

מַלְכוּת *malkut* 'kingdom'. Incidentally, p. 70, line 11, represents the only mistake in this very technical book which caught my eye: Jer. 27.1 there should read Jer. 26.1.

To repeat: Hornkohl has written a masterful study about the linguistic profile of the book of Jeremiah, but the data and the conclusions reverberate far beyond the specific focus of this monograph. I for one will consult this book for years to come.

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Ezra and the Law in History and Tradition. By LISBETH S. FRIED. Columbia, S.C.: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PRESS, 2014. Pp. xii + 258, illus. \$59.95.

This book is published in South Carolina's series, "Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament," which portrays the histories of biblical figures' reception in religious tradition as well as their depiction in biblical texts. Fried approaches this task systematically by writing a chapter on each stage of Ezra's portrayal, from reconstructing the historical Ezra and contrasting him with the biblical Ezra (chapters 2–3) to summarizing and contesting modern critics' assessments of Ezra and of the Torah (chapter 9). The chapters in between chart this character's development and transformation in Jewish, Christian, Samaritan, and Muslim traditions. The result is a fascinating case study of religious imagination in the service of apologetics and polemics.

Fried has published extensively on the history of the Persian period, and her reconstruction of the historical Ezra (chapter 2) recaps her previous work. She thinks there is an authentic source behind the letter of the Persian emperor, Artaxerxes, authorizing Ezra's mission (Ezra 7:12–16). Fried draws many conclusions about Ezra from this letter. The most interesting is that Ezra's commission to appoint judges refers only to ethnic Persians, so his commission involves the imperial administration, not the internal affairs of Judea and Judean law. Fried does think that Ezra may have impacted the Jerusalem community through the tax exemption for the temple and cultic personnel (7:24). This exemption would have meant release from corvée labor of the kind that Nehemiah imposed to build Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 3). She also thinks that the complaint about mixed marriages in Ezra 9:1a may derive from an authentic Ezra memoir. Fried draws on well-documented Athenian marriage laws of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE as well as the scanty evidence from the Persian Empire to argue that mixed marriages were severely discouraged in both empires because of fear of foreign alliances through marriage (pp. 22–27). She therefore concludes that the story of mass divorce is historically plausible.

Otherwise, the depiction of Ezra in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah was entirely fabricated by the biblical writers working in the early Hellenistic period at the end of the fourth century BCE. After untangling the chronology to place Ezra after the time of Nehemiah (pp. 28–33), Fried argues that multiple writers reworked the material to cast Ezra as a priest and scribe mandated by the empire to teach the Torah in Judea. The story of Ezra's public reading of the Torah (Neh. 8) was then added as the climax to this account. Fried observes that the stories depict the Torah as an oracular device (7:10) and as "the physical sign of YHWH's presence" (p. 38) to "evoke in the mind of the reader awe and veneration for the Torah scroll, indeed not for its contents (which the reader does not know) but for the scroll itself" (p. 43). Fried proceeds to contextualize literarily this depiction of Ezra in comparison to the Exodus story and 2 Kings. It would have been helpful also to contextualize the biblical account within early Hellenistic-period politics as she contextualizes the historical Ezra. She does not explain who would have wanted to promote the biblical depiction of Ezra and why.

Chapter 4 describes 1 Esdras, a third-century-BCE Greek rewriting of Ezra combined with the end of Chronicles and Nehemiah 8. This account omits the character Nehemiah entirely, along with his criticisms of priests for intermarriage, so 1 Esdras clearly expresses priestly interests. Fried points out that this rearrangement makes Torah reading the climax and conclusion of the work. 1 Esdras thus presents Torah observance as the solution to the problem of sin and divine punishment.

Chapter 5 turns to 4 Ezra, also known as the Ezra Apocalypse, written in Hebrew at the end of the first century CE in response to the destruction of Herod's Temple. 4 Ezra contains three dialogues between Ezra and the angel Uriel around the theme of theodicy before turning to apocalyptic visions of judgment. Ezra complains that humans are almost incapable of keeping God's law. Even the few righteous will not be rewarded in this life. The book offers hope only in keeping Torah to earn reward in the afterlife. Therefore Ezra is inspired to rewrite the twenty-four books of the Tanakh that 4 Ezra claims were lost in the Exile and seventy secret books as well, which Fried supposes are meant to include 4 Ezra itself.

In chapter 6, Fried describes the Christian additions to 4 Ezra that are conventionally called 5 Ezra and 6 Ezra. Written in the second century CE, 5 Ezra introduces the Ezra Apocalypse with a supercessionist introduction. 6 Ezra reflects Roman persecution of Christians in the middle of the third century. It thus directs the apocalyptic fervor of the Ezra apocalypse not to questions of theodicy, but rather towards hope in the imminent overthrow of Rome.

These Christian additions to the Ezra Apocalypse were only the first of many reinterpretations of that book's presentation of Ezra. In chapter 7, Fried surveys seven Christian works carrying the name of Ezra and stemming from the second to the ninth centuries. The writers of these works seem fascinated by Ezra's challenge to theodicy and also unsatisfied by 4 Ezra's solution for it. They send Ezra on detailed tours of heaven and hell and show him engaged in further disputations with angels. They are notable for preserving 4 Ezra's emphasis on divine justice, with little mention of mercy or compassion. Ezra's reputation as a visionary is further enhanced by political apocalypses motivated by the Muslim invasions and by an almanac that predicts natural and human events by the calendar and days of the week.

In chapter 8, Fried reviews a broad array of sources on the reputation of Ezra among Christians, Samaritans, Muslims, and Jews of Late Antiquity. What emerges from this survey is the tendency of non-Jewish interpreters to blame Ezra for corrupting, falsifying, and even inventing the text of the Jewish scriptures. In the hands of anti-Jewish polemicists, 4 Ezra's story of Ezra reinscribing the Torah, the Tanakh, and seventy other books by divine inspiration becomes the basis for explaining the Tanakh's failure to mention Jesus Christ, or Mount Gerizim, or the Prophet Mohammed. These polemicists reason that, since God had revealed true scriptures to the Jews, these omissions must be due to Ezra's corruption of the text. Rabbinic literature, on the other hand, elevates Ezra to prophetic status as Malachi, to the rank of high priest, and even to that of a second Moses and Joshua. Ezra had become a mirror reflecting these traditions' concerns about their religious identities relative to each other.

In the final chapter, Fried briefly summarizes modern scholarship on Ezra from Hobbes and Spinoza to late-twentieth-century developments. After the previous chapters, it is enlightening to see historians rehearsing older views of Ezra, both positive and negative, with new rationales. Fried cannot resist devoting six pages to refuting Wellhausen and the Documentary Hypothesis (pp. 155–61), a digression that is too short to seriously engage the issues and too long for this book. As one would expect, recent scholarship is the hardest to characterize fairly, and Fried underestimates the endurance of source-critical positions in contemporary scholarship.

Fried succeeds admirably in the overall task of showing how Ezra changed across the texts and millennia. She summarizes these developments as an "ongoing debate regarding the efficacy of God's laws as antidote to the evil inclinations of the heart" (p. 172), a summary that rightly points to the influence of 4 Ezra on a remarkably wide variety of subsequent interpreters. One could also summarize it as a history of using the figure of Ezra to reflect on religious identity, its definition, and its boundaries. Ezra sometimes exemplifies the ideals of the privileged group and sometimes personifies the iniquities of its rivals.

The book is less successful as an account of "the Law in History and Tradition." Though many writers used the figure of Ezra to reflect on the status of the Torah, biblical law and its reception is a large topic that requires its own treatment. Fried tends to make facile arguments by definition (e.g., on the distinction between law and word, pp. 16–17, 39, and that biblical law was never binding, pp. 169–70), rather than grappling with the historical and cultural complexities of social norms, written instructions, and the idealization of "law" as a social and religious good.

The book concludes with a useful chronology of Mesopotamian and Egyptian kings and an appendix on the many versions and translations of 4 Ezra. The book also includes seven illustrations. Unfortunately, many of the black and white photographs are indistinct and hard to see—a surprising deficiency in a book series that focuses on the history of reception.

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The Decoration on the Cult Chapel Walls of the Old Kingdom Tombs at Giza: A New Approach to Their Interaction. BY LEO ROETEN. *Culture & History of the Ancient Near East*, vol. 70. Leiden: BRILL, 2014. Pp. lix + 436, illus. \$218.

Full disclosure: I have never been anything more than competent with mathematics, nor am I particularly comfortable with results displayed on a graph. So imagine my surprise when a study's hard-won conclusions are largely presented in that particular format. This is not a book for the faint-hearted, as the reader must get accustomed to acronyms such as CPSD ("Co-occurrence percentage surrounds discrepancy"), which is explained as "a calculated value giving the quantified difference between a CP [= "Co-occurrence percentage"] value and the CP values surrounding it in a table of CP values" (p. xiv). Given that such language is mostly impenetrable to me, I am happy to report that the author's thorough work has paid off with some rather interesting results, which are summarized in a concluding chapter that uses words exclusively. The author himself seems to be aware of the unconventionality of his approach, as he states that "[a]lthough some of the conclusions are so obvious that the employment of the methodology that has been developed may seem superfluous, the fact remains that the methodology adds a mathematical basis, thus making them more reliable" (p. lvi).

The book begins with a presentation of technical terms and abbreviations, followed by a general bibliography of works cited and a useful and up-to-date bibliography of the Giza tombs. After this comes a brief introduction followed by a numbered list of "(sub)themes" found on the chapel walls, such as the tomb owner standing or sitting alone (no. 1) or in the presence of his family (no. 2), personified estates bringing goods (no. 6) or servants also carrying goods or leading animals (no. 5), and so forth. Because these (sub)themes are often simply referred to by their numbers within the discussion of their occurrences and which (sub)themes surrounded them, the reader might wish to copy those three pages (lvii-lix) for easy consultation while reading the book.

Following this, chapter I presents the architectural and iconographic development of Giza mastabas and a discussion of the secular versus the non-secular content of the previously mentioned (sub)themes. This includes an examination of the difference between ritual and cult, where it is explained that cultic acts performed in the same order become a "ritual," and where the totality of the ceremonies carried out within the tomb chapels perforce became a ritual (p. 25). Next the terms "funerary" and "mortuary" are reviewed; the funerary ceremony, performed and represented as a standardized sequence of cultic acts, became a "ritual" (p. 26), and the expression "mortuary cult" applies to every aspect of the way the ancient Egyptians dealt with death and the dead (p. 27). This is followed by brief remarks on the decoration of the superstructure and the substructure of the tombs.

Chapter II presents the *raison-d'être* of the volume, which is to determine the cultic character as well as importance of the (sub)themes on the tomb's false door and west wall especially, whether these were subject to chronological developments, and what such changes indicate about the on-going provisioning of the deceased's *ka* by the individuals tasked with this responsibility. The methodology followed throughout the study is then revealed, followed by a description of the various catalogues of examples offered. These are dictated by the current condition of the chapel walls, and whether both the west wall and the false door are partly or completely present and decorated, or else only the false door or the west wall is, again, partly or completely present. As can be seen, the author is meticulous in his analysis of the evidence, which is what allows him to be so precise with his subsequent mathematical presentation throughout his study. Chapter III presents his methodology, which is predicated on statisti-