR demographic data is currently anecdotal, the trends do indicate that over a third of ASOR members are also members of the Society of Biblical Literature. A similar percentage of Institutional Members are biblically-oriented or ministerial schools. The percentage of non-academic (lay) ASOR members that connect to ASOR because of a biblical interest appears to be much larger.

5 Members must agree to a confessional statement affirming the inspiration of Scripture.

6 Of course there are those who are not in any way theologically motivated who are engaged in archaeology of the Near East, or whose theological concerns are not from a Christian perspective; this paper is focused instead on those who do have a Christian background.

7 See especially, T. W. Davis 2004 and A. Meier 2010.

8 The 'broad-brush' approach in what follows does not dismiss the diversity among Evangelicals; instead the grouping seeks to focus on what is most common among the various stripes of Evangelicals, especially those from North America.

9 Often understood simply as chronological and realistic narratives depicting past events – with both artistry and accuracy. It is in the assumption and definition of accuracy that the historiographic issues are manifest.

While some have argued that 'accurate' should be understood in terms of successful communication of ancient authorial intent (cf. Provan, Long and Longman III 2003: 87-88), others insist that 'accuracy' be defined according to the degree of exactness to the actual event itself, especially when used in modern discussions.

10 See, for example, Howard 1993, Long 1994 and Provan, Long and Longman III 2003.

11 To be sure, the argument may be made that this is not circular but rather confirmatory, but given that it is the accuracy of the history which is being discussed and the theology is open to interpretation, it is difficult to know what is confirming what.

12 For example, Moberly has argued that Gabler's division was proper for his time but newer nuances make that break no longer viable (Moberly 2009: 175).

13 J. Pelikan has noted cogently that from AD 100-600, bishops were the standard interpreters, and it was the monks between AD 600-1500, but from AD 1500 to the present it is (secular) university professors, (Pelikan 1971: 5).

14 Note the preposition "in these texts" rather than "of these texts" – a different understanding of inspiration and authority than more conservative counterparts.

15 But, as Vanhoozer (2005: 16) insists, it "is not an imposition of a theological system or confessional grid onto the biblical text" except the grid of the "Rule of Faith."

16 Perhaps this is the basis for many dismissive statements by archaeologists and historians.

17 This is a common dogmatic / systematic theology foundation for the hermeneutic task.

18 Precise archaeological evidence for specific events is usually elusive, especially as it relates to the more local and small-scale events depicted in the Bible.

19 Note the letters to the editor in *Biblical Archaeology Review*.

Reviews

James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible,* Grand Rapids, Michigan/ Cambridge, UK, Eerdmans, 2012, 202pp ISBN 978-0802866790, USD 25.

Reviewed by Anne E. Gardner

As the title suggests, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible,* discusses aspects of the relationship between the former collection of texts and the latter. It does so in seven chapters, six of which had their genesis as individual addresses delivered in the series, Speaker's Lectures at Oxford University in 2009.

Chapter One, entitled 'The "Biblical" Scrolls and their Implications', enumerates the copies found at Qumran of all works later recognised as belonging to the Bible with the exception of Esther. It is duly pointed out that only 1QIsa[a] is complete and the copies of other Biblical works are fragmentary. Nevertheless VanderKam adds that the finds at Qumran include portions of Greek language translations of the Pentateuch, three targums (one of Leviticus; two of Job), as well as quotes from Biblical works that appear in the Pesharim and in Tefillin and Mezuzot, all of which supplement our knowledge of the early Biblical texts. VanderKam also lists the copies of Biblical works found at Masada, Murabba'at, Nahal Hever, Se'elim and Sdeir. His main interest though is in the implications of the evidence from the ancient sites for what they impart to scholars about the history of the textual tradition. He stresses the importance of the texts as the oldest original language copies in existence and the fact that they were transmitted with great care. He shows that the Qumran texts often illuminate variants between the MT, SP and OG but also include interpretive insertions. Such new and expanded versions of Biblical texts can demonstrate textual fluidity, indicating a multiplicity of textual traditions thus going beyond the older scholarly notion of three versions. The variations are not apparent in the later texts from the sites other than Qumran; rather they stand in line with the MT, suggesting a greater uniformity, for whatever reason, by the end of the first century CE.

Chapter Two entitled, 'Commentary on Older Scripture in the Scrolls' examines the interpretation of older texts in the scrolls and/or where the writers use older texts as support. The extent of such links is underlined by Vanderkam when he says "the Qumran scrolls are scripturally-saturated literature, whether through explicit citation, paraphrase, allusion or commentary"(p.26). He points out that this accords with the instructions for continuous study given in 1QS6, 6-8 but warns that the interpretive techniques in the scrolls are those of the time and place of the authors and thus very different to modern ones. He draws the reader's attention to the existence of the interpretation of older texts within scripture itself e.g. Chronicles reinterprets Samuel-Kings as well as other works; parts of the Pentateuch are re-presentations of older law codes and in Daniel 9 Jeremiah's prophecy of the Exile lasting seventy years is interpreted through the medium of other scriptural texts. Beyond scripture, VanderKam points to 1 Enoch, Jubilees and Aramaic Levi, (fragments of all have been found at Qumran) which reinterpret and elucidate scriptural passages. The continuous Pesharim e.g. Commentary on Habbakuk (1QpHab) interpret the events and people of the time of the prophet concerned to the events and people of the time of the author of the Pesher. VanderKam says that in the case of the Habbakuk Pesher it is clear that the author looked closely at the Book of Habbakuk for a past tense in Habbakuk is related in the Pesher to the actions of the Wicked Priest and a future tense to what will happen to the Wicked Priest. VanderKam also discusses other forms of interpretation. For instance in Commentary on Genesis A (4Q252) col 4 there is a collection of Biblical references involving the keyword "Amalek". Some are allusions, some quotations but there is also a prediction and a fulfilment. Some texts e.g. 4Q 158 and 4 Q 265 wrestle with what they see as a problem or difficulty in a particular scriptural passage which they "overcome" through reference to other scriptural passages. A thematic pesher like 11Q Melchizedek evidences the steps that led to an eschatological interpretation of the figure of Gen 14:18-20. This was accomplished through reference to scriptural passages associated with the function of Melchizedek in Genesis 14 i.e. the release of captives and the restoration of prophecy.

Chapter Three entitled, 'Authoritative Literature according to the Scrolls' explores the question of whether there was such a collection and, if so, which works belonged to it. Caveats precede the discussion: the word "canon" is to be avoided for it was first applied in the fourth century CE to a Christian collection of scriptures; it must not be assumed that there was a three-fold division of authoritative works for that was not established until some point in the Rabbinic period; where Law and Prophets are mentioned, it should not be assumed that the works in these categories are identical to the works in the later divisions of the MT. Nevertheless it is clear that in both the Scrolls and the NT (considered for the sake of comparison) there are references to "what is written" and both collections quote or allude to scriptural works. The corollary is that there were esteemed written works which had authority for a particular community or communities and other works which did not (e.g. the books of Maccabees). It is questioned whether all communities agree which ones were authoritative and how they described such works in collective terms. By mid-first century CE Paul uses η γραφη to refer to works in the Torah and Prophets (Gal 3:8; 4:30). Law and Prophets are also referred to in Rom 3:21; Matt 5:17-18; 22:40; Acts 28:23; 1 QS 1, 1-3; 8, 15-16. However, it is possible a three-fold division appears in the Prologue to Ben Sira (Law, Prophets and others); in Philo's Contemplative Life 3,25: in Josephus *Contra Apionem* 1,38-42 (where he talks of twenty two books: five books of Moses; 13

Prophets) and 4 hymns and in 4 Q 394-99 which some scholars have claimed refers to three or four categories, although the text has been reconstructed. Although not stated as such by VanderKam, it is clear that that there is no absolute certainty as to the exact composition or arrangement of an authoritative collection in the Second Temple period. As he points out though, at Qumran there are several indications of what was revered: copies of all Biblical works, except Esther; citations to Isaiah, Ezekiel and David's Psalms as being from God; the use of the phrase, "as it is written" with reference to Exodus to Deuteronomy; some prophets, Daniel, Psalms and Proverbs and possibly Jubilees and Aramaic Levi; commentaries on Biblical books (Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, Habbakuk, Nahum, Zephaniah and Psalms) or on parts of Biblical books (Genesis, Jeremiah, Ezekiel). VanderKam thinks Enoch may also have been authoritative at Qumran and in the NT (cf Jude).

Chapter 4 entitled, 'New Copies of Old Texts' provides a review of copies or fragments of works found at Qumran in Aramaic or Hebrew but which were known from elsewhere, usually in another language. The works concerned, which all relate to the tradition, are Jubilees, Aramaic Levi, the Book of Giants, The Wisdom of Ben Sira, Tobit, Enoch, the Epistle of Jeremiah and Psalms 151, 154, 155. In some cases, the finds have laid to rest scholarly debate about the original language of a particular work or helped to clarify the likely period in which a text was composed. The earliest fragment of Jubilees, for instance, has been dated to c. 125 BCE, indicating that its original composition was no later than the second century BCE; AMS (Accelerator Mass Spectometry) dating of 4Q 213 (Aramaic Levi) is second century BCE so the autograph may well have been composed earlier (VanderKam speculates that it originated in the third century BCE). It expresses a view of Levi parallel to that which appears in Jubilees for both works praise his action against the men of Shechem in Genesis 34 for he thereby protects communal purity. Fragments of all sections of 1 Enoch were found, with the exception of the Similitudes. Two fragments, one from the Book of the Watchers and One from the Astronomical Book were copied c.200BCE indicating a likely date of origin in the third century BCE. Small fragments of a Greek translation of the Epistle of Enoch (chapters 91-107) dated to c.100BCE indicate that the usual dating of the Aramaic version to the late second century BCE is likely to be too late. The very existence of a translation though testifies to the popularity of the work. The find of Psalms 151 (attested in the Greek Bible) and 154 and 155 (known from Syriac witnesses) indicates that the tradition was not fixed, nor the order of Psalms for 151 appears at the end; 154 after 145 and 155 after 144 and before 142! Not all the works considered in this chapter can be adduced as having special theological value for the Qumran community e.g. Ben Sira.

Chapter Five entitled, 'Groups and Group Controversies in the Scrolls' investigates whether the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees that are mentioned in Josephus and other ancient literature appear in the Scrolls. Here difficulties arise for the Scrolls do not name the groups, although it is clear that they indicate, in cryptic language, groups other than themselves. It is not even clear what the community called their own group. Scholars have theorised though that they should be identified with the Essenes because their views and actions appear similar and their location at Qumran is likely to reflect Pliny the Elder's description (Nat. Hist 5.73) of the location of the Essenes as being close to En-gedi. However, there has been some dispute about the derivation of the name "Essenes" which appears in Josephus in a Greek form and in Pliny in a Latin one. There are four suggestions: that it is derived from 1) an Eastern Aramaic adjective איסח meaning "holy" 2) the Aramaic יסא meaning "healer" 3) the Hebrew חסידים or the Aramaic חסידין meaning "pious ones" 4) the Hebrew עשי התורה meaning "doers of the law". VanderKam favours the fourth for linguistic and literary reasons. Indeed it is the only one of the four to appear within the scrolls as a self-designation and so is the most probable. In the Scrolls "Ephraim and Manasseh" appear as enemies of the community and scholars have theorised that Manasseh is a cipher for the Sadducees and Ephraim for the Pharisees. VanderKam rightly points out the weakness of the former identification in that "Manasseh" appears only 12 times in the Scrolls and the evidence is confusing in that in the case of the purity of liquids, the Sadducean view (cf m.Yad 4:6-7) is similar to that of the community (4QMMT B 55-58) but the Sadducean view of life after death stands in opposition. In the section on the Pharisees, VanderKam reviews passages (Damascus Document, Hodayot, Pesher Nahum) where "(seek) smooth things" occurs for that is what is predicated of Ephraim. In common with the majority of scholars he sees "smooth things" as indicating seeking an easy road in legal terms. He thinks there may be a pun between חלקות (smooth things) and הלכות (legal rulings). The Hodayot mentions "their folly concerning their feast days" while in Pesher Nahum the "seekers of smooth things" advised King Demetrius to enter Jerusalem at a time between Antiochus and the advent of the Romans. As punishment, the "furious young lion" (identified by scholars as Alexander Janneus) hung them. However, despite linking what is said in Pesher Nahum with passages in Josephus, scholars do not have any definite proof that the "seekers of smooth things" are the Pharisees. VanderKam readily admits the weakness of the identification although is inclined to accept it. What he does not do, however, is provide any information about scholarly theories as to the derivation of the name "Pharisees" which he does in the case of the Essenes (in detail) and the Sadducees (in passing). VanderKam wishes that works written by the Sadducees and Pharisees could be found but, whether or not that eventuates, it is clear that further research on the enemies in the Scrolls is required. This links, of course, with the history of the community which is notoriously difficult to pinpoint and which VanderKam does not address in the present work.

Chapter Six entitled, 'The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament Gospels' is the first of two chapters that show how the Scrolls illuminate aspects of the NT which grew out of a Jewish context, although in certain respects there are major differences between the two collections of texts. Five topics are addressed in the present chapter: Messiahs; Works of the Messiah: Scriptural Interpretation; Legal Matters and Rebuking. Under the heading "Messiahs", VanderKam points out that whether or not Jesus claimed the title, he is hailed as "Messiah" (e.g. Matt 16:16). It is known from the NT that the Pharisees expected a Messiah, son of David (Matt 22:41-42) and the Psalms of Solomon 17-18 express the same belief. It is clear from Josephus that messianic fervour was current for he mentions a number of would-be messiahs. There is scholarly argument over whether one or two messiahs were expected by the community of the Scrolls - one of Aaron and one of Israel - for 1QS 9:9-10 has messiah in the plural although it is singular in the Damascus Document (CD 12:23; 14:19; 19:10). The Messiah of Israel is also called the "Branch of David" and "Prince of the Congregation". The Messiah(s) is mentioned also in the context of the "last days" (probably in 4Q 285,7 as well as in the Community Rule). In the latter text bread and wine which the priest will bless and the Messiah extend his hand over are cited. Bread and wine, of course, are familiar to Christians from the Last Supper and in Hebrews, Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. As far as the "works of the Messiah are concerned, VanderKam draws attention to 4QS 521 which has "messiah" in the first line and then later lists miracles drawing from the same Isaianic passages (Isa 61:1-2; Isaiah 35) as Lk 7:19-23 which cites miracles as proof of Jesus' messiahship. Interestingly, both the passage from the Scrolls and Luke include "resurrection of the dead" in their lists although that feature does not appear in either of the passages from Isaiah. VanderKam though differentiates between 4QS521 and Lk 7:19-23, saying that in the former the miracles are performed by God, thus implying that the Gospels would not agree. One wonders whether the theology behind the performance of the miracles in the NT is really different for its implication is that God works through the messiah - who for the writers is Jesus. Even though they used the same scriptural texts, VanderKam points out that both the authors of the Scrolls and NT interpreted those texts in the light of their own communities e.g. "way" in Isa 40:3 is understood to apply in 1Q58 to the study of the law by the community who were situated in the wilderness but the gospels relate it to John the Baptist in the Judaean desert and his urging of people to repent. Topics of debate in the case of legal matters appear in the New Testament and obscurities in Gospel passages e.g. Mth 12:9-14 with its mention of pulling a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath can be illuminated (although not paralleled) by reference to early Rabbinic and DSS passages. The regulations for rebuking a fellow Christian in Matthew 18 have much in common with those cited in 1QS 5:2; 6:1. Both sets of texts draw their inspiration from Leviticus 19 and all three reflect the necessity of preserving harmony in society.

Chapter 7 is entitled 'The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of Paul'. As with the New Testament Gospels, VanderKam says the DSS provide a backlight for Acts and Paul. He provides a few examples only. The holding of possessions in common appears in Acts 4:2-37 and in less detail in Acts 2:42-47. Amongst the Scrolls 1QS 6:19-22 regulates that by the third year of membership an individual's property will be merged with that of the community. VanderKam demonstrates that in 1QS the holding of property in common was based on Deut 6:5 ("You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your might) for "might" has the implication of "wealth" in a number of Targumic and other texts (as it can in the Hebrew Bible, although that is not recognised by VanderKam). He thinks that Acts 4:32 explicates Deut 6:5 in a similar way. As seen in earlier chapters of the work under review, the DSS community saw ancient prophecies actualised in their own time and this happens also in Acts 2:15-17 where the pouring out of the spirit is seen as a fulfilment of a passage in Joel. In another example, VanderKam points out that there are a number of allusions to the story of Moses on Mt. Sinai in Acts 1 and then in Acts 2 Pentecost is the setting. This he relates to the association of the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) with Moses and the making of the covenant on Mt Sinai in the Book of Jubilees and the Scrolls. He points out that the book of Exodus pictures Israel as a special entity at Sinai ("answered as one"; "treasured possession") and as a corollary Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer 41 contrasts the dissension of Israel on its journey through the wilderness with its unity at Mt. Sinai. According to Exodus then Israel was an ideal society when it received the Torah as were the first Christians in Acts when they received the Spirit. VanderKam turns next to Paul. He says that the people of the Scrolls believed the secrets of ancient prophecies had been revealed to the Teacher of Righteousness by God (1QpHab 7:1-5) and that Christians thought that the secrets were revealed through Jesus (Lk 24:44-45). Both the Scrolls and Paul cite Hab 2:4b "the righteous shall live by their faith/fullness". Their interpretations of how it applied in their own time were different. Further, VanderKam indicates that there are a variety of scholarly views as to how such interpretations should be understood for there is no agreement about the implication of the Hebrew אמונה translated as faith/fullness. 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 is also considered. It has no clear connection with what precedes it and it includes six words that do not occur elsewhere in either Paul or the NT. However, VanderKam refers to Fitzmyer's work which shows that the passage contains a number of elements that appear in the Scrolls. The phrase, "works of the law" which occurs in the Pauline letters is also in the Scrolls and VanderKam provides a discussion of whether the phrase encompasses the whole law or parts of it.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible give an excellent overview of the topics addressed and will be of value to scholars and students alike who wish to grasp the nature of the primary texts in relation to scripture as well as current scholarly thinking about them. The lucidity of VanderKam's prose is to be commended. As seen, this reviewer has suggested instances where what is stated may require to be nuanced or concerns an area where further research is required. However, that does not detract from the overall worth of the book which is likely to be a classic for some time to come.

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Ronny Reich (trans. Miriam Feinberg Varnosh), *Excavating the City of David: Where Jerusalem's History Began*, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Biblical Archaeology Society, 2011, 368pp. ISBN: 9789652210821, USD 50.

Reviewed by Anne E. Gardner

Excavating the City of David: Where Jerusalem's History Began presents, as the title suggests, an account of archaeological excavations on Jerusalem's south-eastern hill, where the earliest signs of human occupation are apparent. It also attempts to provide a short history of Jerusalem based on the archaeological finds. In addition, *Excavating the City of David*, produced with lavish colour photographs, maps and diagrams and aimed at the interested layperson, refers to a number of complex issues. These include the relationship between archaeological finds and the Bible; the nuances of interpretation of archaeological finds by different archaeologists at various times and relations between governing and administrative bodies and excavations. Political aspects also creep into the tale - including relations between the ultra-orthodox and secular archaeologists and attitudes to Palestinian workers. The unifying feature of *Excavating the City of David* is the voice of Ronny Reich. His dedication to understanding the work of those archaeologists who preceded him, his persistence in difficult excavations as well as his reflections on all the above named issues bring to life the finds from ancient Jerusalem within the context of the modern day. Reich's involvement in writing the present work though was not part of the original plan.

Mendel Kaplan, a South African Jew with an interest in the ancient world, visited the City of David in 1977. He was appalled by its condition and, having secured the support of the mayor of Jerusalem, proposed that the Hebrew University undertake a dig of the whole area of the City of David using the financial resources of an autonomous foundation set up by Kaplan himself. Although it was not practical to attempt to excavate the whole area, the proposal was accepted in essence and Yigal Shiloh appointed as archaeologist. It had been Kaplan and Shiloh's intention to publish a popular book but the premature death of the latter left a vacuum which Ronny Reich was called upon to fill, both as excavator and author.

The history of the excavations of the City of David takes up the majority of *Excavating the City of David* (from pages 13-276). Reich divides the history of excavations into four periods: the Ottoman, the Mandate, the Divided city and the Reunified city. By far the greatest amount of archaeological activity has taken place in the last period and most of that was by Shiloh and then Reich and his partner, Eli Shukron, who, at the outset, merely undertook a rescue dig at the behest of the IAA. Prior, though, to providing an account of their own work, Reich recounts the main features of all earlier digs, giving the reader the benefit of his assessment of their importance and aspects that would be followed up or viewed in a different light at a subsequent time. Every dig, as far as possible, is situated within its historical context and in order to do so there were occasions when Reich had to unearth archival material. In contrast to Final or even Preliminary Reports from the individual archaeologists concerned, Reich provides an easy to read account into which his own personal story is interwoven. His comments on political/religious matters which have affected the course of archaeological exploration run like a thread through his work. He first alludes to such matters on p.9 when he says, "Working in Jerusalem reveals not only ancient remains, but constantly lays bare and touches the delicate nerves of Israeli society." Reich and Shukron's digs are the most recent major explorations of the City of David and one hundred and twenty pages are devoted to them. There is a sense in which all previous archaeological digs in the area are viewed as merely a prelude to theirs which perhaps is inevitable, given the chronological scheme. At least it is made clear that at all times they were building on the work of others but also carefully reassessing it when new finds or even set-backs required it. Their contribution to uncovering the ancient waterways and defensive aspects of the spring and the city is outstanding. While luck played a certain part, perseverance and mental acumen were necessary to their success.

The section on the history of Jerusalem is much shorter (pp. 277-343). There are two particular highlights: 1) Reich's brilliant argument for the successive names of the water systems and the original designation of the Gihon Spring 2) his explanation for the lack of sherds around the Spring from LBA-Iron I, Persian period, Byzantine-Crusader periods in terms of access having been cut off (known for the latter two periods but theorised for LBA-Iron I). Overall, though, this section on the history of Jerusalem is less successful than the one on the history of the excavations for it is much less open. A minimalist approach is adopted. This is argued for by Reich who says that only archaeological data, as opposed to textual, can be accepted as scientific. While few would refute that archaeological finds are of the utmost importance, the lay person is not always aware that archaeologists do not interpret or date their finds with one accord. In

other words, just how "scientific" is archaeological evidence when viewed through the prism of the opinions of archaeologists? And how "scientific" is it to utilise one's own opinions about particular artefacts and translate those into "historical" evidence concerning a particular period when other archaeologists have quite different opinions and would use the same evidence to amplify our knowledge of quite a different period? This Reich does in the case of Kenyon's proto-Aeolian capital found in Jerusalem, assigning it to the late eighth century BCE at the earliest without mentioning that Kenyon thought it was from the tenth/ninth century BCE. Indeed, in the case of that particular artefact, the date can never be secure because it was found not *in situ* but rather in debris from the Babylonian destruction and thus dating it earlier will always be conjectural to some extent.

In keeping with the accepted practice of archaeologists, there is an explicit separation of archaeological evidence and Biblical story. This separation is extended to the Amarna Letters which are decried as mere "text". Although this is done by other archaeologists also (Magrit Steiner for instance) one wonders why this should be so. The Amarna Letters had not been copied and recopied like the Bible and are as much of an archaeological artefact as the bullae found by the Spring and which Reich sets much store by. The answer probably lies in a limited understanding of the nature of ancient texts whose context is not immediately apparent and which need to be assessed in terms of 1) the semantic field of the vocabulary that appears in them 2) the literary genre to which they belong 3) their context within the literary, social, economic and political world of the time. Yet there are times when Reich does make use of texts and in ways that help to advance our knowledge of Jerusalem. His convincing theory about the names for the waterways - Siloam prior to the Exile and Gihon after the Exile - is linked with Isa 8:16 and 2 Chron 32:30. He purports that the earlier name for the Gihon Spring was En Shemesh. He derives support for this theory from Josh 18:17 and his personal observation of the effect of the sun (shemesh) upon the spring.

Generally speaking, there is an unacknowledged aspect amongst some scholars of the relationship between the archaeology of Israel and the Bible. In the case of the present work which claims to base itself on archaeology, its appeal to the popular imagination is encapsulated in the name "City of David" which alludes to 2 Sam 5:6-9 where it is claimed that David captured the city and called it after his own name. Indeed it is because of the stories in the "Book of Books", as Reich calls the Bible on one occasion, that the early history of Jerusalem is of interest to so many people throughout the world who are potential buyers of his volume! Time and further research, both archaeological and textual, will tell whether in the future the "history" of Jerusalem conforms more closely to the Biblical story, particularly in the period of the early monarchy, than Reich and others see it as doing at present.

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James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary, *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith: A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture,* Wheaton Il: Crossway, 2012, 542pp, ISBN 9781433525711, USD 35.

Reviewed by Christopher J. Davey

This substantial volume is the outcome of a colloquium at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in February 2009. It was prompted by Kenton L. Sparks' *God's Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship* (Baker Academic, 2008) and we are told that 'the authors of the present book, a number of whom are world-class archaeologists, calmly extend invitation by implication to Professor Sparks, and others, to consider the validity of his errancy proposal' (14). One may assume from this that the book is an argument for the inerrancy of Scripture as advocated by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church until the nineteenth century, and some modern-day American evangelical Christians; but for those who read on, the situation may not be so clear-cut.

The book is arranged in five parts, the titles of which demonstrate its theological character; Biblical, Systematic, and Historical Theology; The Old Testament and Issues of History, Authenticity, and Authority; The New Testament and Issues of History, Authenticity, and Authority; The Old Testament and Archaeology. It has recieved many favourable theological reviews by evangelical scholars, but it has largely passed the archaeological community by. The archaeological contributors are active field workers, but as seminary based scholars, they work within a theological environment.

After reading Dr Arbino's paper in this edition of *Buried History*, archaeologists who wish to engage with evangelical theology may also dip into this volume. However the repeated refutation of Sparks' book does often lessen the general relevance of the material. For example, the first paper by Thomas H. McCall on 'Religious Epistemology' draws attention to a couple of relevant recent developments in the philosophy of knowledge and discusses how epistemology may relate to critical biblical scholarship. This is a reminder that people approach information and reach decisions in different ways and, as such, does have some relevance to archaeological research. However a significant portion of the paper deals with Sparks' chapter on epistemology and hermeneutics and is the first of a number of such discussions in the book resulting in a zero-sum game.

Mark Thompson's 'Toward a Theological Account of Biblical Inerrancy' begins by suggesting that the idea of inerrancy was not expounded until the veracity of Scripture was questioned in the nineteenth century. Both Warfield and the Chicago Statement maintain that the inerrant autographs are effectively the same as the current Bible. Thompson appears to look favourably on the definition of inerrancy by Paul Feinberg who proposed

that 'Inerrancy means that when all the facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs when properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything they affirm,…' (81). This has eschatological and hermeneutical dimensions. Thompson argues that conservative scholars have always realised that difficulties with the text of Scripture may remain unresolved for the present. He also says that biblical inerrancy 'should not be misused as a way of shielding any particular interpretation of a biblical text from evaluation' (82).

Thompson concludes that 'inerrancy almost inevitably becomes distorted when it becomes the most important thing we want to say about Scripture' (97). While theologians may have other things to say about Scripture, for the study of archaeology and history this is the supreme take it or leave it affirmation; tacit inerrancy of extant biblical texts leaves very little room for the exploration of meaning and great potential for accusations of heresy.

The historicity of the Exodus is a thread running through much of the book and is discussed directly by James Hoffmeier. He takes issue with Sparks because he ignores his own book *Ancient Israel in Sinai*. The fact is that biblical scholars who ignore the work of Egyptologists Hoffmeier and Kitchen when dealing with the Ramesside period should not be taken seriously. Hoffmeier devotes most of his paper demonstrating that the Exodus is important for all Old Testament writers; it is the founding narrative of ancient Israel.

A number of contributions draw on archaeological and epigraphic data. In a paper entitled 'The Culture of Prophecy and Writing in the Ancient Near East' John Hilber examines prophetic writings from Mari and Nineveh to show that 'Ancient culture respected the connection between prophets and the texts that bear their names' (241). While acknowledging that the Old Testament prophetic books have complex structures, Hilber argues that it can not be assumed that scribes ignored these conventions.

Alan Millard's paper 'Daniel in Babylon: *an Accurate Record?'* explains how many apparent errors in the Book of Daniel have come into question with archaeological discoveries. Readers of Professor Millard's paper will appreciate the complexity of Neo-Babylonian history and will, hopefully, be less inclined to reach superficial conclusions. When discussing Darius the Mede he references Professor Donald Wiseman, to whom this volume is dedicated, and only mentions Professor Sparks in the final sentence to expose his underlying bias. This paper makes no extravagant claims and is a model of scholarly analysis.

Tom Davis was director of the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute in Nicosia and contributes a paper entitled 'Saint Paul on Cyprus: *The Transformation of an Apostle'*. He describes the cultural milieu of first century Cyprus where Paul, as a Christian, first stepped into the Roman world and began his mission to the Gentiles. This paper is seminal for anyone seeking to understand the Apostle Paul and the context of Acts chapter 13. With some justification, Davis describes Cyprus as the 'crucible' of Christianity (423).

The core of John Monson's paper, 'Enter Joshua: *The "Mother of Current Debates" in Biblical Archaeology',* is an analysis of the Hebrew text and the historical geography associated with the Ai campaign. He gives a 'plausible and understandable reconstruction' (452). Only in the last paragraph is there a suggestion of the meaning of the Joshua narrative, but sadly this was not the context to develop the topic.

Rick Hess surveys the evidence for Israelite religion, including the Kuntillet 'Ajrud discovery, in 'Yahweh's "Wife" and Belief in One God in the Old Testament' to demonstrate that it does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that monotheism was a late Iron Age phenomenon. Personal names, in particular, demonstrate the complexity of belief patterns during this period.

Khirbet Qeiyafa is a large single period site that is becoming crucial for Iron Age archaeology. Michael Hasel is one of the excavators and summarises their current understanding of the site in his paper, 'New Excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa and the Early History of Judah'. As a large, unoccupied single-period site, Hasel is probably right to see it as a future type site for Iron Age I. It will also probably be the final nail in the coffin of the Low Chronology.

The final paper, 'The Archaeology of David and Solomon: *Method or Madness?*', is a summary of the debate about David and Solomon by Steve Ortiz. The Low Chronology does not fair well, but it is more important to acknowledge that new research approaches, such as State Formation Theory, are now being explored.

The book's readership will be scholarly and it will be particularly helpful for seminary students who will dip into it for useful archaeological and historical references. This will be its enduring contribution.

While the volume discusses the Bible at some length the nature of Christian faith is largely overlooked and Thompson's cautions about the role and nature of Scriptual inerrancy are not developed. Instead the authors of the papers mentioned herein aim to demonstrate the plausibility of the bibical narrative, not to prove it. For some, this will fall short, partly because of the theological framework of this book and the expectations it engenders.

The fact is we do not know exactly what the Exodus may have looked like or the exact time it happened. Faith entails living without fear of such vagueness and it also means not worrying about scholars who reject the historical character of the Bible because they can not cope with apparent ambiguity.

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Buried History

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