

Peripatetic Cultures

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[Mercury's Wings: Exploring Modes of Communication in the Ancient World](#) by Richard J. A. Talbert and Fred S. Naiden [Oxford University Press, 9780195386844]

[Mercury's Wings: Exploring Modes of Communication in the Ancient World](#) is the first-ever volume of essays devoted to ancient communications. Comparable previous work has been mainly confined to articles on aspects of communication in the Roman empire. This set of 18 essays with an introduction by the co-editors marks a milestone, therefore, that demonstrates the importance and rich further potential of the topic. The authors, who include art historians, Assyriologists, Classicists and Egyptologists, take the broad view of communications as a vehicle not just for the transmission of information, but also for the conduct of religion, commerce, and culture. Encompassed within this scope are varied purposes of communication such as propaganda and celebration, as well as profit and administration. Each essay deals with a communications network, or with a means or type of communication, or with the special features of religious communication or communication in and among large empires.

The spatial, temporal, and cultural boundaries of the volume take in the Near East as well as Greece and Rome, and cover a period of some 2,000 years beginning in the second millennium BCE and ending with the spread of Christianity during the last centuries of the Roman Empire in the West. In all, about one quarter of the essays deal with the Near East, one quarter with Greece, one quarter with Greece and Rome together, and one quarter with the Roman empire and its Persian and Indian rivals. Some essays concern topics in cultural history, such as Greek music and Roman art; some concern economic history in both Mesopotamia and Rome; and some concern traditional historical topics such as diplomacy and war in the Mediterranean world. Each essay draws on recent work in the theory of communications.

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Excerpt: No doubt the subject of this book, ancient communications, first came to preoccupy its editors' attention in the same way that it has engaged many scholars—through their own work, such as Richard Talbert's mapping of the classical world. The project of editing a volume of essays on ancient communications—a book that had no

forerunner—materialized in 2006, when Oxford University Press approached Talbert with an invitation to join his old friend and collaborator Kai Brodersen (then professor of ancient history at Mannheim University) in co-editing a communications handbook. Discussions were still at a preliminary stage, however, when the pressure of unanticipated professional and personal obligations led Brodersen to ask to be relieved of his commitment.

Talbert then hesitated to persevere alone, especially in view of his growing concern that the scope initially envisaged for the handbook—a "roads and seafaring project," as one e-message had summarized it—would prove unsatisfyingly limited. Moreover, it seemed to run the risk of needlessly duplicating much of John Oleson's *Oxford Handbook of Engineering and Technology in the Classical World*, a volume that was already approaching publication (in 2008). Talbert expressed to Fred Naiden—his new University of North Carolina colleague recruited in 2007—his sense of frustration that communications ought somehow to be addressed across a broader and more rewarding canvas. Naiden's sympathetic reaction and shared outlook soon prompted Talbert to request that the Press offer him Brodersen's place. It agreed. Between them, Naiden and Talbert next began to reconceive the volume as an initial exploration of a new field rather than as the kind of comprehensive reference work that could be produced for an established, well demarcated subject; in other words, as a set of essays and not a handbook.

[*Mercury's Wings: Exploring Modes of Communication in the Ancient World*](#) dares to take the broad view that communications are a vehicle, not just for the transmission of information, but also for the conduct of religion, commerce, and culture. Encompassed, too, within this scope are varied purposes of communication such as propaganda and celebration, as well as profit and administration. No less varied are the means and mechanisms of communication taken into account—from coins, papyri, artwork, and inscriptions on durable surfaces, to transient forms like watch-fires and mounted messengers. This said, we maintain that, for all its breadth, the scope of

"communications" thus conceived should not be as extensive as that of general cultural expression, especially literary or artistic expression. Even so, works of literature and visual art merit inclusion insofar as they achieved communicative effects (resulting from public performance, for example), as distinct from achieving aesthetic effects.¹ In addition, we recognize that the communicative skills required to create and deliver works of literature and art—the skills of composition, performance, and dissemination—are indispensable for ancient communication, not just in these two fields, but also in related ones ranging from oratory to graffiti. The topic of communications is larger than (and largely different from) that of technology, as treated in *The Oxford Handbook of Engineering and Technology in the Ancient World* already noted. It is smaller than (and again largely different from) that of social relations, as covered in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*.

The spatial, temporal, and cultural boundaries of this volume are extended but firm. The Near East formed a diplomatic and commercial communications network by the middle of the second millennium BCE, one that included part of Greece; this network then reemerged, with all of Greece now included, before the middle of the first millennium BCE. The eastern boundary of the network encompassed Persia, and from the early first millennium onwards, the western boundary included Greek, Punic, and Italian city-states; later, this boundary moved farther west and north to include Roman possessions. Just as the volume's terminus post quem is the emergence of a Near Eastern network in the second millennium, so its terminus ante quem is the division of the Near East soon after the rise of Islam.¹ Nonetheless, we do not attempt to be comprehensive in our coverage. That would be a gargantuan, as well as premature, undertaking.

In the chapters that follow, seventeen scholars whose previous work has to some degree or other engaged with communications now devote their attention to aspects reflecting communications as a specific perspective. The diversity of these contributors is exemplary. Some are building here on decades of work, others are working from

recent monographs or dissertations; some synthesize familiar evidence, others address new discoveries or forge fresh links. Altogether, the contributors' attention is divided more or less evenly among the Near East, Greece, Greece and Rome together, and the Roman Empire as a whole. Predictably enough, a few chapters do not fit this classification, while several cross boundaries within it.

In an ancient context, what are "communications"? Can today's communications terminology help explain the ancient variety, or were ancient communications, as Deleuze and Foucault implied, part of a world that was too simple or naïve to require any terms or ideas of this kind?

Written communications appear in both circumstances. One potential effect of the use of writing is the dissemination of copies that inform and empower those in the hubs or centers of a network. Another is the assertion, and also the extension, of the privilege of literacy. Neither effect, however, is achieved through writing alone. Images, too, may be standardized and multiplied, and then displayed in contexts that complicate their meaning and also their social impact. Just as the spread of writing is an outstanding feature of the first two millennia covered by this volume, so the spread of standardized messages is an outstanding feature of the millennium thereafter; that is, the Hellenistic period followed by the Roman Empire.

Religious communications differ from other kinds with respect to networks and also to range. Religious communications commonly have two recipients: one, a god or spirit, and the other, fellow worshippers or priests who may observe or overhear. As a result, religious communication is oblique: what is said to one party must be redirected towards, and reinterpreted by, another. All statements are effectively double, and some are obscure. Oracles depend on this obscurity. Dedications and other acts of ostentatious piety are costly signals, like the signals conveyed by royal monuments. Signals of this sort permit the signaler to accumulate prestige; at the same time, they give material benefit to the community.

Religious communication in later periods has some of these features, but it lacks the outstanding feature found in antiquity: ubiquity. Most ancient

historical records are, formally speaking, religious records: the doings of gods; the outcome of rituals, portents, and divine judgments; the countless plagues and famines caused by divine displeasure, or victories and harvests due to divine complaisance. Religion is everywhere in the ancient communications stream, as advertising is today, or propaganda was at the height of communism and fascism. In Mesopotamia, rulers wrote letters to gods. In Greece, gods inspired verses for the edification of oracular consultants. In both these societies, as well as in Egypt, gods made suburban boat trips, and worshippers for their part gratefully undertook long-distance pilgrimages. There was no avenue of communication considered inappropriate for addressing a god—not dancing or libanomancy, nor sharing food and drink. Gods were no less liberal in response, using birds in flight and nodding statues, earthquakes and sheep livers.

If religion was important from the very beginning of ancient communication, a second distinctive feature emerged mostly in the last millennium or so BCE, under the Achaemenid Persian and Roman empires, and also the empire of the Maurya in India. Such far-flung states not only ruled diverse peoples—a phenomenon going back to the unification of Egypt, and then Mesopotamia, in the fourth and third millennia—but also integrated them through deportation or immigration, the establishment of garrisons and military colonies, and the encouragement of urban growth through building projects. Although there had always been bilingual populations at the interstices of ancient societies, such as the Phoenicians and later the Greeks, now there were bilingually administered empires, like Persia, which used Persian and Aramaic, and Rome, which used Latin and Greek. In such empires, religious life, too, was more complicated than in earlier states, and commerce was more active, better organized, and farther-reaching. Communication tools like maps and coins became more sophisticated as well as more common.

These changes were not only extensive but also intensive. In the most populous and wealthy regions, like Egypt, the intermingling of populations from the Hellenistic period onward led, not just to bilingualism, but to biculturalism, too. In Rome (its

population as high as one million) and leading cities elsewhere—including those of the rival Parthian and Sasanian empires, like Ctesiphon with a reported population of 400,000—the multiplication of inscriptions and images combined with the larger and more diverse population to cause a growth in communications comparable to what the modern world has experienced. The quantitative change was so great that the quality of communications must have changed also: it became cross-cultural.

Two means of communication illustrate this change—currency and religious proselytism. For the first time in antiquity (indeed, in history), fiduciary coinage appeared, the result of innovations in Roman financial policy during the third and fourth centuries CE. Moreover, for the first time, Greeks and Romans came into extensive, permanent contact with the interior of the Levant, the Iranian plateau, and India, and with religions notably more different from their own than those they had encountered in Celtic Europe or the Punic Mediterranean. The spread of Christianity to Roman cities was one eventual result. At the end of antiquity, the Mediterranean basin had more money than it would again until the early modern period, and more places with Christian majorities than it ever would again.

Each of the seventeen chapters in [Mercury's Wings: Exploring Modes of Communication in the Ancient World](#) touches on one or more of these issues, but each chapter also primarily addresses either a communications network, a means of communication, or a dimension of religious or cross-cultural communication. These broad themes comprise the four parts of the volume. The order of the parts is consciously progressive: "Networks" make communication possible; "Means" render it variable; "Divinities" make it ambiguous; and cross-cultural "Engagements" make it complex.

Grant Parker's chapter introducing Part I, "Networks," underscores the importance of the physical environment, both water and land, while also issuing a timely reminder that the Mediterranean Sea has been a topic unjustifiably neglected by modern scholarship. To be sure, as early as the eighth century BCE, Homer features Odysseus' epic travels across a Mediterranean of

the imagination, etching him permanently into the memory of all educated Greeks and Romans (and readers ever since, too) as a quintessential traveler. Nonetheless, scholarship has been slow to appreciate the remarkable contrasts in the region's landscape, climate, and ecology, not to mention the varied means by which connectedness was achieved across such a vast expanse and beyond. The slowness may be explained in part by the relative reticence of the surviving geographical writers: they focus their attention on places for the most part, with less regard for the opportunities and difficulties of moving between them. Parker redresses the imbalance by singling out Delos, Delphi, Ostia, and Palmyra as instructive examples of how places may be connected; the last of the four—a desert oasis—most strikingly by the creative integration of land, river, and sea routes.

In addressing libraries, the author of the next chapter, Matthew Nicholls, broadens traditional scholarship to gauge the roles of these institutions in promoting the exchange and transmission of ideas and values, and the mobility of people, objects, and texts. The privileged ability of libraries to select and canonize texts has long been appreciated, but recognition of their widespread communicative value in Greek and Roman society is a revealing recent advance. Among Hellenistic rulers, efforts to develop libraries as centers of culture and learning became a significant form of interchange and rivalry. At the same time, such libraries furnished a valued means of communication between the ruler and his subjects, most notably in the case of the Ptolemies. Also in the Hellenistic period, Roman aristocrats developed a similar passion for libraries. However, it was Augustus' new regime at Rome that elevated the importance and visibility of libraries to an unprecedented degree. Their sheer physical scale here, the scope of their collections, the sense of permanence that they projected, and above all their open embrace of a broad, public readership, were extraordinary. Moreover, the communicative and commemorative roles of the great libraries in Rome itself were expanded into a network by the establishment of similar prestigious institutions at the heart of leading cities elsewhere across the empire.

It is Taco Terpstra's claim, made in the third chapter of Part I, that scholarship on Roman long-distance trade has been preoccupied by questions of its scale and importance for the overall economy. In consequence the role and importance of communication for this Roman trade have remained overlooked. Terpstra's chapter therefore seeks to recover the nature of this communication—both written and oral—and of the communications network in circumstances where the pace at best was pitifully slow by modern standards, and, to make matters worse, was often prey to storms, say, or bandits. Given the nearly complete loss of commercial correspondence from classical antiquity, but not from the medieval period, Terpstra draws on material from the latter for evidence. He also assigns a higher value and importance to oral rumor than scholarship has typically favored. For anyone engaged in business, he urges, it was vital to maintain a solid reputation, and the development of centers where traders would operate in close proximity—the "Piazzale delle Corporazioni" at Ostia serves as an outstanding example—undoubtedly increased the chances of information being passed on verbally.

In the last chapter of Part I, Fred Naiden reminds us that ancient warfare was, among much else, an act of communication. He explores the ways in which communication determined the outcome of battles in classical Greece—encounters where an army's victory would depend upon its continued cohesion and its soldiers' ability to remain in effective communication with one another. Neither Thucydides nor Xenophon (our principal sources for the battles in question) draws specific attention to these two vital needs, let alone their synergy, but Naiden demonstrates how readily identifiable they are. A distinction is to be drawn between networks of "horizontal" communication among an army's mass of soldiers on the one hand, and officers' top-down "vertical" communication on the other, the latter form conveyed by symbolic gestures as well as by verbal instructions (sometimes including calculated resort to falsehood). Well-drilled Spartan armies—and, to a lesser extent, Boeotian ones—stood out not least for as many as six officer-ranks, for their communication through music, and for their ability to execute orders conveyed in the heat of battle, including the maneuvers for an

orderly withdrawal. To be sure, Spartan steadiness also stemmed from the ingrained mentality of a citizen body where individual private identity was to be subordinated to the needs of the community. Athenian performance was more typical: here, army discipline was inferior by contrast, although in Xenophon's estimation the navy's discipline did match that of the Spartan army.

The chapters in Part I all place institutions and organizations—libraries, trading associations, and armies—in a natural setting. The chapters in Part II, "Modes," consider manmade environments dominated by the arts and by social and literary conventions. James Osborne's opening chapter on Hittite and Neo-Assyrian monuments engages with some of our oldest evidence for communications, as well as some of the most spectacular. For his discussion, Osborne exploits two interpretive concepts, one that he terms "relationality,"

and the other, known as "costly signaling theory," imported from recent work in evolutionary anthropology. Relationality calls for reckoning with changes over time in how a monument communicates messages and how it is perceived; costly signaling theory serves to explain why some monuments communicate more effectively if they are large and expensive. Both concepts assist in analyzing the ideological content of the monumental royal sculptures that form Osborne's focus. Familiar as these objects may be for Near Eastern specialists, Osborne shows how the perspective of communications can reveal interpretive complications. One is religious: many monuments are placed on inaccessible sites where the apparent viewer is a god. In this respect, these monuments resemble Mesopotamian royal letters to the gods, but in the form of colossal stone parcels, not the epistolary tablets that are the subject of a chapter by Seth Richardson in Part III.

In the next chapter, Jennifer Trimble argues that the size, diversity, and connectivity of the Roman Empire in the first centuries CE fostered developments in image communication. This was a world where levels of visual literacy, especially among city populations, should be considered quite well developed. At the same time, a full grasp of a monument's iconography was not essential for effective communication at a range of levels. For

our understanding, a "transmission" model of communication (with the message intended by the sender in individual instances forming the primary concern) is liable to prove less satisfying than a broader, "ritual" one. Here collective, repeated expressions become the focus, with special attention devoted to particular social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. A remarkable, seemingly modern phenomenon of the period is the proliferation and stability of image use, enabling complex, varied interplays of empire and place to be articulated in all segments of society, with or without the involvement of the authorities. Trimble illustrates this interaction with reference to three contrasting uses of the same visual motif, a man wearing the Greek himation (mantle) in the "armsling" scheme.

Like art, music is an avenue of communication with both aesthetic and political dimensions that differentiate it from gestures. For Timothy Power, writing on archaic and classical Greek music in the third chapter of Part II, the political dimensions of musical expression are paramount. There is little Greek evidence for instrumental music apart from poetry meant to be sung, and also little evidence for musical scores as opposed to the words—the "libretti," as Power terms them—that were meant to accompany the instruments. Music, accordingly, presents us with a synaesthetic form of communication: verse, instruments, often dance and, in Athenian drama, prose dialogue. The modal complexity of this kind of communication was unrivaled; so, too, Power implies, was its political impact. Solon and other politicians used music, while Pindar and other poets introduced political motifs into performances of their works. In Power's view, the generally accepted notion that early Greece was a "song culture"—differing in this respect from ancient Mesopotamia with its scribal culture, or from imperial Rome with its predilection for monuments and public spaces—should not lure us into laying undue stress on private life and personal communication. On the contrary, this culture was not only saturated with political values, but also periodically reoriented through innovative uses of song to introduce new political ideas.

The following chapter, Gregory Aldrete's study of gestures, addresses the oldest of all means of communication, shared by mankind with primates.

Yet it is also one of the most complex, since it often occurs in conjunction with other means: first, speech, and second, culturally created means such as images and music. To convey the subtleties and flexibility of gestures in short compass, Aldrete focuses on Roman practice, mainly during the late Republic and Principate. However, he also takes into account Roman encounters with Greeks, as well as variations of gesture at different levels of Roman society, from the imperial court to the arena. This environment of stereotyped gestures depends upon protocols for time, place, and purpose of use; yet Aldrete demonstrates repeatedly how Romans distorted, or even violated, these protocols to diverse effect. Some of these acts of manipulation involve religious gestures of the type treated at greater length in Part III; other such acts relate to the intercultural communication treated in Part IV, by Sheila Ager especially. Nonetheless, encounters between individuals remain Aldrete's main focus, rather than networks of communication on a larger scale.

While the first two parts of this book display topographical and chronological variety, Part III, "Divinities," limits itself to three of many eligible ancient religions, and to two closely related practices. It opens with a chapter by Seth Richardson, in which he addresses worshippers' messages to Mesopotamian gods and explores the duality of this kind of communication. Certain "genres" of communication, as he terms them, are for the worshipper to initiate; some, but not all, require expert assistance. Other such genres, in contrast, are for a god to initiate; here, too, the worshipper may require outside assistance. Moreover, there is always the possibility that some messages meant for a god will fail to arrive: hence, Richardson stresses occasional "general failure" of communications. At the same time, some messages sent from the gods prove inscrutable, creating another reason for failure. Because of this risk, the Mesopotamians developed protocols to account for failures. They also developed an elaborate communications infrastructure—places, genres, and formulae. Richardson's focus encompasses, not just individual worshippers, but shrines and their staffs, too. Notably, he identifies a characteristic Mesopotamian style for religious communications: it is at once elaborate and pessimistic.

Ian Rutherford's chapter, which follows, illustrates how the perspective of communications may reveal unnoticed features in familiar phenomena. Extending the scope of his 2013 monograph on theōria—pilgrimage by delegates sent to religious festivals by Greek poleis—here he considers pilgrimage in other ancient societies, and takes the opportunity to differentiate between features that were distinctively Greek and those that are commonly found. His insight into pilgrimage networks highlights how important the polis and the federation were as Greek forms of religious organization, and how they contributed to the special character of Greek pilgrimage. Moreover, Rutherford's discussion of how pilgrimage reinforced cultural norms and contributed to social cohesion leads him to an instructive comparison between Greece and ancient Israel. The latter society might appear to be the polar opposite of Greece, since sacrifice and accompanying religious activities were long confined to a single shrine, the Jerusalem Temple. In fact, however, pilgrimage to the Temple largely resembled Greek pilgrimage to shrines like Delphi or Delos; indeed, Rutherford speculates, it may have been modeled partly on Greek pilgrimage. This resemblance vindicates several decades of scholarly work—by both Rutherford and others—visualizing Eastern Mediterranean religions as a spectrum in which neighboring religions have much in common.

Among types of religious communication, oracles are paradigmatic, as Julia Kindt explains in the third chapter of Part III. Man proposes, but God disposes, so the act of communication cannot be said to accomplish any of the typical aims that otherwise may be taken for granted—such as transmitting information, influencing recipients or observers, or fostering relationships. The same limitation applies to portents and epiphanies, too. However, only oracles institutionalize this sort of communication, reduce it to writing, and make it available to all manner of inquirers, from states seeking political advice to individuals asking about marriage, business prospects, and other personal matters. A distinctive feature of oracles in Greece was their verbal ambiguity. Although any portent—and many other messages—might be misinterpreted, some Greek oracular shrines encouraged misinterpretation by adopting an

enigmatic style of expression that mixed ambiguity with vagueness, opacity, and a countervailing impression of divine infallibility. Kindt focuses on this "enigmatic voice" at Delphi, the most famous ancient oracle. She seeks to explain why this voice characterizes some oracles but not others; how it complicates the interpretation of oracular messages; and how oracles confirm, but adjust, the Greeks' notion of a barely bridgeable gap between human and divine participants in their polytheistic religion. Kindt's chapter complements Rutherford's explanation of how Greek worshippers communicated with each other while addressing the gods in such unambiguous practices as festival-going.

Like Rutherford's chapter, Michael Kulikowski's, on Christianity, illustrates how the perspective of communications may bring to our attention the importance of underappreciated features in familiar topics of study. It is indeed already widely appreciated that (as Kulikowski observes) Christianity would have been unable to develop in the unprecedented way it did, had not the Roman Empire already opened up a vast domain to networks of communication. Almost from the moment of its origin, Christianity conceived itself as a network of congregations professing the same faith and maintaining communication (or communion) with one another. Kulikowski goes much further, however, when he brings to our attention two unforeseen consequences of Christianity's success in eventually securing the adherence of emperors from Constantine onwards. First, Constantine's decision to declare the rulings of the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE universally binding on all Christians, and his successors' concern to enforce orthodoxy, inevitably strained Christian interaction. Even so, Christianity's regional groupings and the communication network within each of them gained strength as a result, enabling them to endure independently—in the West especially—after the imperial governmental structure on which they were based fell apart. Second, despite their intervention in church affairs, emperors could not serve as arbiters of matters of belief (all-important to Christians), so that laymen in search of guidance turned to alternative, and often competing, sources of authority. In time, the habit served to influence their political thinking, too: again, it was the West

that became most susceptible to division and less dependent upon the traditional imperial structure.

This synoptic view of a major religion concludes Part III. In Part IV, the chapters turn from topics that mostly involve one culture, religion, or period to larger topics such as great-power diplomacy and cultural exchange, imperial finance, and worldview. This part opens with a chapter by Matthew Canepa that immerses us in a world where the Persian Empire had long been the physical and cultural center, and Northern India and the Mediterranean were no more than outliers to the east and west. Canepa's concern is the cross-cultural interaction that developed during the Hellenistic period in the aftermath of Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire as the land and sea routes between the Mediterranean and India opened up. Despite their constant- that inter-state relations were liable to suffer from "information asymmetry," like the long-distance commerce treated by Taco Terpstra. This was a world of manifold networks, where knowledge was power, and where the safeguards provided by formal, permanent international institutions of the modern type were lacking. In the same spirit, the Arthashastra of Kautilya (summarized by Canepa) approached diplomacy as an extension of war. Although envoys were not professionals, the means of conducting diplomacy were varied and sophisticated, with tones ranging from wheedling flattery to blunt coercion. Symbolic messages of various kinds (including inscriptions, monuments, and coins) had an important role to play. In certain circumstances, kinship diplomacy might prove decisive, as might "deprecation" offered by third parties to avert a catastrophe. Our understanding, gained as it is through incomplete or unsatisfactory sources of information, relies heavily on what was said or done publicly; it is impossible to gauge the importance of what was said behind closed doors.

The fourth chapter, by Kenneth Harl, deals with Roman coinage as a distinctive type of communication that developed in the centuries preceding the empire's fall in the West and the loss of Egypt and Syria to the Moslem caliphs in the East. During this period, the Romans minted standardized images in the hundreds of thousands, even millions. In Part II, Jennifer Trimble showed

how multiplication of images affected visual and verbal discourse in various public settings, and now Harl, echoing this theme, describes how such a massive output of coinage affected marketplaces, and through them the economy of the empire. Linked to coinage in this period was unprecedented government regulation of the economy, a further extension of the capacity of both rulers and—in their reception of coinage—the ruled, to communicate with one another. Harl concentrates on by far the most important innovation, the establishment of a fiduciary coinage in the third and fourth centuries. While this step has typically been taken to signify economic decline or incapacity, Harl argues that fiduciary coinage represents a new level of communication, in which what is conveyed so widely—the value contained in a circulating medium—is an abstraction.

The conveying of abstractions is also a theme in the final chapter of Part IV, Richard Talbert's consideration of the conceptual foundations of Roman map-making. The ancient notion of a "map" was so different from today's that this term itself should be used with caution, a surprising as well as disappointing conclusion, because classical antiquity witnessed scientific progress in the related fields of astronomy and geography. Instead of describing the earth as accurately as was possible at the time, the maps of the Roman era depict, and glorify, Roman rule of what was, for the Romans, the larger part of the inhabited world. In this respect, maps served the same purpose as panegyric of the imperial period. Even so, there was much more to Roman maps than this propaganda purpose. On one hand, some maps, like the colossal Marble Plan of the city displayed in Rome itself, were costly signals, conveying their meaning by the effort made to express it, a theme in the chapters of Osborne and Manning. On the other hand, much of the Marble Plan was invisible to any spectator, implying that it was also intended for divine spectators, and thus had a kind of double identity evoking religious communication, as analyzed by Kindt and Richardson. <>

[Corinthian Wisdom, Stoic Philosophy, and the Ancient Economy](#) by Timothy A. Brookins [Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, Cambridge University Press, 9781107046375]

This work re-examines the divisive wisdom that Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians. Challenging the recent consensus that the Corinthians' wisdom was rooted primarily in the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition, Timothy A. Brookins offers a revisionary thesis centered on discourse similarities between the perspective of the Corinthian "wise" and the Stoic system of thought. Brookins argues that several members of the church, after hearing Paul's initial gospel message, construed that message in terms of Stoic philosophy and began promoting a kind of "Stoic-Christian" perspective that helped to precipitate divisions in the church. Being apprised of their views, Paul then exploited the "Stoic" discourse of his opponents in order to sustain common discursive ground. In addition to providing a fresh synthesis of the data in 1 Corinthians, Brookins brings in cutting-edge research on the ancient economy as he explores questions related to philosophical education and social status within the church community.

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In at least one respect, the subject of this book is one on which scholars have shared practically universal agreement: "wisdom", as it was understood by some in the Corinthian church, was critical to the problem of division that threatened to topple that fledgling church into ruin (1 Corinthians 1-4).

But over the last 200 years, this subject has also made cause for great disagreement, as scholarly assessments of this wisdom have varied widely.

- (1) In 1831, F. C. Baur published his programmatic essay arguing that the church's four putative "parties" (1 Cor 1:10-12) could be reduced to two: Paul's Hellenistic-Jewish faction, which extolled grace, and Peter's Palestinian Jewish faction, which extolled the Law and human wisdom.
- (2) From the early to mid-twentieth century, wisdom came to be understood in terms of Greek Gnosticism, whereby certain ones in the church were thought to have demeaned the material realm and to have boasted in the spiritual salvation ostensibly achieved through baptism.
- (3) Beginning in the final third of the twentieth century, scholars began to liken Corinthian wisdom to either "over-realized eschatology" or the wisdom of Hellenistic Judaism, both of which could be described, if not in terms of Gnosticism, at least in terms of incipient or "proto-gnosticism."
- (4) Also gaining traction during this period — though still continuing as the dominant perspective today — were social-historical theories that connected the Corinthians' wisdom with elite, and especially rhetorical, education.

Of these trends, the first two have been effectively demolished. Baur's thesis has long been regarded as reductive, if at all accurate. Gnosticism, as was shown in the 1970s, apparently did not exist

before the early or mid-second century, much less in Paul's day. Moreover, interpretations of the third sort have been blackened by association. In their recent review of Corinthians scholarship, Edward Adams and David Horrell subsume under one heading theses based on "religious and philosophical parallels," which include not only the Gnostic thesis but also theses related to Hellenistic Judaism, Greco-Roman philosophy, and popular philosophical thoughts. The difficulty they find with such theories reflects a common sentiment at present: "When parallels are found in Gnosticism, Hellenistic Judaism, Stoicism, Cynicism, Epicureanism, and so on, we are bound at least to ask whether the Corinthians can ever be clearly located in relation to one movement or another." This objection, sensible as it seems, has generally led in either of two directions. Many scholars, bracketing the question of the Corinthians' wisdom, have now shifted focus from the putative background behind the letter to the task of examining Paul's own side of the conversation — what his theology of wisdom was, what kind of rhetoric he used in treating the exigencies, and so on. The second solution has been to address the Corinthians' wisdom, but with the understanding that it cannot be characterized by any single system of thought: it is rather the wisdom acquired from elite education and therefore must pertain to rhetorical eloquence or sophistry, not any readily definable set of religious or philosophical beliefs. Both of these approaches have reinforced the recent trend of widening investigation to examination of the broader social milieu and consideration of the general secular attitudes that the Corinthians might have imbibed from it. Accordingly, most would now consider attempts to locate the Corinthians' wisdom in relation to particular systems of thought to be beyond the pale of what is currently acceptable.

Few, if any, would deny that these trends have marked a significant advance from the ideas of Baur and proponents of the Gnostic thesis. Yet, it should be asked whether the flow of present scholarship is one simply to be entered into, or whether — as at any juncture in the history of interpretation — it too may be in need of some redirection. To be sure, social-historical approaches to the text will remain indispensable for a full

appreciation of what is taking place in 1 Corinthians. But such approaches, I hope to show, need not lead us to the conclusion that the Corinthians' wisdom cannot be understood primarily in terms of particular systems of thought (controversial as that may sound), nor to the now dominant perspective that the Corinthians' wisdom is best understood in terms of Greco-Roman rhetoric or sophistry.

In the light of present circumstances, the thesis proposed on the following pages, in many respects, appears to buck the trend. Nonetheless it is a thesis that, at least in inchoate form, has precedent as old as any and, once an opportunity has been given for the full breadth of evidence to be assessed, I hope, will be recognized among the most cogent proposals to be forwarded to date, accounting as it does for both a broader range of the internal evidence of 1 Corinthians on the one hand and the social situation of first-century Corinth and its church community on the other. Without denying the role played by social stratification and other secular social forces, I argue that the divisive "wisdom" of the Corinthians, *qua* wisdom, can be accounted for as a Christian development of Stoic philosophy, arguably without remainder. Conspicuous in most of the problems in the letter, this perspective has been adopted among a small but influential minority in the church. While they have not committed to Stoicism slavishly, they are nonetheless deeply indebted to its discourse and superstructure for their interpretation of Paul's message.

The lack of attention this thesis has received over the years owes, I think, less to a dearth of evidence than it does to the irresistible draft of the collective scholarly agenda, which, though set by a few, sweeps nearly all into its powerful current. For some fifty years prior to the ascendancy of social-historical approaches, NT scholarship exhibited an all-time low in interest for how Greek philosophy might illuminate the text, which meant that Stoicism received little attention in investigations of 1 Corinthians. At the end of that period, when the Gnostic thesis suffered its decoronation and social-historical approaches were presented as a sort of replacement, all theses that might have been supported on the basis of comparative religious or philosophical material were collectively crushed,

with scarce regard for their independent merits. This has allowed what little treatment the Stoic thesis has received in recent years to fall through the cracks: the thesis has been passed over on principle rather than by any sort of direct rebuttal. With "religious" and "philosophical" theses out of the picture, the "rhetorical" thesis then seemed the natural road to take. This direction seemed to be confirmed by a simultaneous shift of opinion regarding first-century Corinth, namely that it was "Roman, not Greek" (again serving to shunt aside theories related to Greek religion or philosophy). With that, the new agenda for Corinthian studies was set: as we hear in the current literature, the divisions of the Corinthians were "social, not theological" in nature, their wisdom was that of "rhetoric, not philosophy," and their city was "Roman, not Greek." Next to such sharp dichotomies, the Stoic thesis has been a nonstarter. As it is, one either follows the consensus willingly or is dragged.

Perhaps the current consensus has also stemmed from our despair at the great diversity of meanings that greek- language was capable of carrying in the first century. Such difficulties are not to be denied. Yet, the corollary observation that Paul's discussion of "wisdom" in 1 Corinthians 1-4, too, admits of a wide variety of usages, and wisdom must therefore be nonspecific, seems to involve a non sequitur. Arguably, it confuses the occasion behind the letter on the one hand, and Paul's ad hoc response to it on the other. Indeed, much could be clarified in Corinthian studies if we would take more seriously the (widely accepted) methodological observation that not everything Paul says constitutes the antithesis of some opposite position held by his "opponents," as if the text were an immaculately polished mirror. Rather, historical occasions act as springboards for Paul's theologizing: he begins with a particular set of circumstances — and many have supposed, in 1 Corinthians, with a particular kind of wisdom — and then expatiates more broadly on "human wisdom" in all its dangerous forms. Just how this set of historical circumstances might be isolated if not through "mirror-reading," however, will have to be considered in our present investigation.

My main aim here is to provide the first sustained treatment for the Stoic thesis, assessing 1 Corinthians from beginning to end, with conscientious attention to methodology, and — marking an advance from the old Gnostic thesis — within proper social and economic context. This requires special attention to a broad range of counter theses, most of all the new rhetorical one. As we shall see in Chapter 2, the rhetorical thesis has been taken for granted on the word of a few dominating monographs; though a closer, and fuller, look at the evidence reveals that their case finds far less support in the ancient sources than recent literature has suggested. Chapter 3 canvasses the state of the issue with regard to methodology and attempts on this basis to distill a set of methodological principles for the present pursuit. In Chapter 4, I undertake an investigation of the Corinthian social world, addressing especially questions related to the socioeconomic configuration of the Corinthian church, the religio-cultural character of their city, and potential philosophical influences within the community. Chapter 5 sets forth the Stoic thesis, with an eye not simply to 1 Corinthians 1-4 — the usual locus of attention — but rather to the pattern of issues found throughout the letter as a whole. Many observations will have been noted in previous studies, but it will also become apparent that past studies have left some ponderable stones unturned. Chapter 6 ties together the loose ends, attempting to answer how the present thesis lines up with insights from other studies, past and present. In the end, the composite evidence should tell a different story from that told in recent years: the "wise man" among the Corinthians is less the "sophist" than he is the "Stoic."

Previous examinations of the wisdom debated in 1 Corinthians have focused sharply on chapters 1-4, and especially the unit found in 2:1-5. Valuable as such focused examinations have been, however, the fruit of wider investigation should now be evident. We have seen from the pattern of the Corinthians' language and of the problems that extend throughout the whole of the letter that the "wise man" among the Corinthians was not — as recent studies have had it — the "sophist" so much as he was the "Stoic." The divisions in the church were

fomented primarily by a small group of Stoic-thinking and relatively wealthy Christians, who, after Paul left Corinth, had translated his gospel message into Stoic categories and denigrated the inferior majority.

Many of the reasons why this thesis has not received the attention it deserves have become evident along the way. As we have seen, a major reason has been the wide disillusionment with literary parallels that overcame the guild in the mid-twentieth century. When the bathwater of Gnosticism was, rightly, thrown out, the embryo of a Stoic thesis unfortunately went with it. Of course, there remain those who have compared the Corinthians with Hellenistic-Jewish wise men, Epicureans, Stoics, or Cynics, but these are theses that the dominating discourse of present scholarship have been wont to discard. Particular religious or philosophical systems are said to be too specific. At best we can speak of a popular trend consisting of multiple philosophical influences. Enlightened as such statements are meant to sound, however, we have seen that they reflect only a partial grasp of the evidence. The positions of the Corinthians may seem to reflect "multiple" philosophical influences because there was overlap in the doctrines and discourses of the philosophical schools themselves. Partial overlap, however, owing to common philosophical heritage, hardly vitiates holistic distinctiveness. Stoicism did not cease to be a distinctive school of philosophy because it shared with the Academic school a similar view on the virtues, and with the Epicureans similar views on the senses, and with both a common stock of language, a concern for the good life, and much, much more. Likewise, the Corinthian perspective did not cease to be peculiarly "Stoic" (if also "Christian") simply because it shared some measure of overlap with other systems of thought. The upshot of our examination has been that, while semblances of the other philosophies appear here or there, only Stoicism clearly rears its head, both conceptually and verbally, from the beginning of the letter to the end. Unless it can be shown that some other system has the potential to explain the evidence to an equal extent, and in an equally satisfactory fashion, the appeal to (limited) overlap must be regarded simply as a red herring. As it is, I have

argued that nothing additional to Stoicism and Pauline teaching is necessary to explain the culprits' "philosophy." What may, however, need further consideration is the nature of the processes involved in the innovative mixing of Christian and Stoic elements undertaken by the Corinthians, and in particular how more recent and adequate understandings of "syncretism" might explain the peculiar social-symbolical ways in which the church made those innovations.

A second reason for neglect of the Stoic thesis has been, ironically, an infelicitous shift in methodology. Trading one imperfect method for another, many interpreters have moved from putting excessive (and often anachronistic) focus on literary parallels, to mirror-reading from Paul's own assertions. Our return to literary parallels here, though now within proper social and chronological context, has led to some startling differences with recent conclusions because it has meant essentially a paradigm shift in what texts are used as the basis for reconstruction. Indeed, whereas the rhetorical thesis mirror-read its conclusions from Paul's statements in texts like 2:1-5 (his alleged repudiation of "rhetoric"), 4:5 (his defense against those who have purportedly "judged" his standing as an orator), and chapter 9 (his "defense" as in 4:5), I have tried to focus on the language and problems more securely linked with the Corinthians themselves. At many points this has led to a total reversal in how the letter is understood: 2:1-5, 4:5, ch. 9, and the like, for example, probably say much less about the Corinthians than they do about Paul (cf. 1 Cor 2:3-5; 1 Thess 1:5; 2:1-10). Conversely, when we turn our eyes to the texts that most directly reflect the Corinthians' views, we see nothing of rhetoric and everything of philosophy.

A series of false dichotomies has also served the oversight. Recent books have told us — in these exact words — that the Corinthians' wisdom was that of "rhetoric, not philosophy," that their divisions were "social, not theological or philosophical," and that their city was "Roman, not Greek." All of these dichotomies have been found either ill-defined, overstated, or simply untrue. As we have seen, all have unfortunately also served to sideline philosophy from the discussion.

We have further been told that, because ancient students were not introduced to philosophy at the lower stages of literate education, which were focused almost exclusively on rhetoric, Pauline church members would not have had any serious acquaintance with it. However, our present assessment of the Corinthian church in the light of the most recent studies on ancient economy counsels that this conclusion be qualified. This church contained several individuals who were higher up on the social ladder, perhaps at the level of Longenecker's "ES4" bracket. These could easily have studied philosophy from the epitomes in circulation, as they almost certainly would have been literate. I have also shown, however, that many at this level, and perhaps even some below, would have had access to a so-called elite education in the gymnasium. Following this trail has led us to some tantalizing "Erastus evidence" that has not previously been brought into the discussion: outside the NT and the now disputed Corinth VIII 232, the only two Erasti known at all in first-century Greece were both gymnasium affiliates. Whether one of these went on to be self in Paul's Corinth we may never know, but the extreme rarity of the name and the otherwise unlikely coincidence in chronology, location, and social station make it difficult not to give some credence to the possibility.

Perhaps a less obvious reason for the oversight has been the way in which the rhetoric-philosophy dynamic has played out in the history of the Church and in western history generally. The Church quickly took up Plato's mantle in railing against rhetoric as "mere eloquence," in favor of wisdom's true content — philosophy. By St. Augustine's day, and then on through the Medieval tradition, Christianity was in fact a philosophy and the Christian believer the true "lover of wisdom," or philosopher. Although Augustine believed that rhetoric too might be pressed into the gospel's service, this did not stop Plato's characterization of rhetoric as flashy in form and vacant in content from enduring throughout most of western history, in ecclesiastical and secular contexts alike. In that regard, having now looked more carefully and exhaustively at the evidence of 1 Corinthians, we might ask whether the rhetorical interpretation has not been influenced more by our

deep-rooted suspicion of sophistry and traditional sympathies with philosophy than it has by the actual evidence at hand: the haughty purveyor of claptrap seems far more deserving of our arrows than does our solemn, truth-telling ally, the philosopher.

A final reason for the oversight has been that most treatments of 1 Corinthians have been deplorably (if somewhat understandably) parochial in focus. This has meant not only that the merely partial treatment of the evidence from those advocating the rhetorical thesis has been found convincing enough, but also that the Stoic thesis itself has never received a full and detailed exposition. But no longer can we be content to build an entire reconstruction off of the shaky foundation of chapters 1-4, or worse, 2:1-5. Here I have tried to draw all the evidence together for the first time, evincing both the Stoic undercurrents that seem to have been at work in all the letter's dominating topics and the plausibility of the Stoic thesis vis-à-vis the social background of the Corinthian church. The cumulative weight of the evidence has mounted more than a formidable alternative to the previously regnant rhetorical thesis.

In closing, it should be said that several issues we have touched upon demand further attention. The question of Stoicism in Paul's thought continues to loom large. The fact that the Corinthians could hear him in Stoic terms is in itself evidence of resemblance. And then for him to posture as a Stoic in response — what should we say to these things? Is it mere "formal similarity"? Or should this prompt us to jettison the notion that there is any "intrinsic difference" between Paul and the Stoics altogether, as Engberg-Pedersen has argued? Probably a more balanced treatment awaits. The present analysis supports the conclusion that Paul was rather a man of many worlds, capable of shifting between them as the rhetorical situation demanded, in the process exploiting discourses that supplied premises acceptable to his audiences, evoking familiar associations, retaining serviceable linkages in thought but emptying the source language of its original content where more subversive purposes were found necessary, and never abandoning his core, and essentially distinctive, Jewish-Christian convictions.

These conclusions also demand a fresh consideration for the contours of the Corinthian correspondence, and especially the relationship between 1 and 2 Corinthians. If past consensus has been right that the two letters (or three, if 2 Corinthians is composite) are prompted by rather different occasions, the present argument gives us now further reason to rethink the extent to which "sophistic" concerns cut across them: the immediate controversy in which the church was embroiled and Paul's concern for his own public perception should probably not be conflated.

The time may also be ripe to begin rethinking the way in which "theological" or "philosophical" theses on the one hand and "socio-economic" ones on the other, far from standing in irreconcilable opposition to each other, actually work together in explaining the letter's exigencies. In the past, each of these aspects has been explored independently. But they are not mutually exclusive. Perhaps Stoicism was attractive to certain upwardly mobile Corinthians for some of the same reasons it was attractive to Roman elites — because (beside appearing compatible with their Christianity) it justified the social and political status quo, served as the badge of their sophistication, helped enhance their honor, or the like? Whatever the reasons, ideology rarely acts alone in governing behavior, and the deeper complexities of the Corinthian exigencies will have to receive further reflection.

Still further avenues could be explored: one might ask what part the Corinthian correspondence played in shaping Paul's theology, take up further reappraisal of the state of methodology in Corinthian studies, or reconsider rhetorical approaches to Paul in the light of the critical role played by the "occasion" in informing his rhetoric of choice. For now, however, I hope only to have set the winds of change in motion on the question of the Corinthians' wisdom. If the present examination of the evidence has been on target, acceptance of the rhetorical thesis should begin to flag and the windfall should go to philosophy. But judgment on these matters shall have to be left to the wise. <>

[Romans 7 and Christian Identity: A Study of the 'I' in its Literary Context](#) by Will N. Timmins [Society

for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, Cambridge University Press, 9781107197091]

In this book, Will N. Timmins provides a close rereading of Romans 7 within its literary-argumentative context and offers a fresh and compelling solution to the identity of the 'I' in this text. Challenging existing paradigms, which fail to provide both literary coherence and theological plausibility, he develops his own positive theory about the device. Along the way he also re-examines a number of key texts within the letter, which have hitherto not been given due weight within the scholarly discussion. This study offers a fresh and satisfying solution to one of the Bible's most notorious cruxes and contributes to our understanding of the apostle Paul's thought. It will be of interest to all scholars and students within the fields of biblical studies and Christian theology.

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Excerpt: This book has been a long time in the making. It started life as a personal wrestling, on and off over a period of years, with the various, rival interpretations of Romans 7. Although I felt the attraction of some of them, I remained dissatisfied with all of them, unpersuaded that they had the explanatory power to deal with various elements of the text. My quest for a solution to the problem of the 'I' eventually took the form of a PhD thesis, which was submitted to the University of Cambridge in 2014.

The Riddle of 'I'

The subject of this study is the identity of the 'I' in Romans 7. Few, if any, passages in the Pauline corpus have attracted more sustained attention. And yet few passages continue to leave interpreters with so many unanswered questions and lingering uncertainties. Comments to the effect that the passage is supremely difficult to understand are not hard to find.

The first-person singular pronoun 'I' is, in principle, the least ambiguous pronoun from a grammatical point of view, since it refers to only one person and is self-referential. Given that there is no longer any significant dissent from the view that Paul authored the letter to the Romans, it is ironic that the identity of the 'I' has become, of all issues, the most vexed.

Of course, it is too straightforward to say that 'I' is self-referential, since the self-reference is not authorial when the 'I' is used fictively. Nevertheless, given the length of the speech in Rom 7, the interpreter would expect to be able to clarify the pronoun's function. There are two reasons why what ought to be a straightforward task is, in fact, a very difficult one.

First, the self speaks within a context marked by a great antithesis that divides up the world and its inhabitants. On the one side stands Adam, and an accompanying reign of sin and death (5:12-21), and those who, as subjects of this reign, are slaves of sin (6:15-23). On the other side stands Christ, and the reign of righteousness and life (5:12-21), and those who, as subjects of this reign, are slaves of God (6:15-23). In Paul's map of the cosmos there appears to be no middle ground. But it is far from clear on which side it belongs. Within the church's reception of Paul, the question of the identity quickly took on a life of its own, being inseparable from debates over the nature of conversion, grace and obedience. Nevertheless, the question itself is clearly informed by the surrounding context of the speech. Different parts of the text seem to belong most naturally on one side of the Pauline antithesis, and it is a relatively straightforward task to draw up a list of the apparently opposing elements.

Secondly, compounding this problem is the challenge of fitting the into Paul's autobiography. No-one has highlighted this more forcibly than Kümmel in his influential 1929 monograph. The problem with understanding 7:7-13, a section marked with past tenses, as a description of Paul's past is that it is hard to imagine a time within Paul's Jewish upbringing when he was without the law. The problem with understanding 7:14-25, marked by the present tense, as a confession of the believing apostle is, quite simply, that Paul's deeply pessimistic depiction hardly fits the life of a believer. This difficulty is not easily resolved by reading vv. 14-25 as a present depiction of Paul's past experience, since the resulting picture of angst is very different from the way Paul portrays his past elsewhere, especially in Phil 3:4-6.8

The reasons why the question is so difficult to resolve are also the reasons why it is important to the interpretation of Paul. Dunn's statement that our understanding of Rom 7 'will in large measure determine our understanding of Paul's theology as a whole risks overstatement, but not by much. A passage tied to our understanding both of Paul himself and the fundamental structures of his theology is obviously of great importance. Käsemann, for example, argues that if it is understood to be a Christian, then 'all that Paul says about baptism, law, and the justification of the ungodly, namely, all that he says about the break between the aeons, will have to be interpreted differently.'

However, nowadays, many scholars doubt that quite so much hangs in the balance over our interpretation of it. Kümmel's anti-autobiographical reading of Rom 7 was accompanied by an argument for understanding the 'I' as a fictive Stilform that has parallels within both Paul and other Greek literature. Not only was his thesis quickly adopted as an answer to the problem of the 'I', but he created the context within which Stendahl could argue that 'the anthropological references in Rom 7 are seen as means for a very special argument about the holiness and goodness of the Law.' Stendahl's concern was a hermeneutical one: Paul was still being interpreted through the lens of late medieval piety, which read into the apostle an introspective conscience that he did not have. This misreading was nowhere more apparent than in Rom 7, where Paul's argument for the integrity of the law had been usurped by a fixation on man's predicament. Although Kümmel's fictive self has not stood the test of time, Stendahl's legacy is a lasting one. Now it is common for interpreters to read Rom 7 as an apology for the law and to relegate anthropology to a matter of secondary significance.¹⁶ Therefore, some scholars suggest that it is time to abandon 'the pitfall of persevering about the identification of the self. In this study, we seek to do the very opposite: to reopen the investigation. We hope to show that what is a matter of secondary significance to Stendahl and his heirs is, in fact, integral to Paul's argument concerning the law.

The Return to a Fictive 'I'

The literature devoted to the study of Rom 7 is vast. Lichtenberger, who devotes more than one hundred pages to the task of summarising it, notes '*doch ist er weit davon entfernt, eine repräsentative Gesamtschau der kirchlich-theologischen Rezeption dieses Textes zu bieten.*' [yet he is far from offering a representative overall view of the ecclesiastical theological reception of this text.] We will not retrace the ground that Lichtenberger has so ably covered, but instead evaluate in detail the contribution of Stanley Stowers, a name lacking from Lichtenberger's survey, but someone whose interpretation of Rom 7 is, nevertheless, by far the most influential of the past two decades. We will devote the next chapter to a close study of Stowers' prosopopoeia thesis. For now, we will briefly sketch the context of his contribution, which will highlight its critical significance for the question we are addressing.

As Theissen has noted, there are three broad categories for understanding the self in Rom 7: it is a personal 'I', a typical 'I', or a fictive 'I'. However, this risks oversimplifying the issue, since it is hard to find a personal/autobiographical reading of the self that denies its typical/representative function. The view of the later Augustine, often considered the pioneer of autobiographical readings of the self, was that the self of 7:14-25 was a believer under grace, caught between the opposing forces of flesh and Spirit. There is, likewise, no sharp line of demarcation between a typical and a fictive 'I', since there may be particular rhetorical reasons why an author presents himself as a representative figure. In fact, already from the time of Origen and the early Augustine, understanding the rhetorical function of the 'I' was considered an important aspect of identifying the self.

What was new about Kümmel's thesis was an argument for how this rhetorical 'I' could be purely fictive and, therefore, bear no relation to Paul's own experience. Of course, the attraction of this view is that it sweeps away, in a stroke, every difficulty with harmonising the self with Paul's own experience or his understanding of Christian identity. However, the problem, beyond those

already noted, is that the struggle that the self narrates sounds like it is someone's experience. Stendahl's suggestion, that later interpreters have been misled because Paul 'happened to express [his] supporting argument' about the law so well, fails to explain why Paul chose a form of argumentation that gave such realism to the experience of the self. As Beker notes, 'the personal tone of vv. 14-25 seems inexplicable, if not deceptive, if it in fact describes something that was completely alien to Paul's Jewish experience.'

The solution for Beker, and many others, has been to read 7:7-25, including vv. 14-25, as Paul's Christian perspective on his former Jewish life. This solution is, according to Jewett, 'the most plausible of the basic approaches to the enigma of Rom 7.'²⁹ Engberg-Pedersen considers it 'established that Paul is describing an experience of living under the Mosaic Law as seen from the Christ-believing perspective.' However, Seifrid has exposed the fundamental flaw of this popular approach. First, it actually involves reading the text as expressing two different viewpoints, dividing it into those parts that represent Paul's past perspective (7:15, 18b-19) and those parts that represent Paul's present perspective on his former life (7:21-24). Secondly, the passage is introduced in 7:14 by the first-person plural, 'which links the narrative to the present which Paul shares with his readers.' And, thirdly, the anticlimatic v. 25b is marked as having present reference by the preceding exclamation of thanks to God through Christ.³¹ To our knowledge, Seifrid's telling criticisms of the retrospective view have not yet been answered.

If 7:14-25 describes the human situation before the coming of Christ, then, as Winger neatly puts it, 'if Paul is talking about himself he is not talking about his present self, and if he is talking about the present he is not talking about himself.' But, for the reasons Seifrid gives, vv. 14-25 cannot be understood as a portrayal of Paul's former self. Therefore, unless we return to an Augustinian reading of the 476, with its associated problems enumerated by Kümmel, it is assumed that Paul is talking about the present condition of people outside of Christ. However, if he is doing so, then the self must be functioning fictively and not

typically. But how can this be maintained without returning to Kümmel's questionable Stilform hypothesis. Enter Stowers, who has argued that in Rom 7:7-25 Paul is employing a *prosopopoeia*, a 'speech-in-character', by which he represents the speech, not of himself, but of another person or type of character.

It is obvious why Stowers' resurrection of the fictive self has proved so popular. The apparent alternative is to choose between the lesser of two evils: either we adopt an Augustinian reading of the self as a believer under grace, caught between the flesh and Spirit, or we adopt a retrospective reading of the self as a depiction of Paul's former life as a Pharisee. The problem with these two readings is not that they cannot be argued within a plausible theological framework, but that they come into conflict with significant aspects of the text. We need to find a solution that makes sense of the text as we have received it, that is able to integrate all the relevant data into a coherent whole. However, it is for this reason that we will also have cause to reject Stowers' hypothesis and, by doing so, open the way for another understanding of the self.

We do not propose to return to the dead ends we have just outlined. That is to say, we will not be arguing that the self is an expression of Paul's past as a Pharisee or a generalising depiction of humanity outside of Christ. Nor will we be arguing that the self's division is an expression of being caught in the eschatological tension between flesh and Spirit. Further reasons to reject these positions will become clear as our argument unfolds. A radical, but nevertheless straightforward, solution to the riddle of the self has been offered by Seifrid and Thurén. Seifrid argues that 7:14-25 corresponds to 7:5 and, therefore, should be read as an absolute statement of life as it is apart from Christ. However, this state is confessed by the Christian according to the manner of Jewish penitential prayers and confessions and serves to describe the believer from the limited perspective of his or her intrinsic soteriological resources. Although, as a believer, Paul has died to the law, he 'portrays his present person as one in the flesh and under the Law', as belonging entirely to the old order. As such, even though this is the confession

of a believer, it can be described in more general terms as the 'human being in confrontation with the Law.'

Equally bold is Thurén, who argues that in Rom 7, when read alongside Rom 6, 'the Christian is presented as totally free from sin, and yet totally subject to it. Both of them face this seeming contradiction head on. For Thurén, it is explicable as rhetorical hyperbole. For Seifrid, it is an application of Paul's theological antithesis to the life of the believer. In the flesh, the believer is still under the law and its condemnation. In the Spirit, he is a free man. In this way, Seifrid seeks to maintain Paul's absolute antithesis between Christ and the law. Paul, by modelling the proper human response to the law, seeks to bring his audience to recognise themselves as transgressors under the sentence of death. His audience's hoped-for confession of radical guilt and condemnation corresponds to an acceptance of Paul's gospel of justification apart from the law, which Paul reaffirms in 8:1-4.

The strength of Seifrid's solution is that he refuses to overlook either the profoundly negative portrayal of the self plight or the temporal markers that situate that plight in the present that Paul shares with his readers. However, it is arguable whether the resulting theological dialectic escapes from being a contradiction at the level of the text. Would Paul's audience in Rome have been able to make sense of being both under the law and not under the law at the same time? Our own conclusions, which we will now briefly anticipate, will be seen to support those of Seifrid in two ways and differ in two others. First, our exegesis supports the idea that in 7:14-25 the self is portrayed according to his intrinsic resources and capacities. Secondly, we also conclude that the self-functions as a representative model of right belief and behaviour. On the other hand, first, we conclude that the self is not portrayed as being in the flesh (7:5), but as being fleshly (7:14).⁴⁷ In other words, while the condition that the self laments in Rom 7 belongs entirely to the old order, the self himself is not presented as belonging entirely to the old order. We argue that in 7:14-25 Paul portrays the anthropological condition of the self as an Adamic state of powerlessness, without direct reference to the self's relational ontology, viz. without reference

to being 'in the Spirit' (Rom 8:9). The self's condition is a lingering, lasting solidarity with the old order, but, as an anthropological condition, it remains with the self even when he is no longer in the flesh, under the law. Secondly, whereas for Seifrid a depiction of the self's radical guilt corresponds to Paul's doctrine of justification, we read the confession of the self's radical powerlessness as corresponding to the assurance of hope, which is the dominant theme in Paul's exposition of his gospel in chs. 5-8, and which is emphasised especially clearly in 8:1-11.

Therefore, as our argument unfolds, we will seek both to challenge Stowers' recent return to a fictive 'I' and also to build a case for understanding the self as a representative, paradigmatic 'I', but one who is a believer in Christ who confesses an ongoing, Adamic, anthropological condition of fleshliness.

The Approach of This Study

Thurén states simply that, 'whereas the mind of the historical Apostle is beyond our reach, it remains our duty to scrutinize the text and its context.' However, there are multiple contexts within which the text of Rom 7 is situated, and, therefore, we must make a deliberate decision on where to focus our attention. Most recent studies of Rom 7 have focused on the religio-historical context of Paul's writing as a means of discovering both likely influences and divergences vis-à-vis various religious and philosophical traditions. Lichtenberger is attentive to this context, but mainly so as to illumine the scriptural backdrop against which the self's speech should be read. In this study, we will primarily focus on the literary-argumentative context of the self. Surprisingly, previous studies have given comparatively little attention to this setting. In the aftermath of Kummel and Stendahl, interest in the literary context has typically not extended beyond the function of Rom 7 within Paul's overall argument about the law in Romans. Some scholars give the impression that all that now remains is a more precise locating of the religio-historical setting.

However, given that the particular difficulties of understanding the self appears in the light of the preceding literary-argumentative context of the

letter, we propose that this literary context needs to be carefully reread so as to better understand self's identity. One of the strengths of Stowers' thesis is that he seeks to place, not just the law, but the self within the context of Paul's argument in the letter. We will seek to do the same, both because the peculiar problems of understanding self's identity demand it, but also because previous research on Rom 7 has done this in only a cursory manner. The task before us, therefore, is that of exegesis, reading and rereading the text within its literary context, being sensitive to the particulars of the self's speech, as well as to the wider contours of Paul's argument. This will involve using the traditional canons of good interpretive method, namely text criticism, lexicography, grammar, syntax analysis and the like, as well as insights from more recent interpretive methodologies, such as discourse grammar, rhetorical criticism, and intertextual allusion.

The temptation the interpreter faces, and perhaps nowhere more than in Rom 7, is to disregard those parts of the text that stubbornly refuse to fit the proposed paradigm. It is with the riddle of the 'I' as with the Rubik's cube: even a single piece which remains out of place betrays the need for a new solution. There is a draconian answer to this dilemma, one that involves the forceful extraction and realignment of the offending piece, a solution to which some have had recourse in the interpretation of Rom 7.⁵³ However, this must be considered a last resort. Certainly, Moo is correct in his assessment that 'it is inconclusive, and even misleading, to cite several arguments in favor of one's own view and conclude that the issue has been settled.' An interpretation of the self must demonstrate a literary coherence if it is also to lay claim to theological plausibility.

Paying close, sustained attention to the literary-argumentative context not only makes one aware of the scale of the challenge; it also presents opportunities for fresh discovery. N. T. Wright reminds us that with the interpretation of Paul it is quite often the 'casual remark' or 'the throwaway line on the edge of something else' that stops us in our tracks and causes us to re-examine our hypotheses and cherished traditions. In this study, we will pay attention to a few such easily missed or

previously ignored statements that call into question prior assumptions and light the way towards a more contextually informed hearing of the self's voice in Rom 7. That said, the challenge remains that of producing an integrative, constructive interpretation of Rom 7 which pays due attention to all of the important textual data and which demonstrates both a literary coherence and theological plausibility. That is what we are attempting in this study.

We will proceed as follows. As already noted, in the next chapter, we will look closely at the arguments of Stanley Stowers for reading the speech of the self as an example of speech-in-character. The importance of engaging closely with Stowers is clear. Not only does he offer a new, or rather renewed, way out of the difficulties associated with personal and typical readings of the self, but he does so with a concern for the self's literary-argumentative context. We will carefully consider Stowers' argument that the self is the same character as Paul's interlocutor in 2:1-16, whom he understands to be an akratic Gentile. We will find his argument wanting in a number of respects, but agree on the importance of the interlocutor for fully appreciating the nature of Paul's characterisation in Rom 7. In Chapter 3, we give our attention to 3:7, the only other verse in the letter that contains ambiguous first-person singular forms. This verse, surprisingly, has not previously been considered significant for the interpretation of the self in Rom 7. Since it appears within a passage that is full of its own interpretive difficulties, these are tackled with a view to understanding 3:7 within its context. In Chapter 4, we turn to the more immediate context for understanding the self's speech, viz. Rom 6. We seek to determine the way in which Paul applies the two-dominion antithesis of Rom 5 to the present situation of his audience. We observe, in 6:12 and 6:19, two statements concerning believers' continued solidarity with the Adamic order, which are important for our understanding of the self in Rom 7. In Chapter 5, we turn to the exegesis of Rom 7 and look at the self in 7:7-13. Our study includes two prior passages, 3:19-20 and 5:12-14, which share a close thematic and linguistic relationship with 7:7-13. The shadow of Adam, which looms over

believers' embodied existence in Rom 6, is more sharply delineated in 7:7-13. Then, in Chapter 6, we undertake a detailed analysis of the self in 7:14-25. Our study includes other passages — 4:18-25; 7:5-6; 5:5 and 8:36 — which provide an important context for understanding the experience of the self in 7:14-25. In Chapter 7, we summarise our argument and make some suggestions on how our interpretation fits Paul's vision of the Christian life.

We have had to decide how best to speak of the subject of this study. Constant reference to 'the "I"' becomes rather clumsy in English, and so we have used the language only very occasionally. An obvious alternative is to speak of 'the ego', but it is hard to disassociate the term from its use in Freudian psychology. We have settled instead on 'the self' or, often, just 'self', which we use as a placeholder for the character under investigation. We only depart from this practice when, in Chapter 5, we look at the function of the personal pronoun. <>

[The Measure of Homer: The Ancient Reception of the Iliad and the Odyssey](#) by Richard Hunter [Cambridge University Press, 9781108428316]

Homer was the greatest and most influential Greek poet. In this book, Richard Hunter explores central themes in the poems' reception in antiquity, paying particular attention to Homer's importance in shaping ancient culture. Subjects include the geographical and educational breadth of Homeric reception, the literary and theological influence of Homer's depiction of the gods, Homeric poetry and sympotic culture, scholarly and rhetorical approaches to Homer, Homer in the satires of Plutarch and Lucian, and how Homer shaped ideas about the power of music and song. This is a major and innovative contribution to the study of the dominant literary force in Greek culture and of the Greek literary engagement with the past. Through the study of their influence and reception, this book also sheds rich light on the Homeric poems themselves. All Greek and Latin are translated.

Excerpt: This book may be seen, as in some ways it was designed, as completing a trilogy of studies on the reception in ancient literature and culture of foundational texts and authors. After Plato and

Hesiod, it seemed escape from Homer was no longer possible. Any attempt, however, to survey the ancient, even just the Greek, reception of Homer is bound to end up as just that, namely 'a survey', and the material is so rich that it would be a very long survey indeed. I chose a different path, a series of studies which, I hope, offer some sense of what Homer meant in antiquity. The book as it has emerged is very different from what was originally envisaged (much that was originally conceived in the context of this book has appeared elsewhere), but above all I am very conscious of the yawning gaps in what one might expect to find in a book on this subject. There is, for example, very little here on Greek drama, but others have written a great deal and very enlighteningly about the dramatic reception of Homer; there is nothing on imperial epic, although it is gratifying to acknowledge how much is now being done elsewhere in this field, and very little on Hellenistic poetry, where however I cannot claim not already to have been given a fair hearing; there is, moreover, not nearly as much as I would have liked on the later philosophical interpretation of Homer, the kind of material which Lamberton 1986 put on the map for so many classicists.

The studies which make up this book are chosen to illustrate how the Homeric poems seeped into expressions of Greek identity and culture at every level (chapters i and 3), how they influenced religious and social practice and thought (chapters z and 3), how it was their stimulus which, more than anything else, was responsible for the rise of critical and scholarly activity (chapter 4), and how the depiction of song in the poems suggested the very frameworks within which that critical activity came to operate (chapter 5). Reference to and quotation and evocation of the Homeric poems are so ubiquitous in ancient literature that it would seem silly to worry about Homeric influence when it is not made explicit (here the case of Hesiod is very different), but I have tried also not to neglect those reflections of Homeric patterns which appear so normal that we forget that they are indeed 'Homeric'.

Placing Homer

A sense of place was very important in antiquity: one's home city could be almost as important an identifier as one's father's name. Homer, however, seemed always to resist local placement because he was everywhere: no city could own him, anymore than it could be agreed who his father was. Not, however, that this stopped cities trying. Several Greek cities staked early and persistent claims — Athens, Chios, Colophon, Cyme, Ios, Rhodes, Smyrna were among the most persistent.¹ A set of (probably late Hellenistic) epigrams from Pergamum, inscribed on a statue base which must have supported an image of Homer, celebrates the squabbles of the cities over the poet, whose 'birthplace is known to Zeus alone', and seems to compare the quarrelling cities to hungry dogs fighting over a bone (SGO 06102118).² If the early claimants were very largely cities of the eastern Aegean and the coast of Asia Minor, more exotic claimants emerged over time: Egypt, Ethiopia, Babylon, even Rome.³ Some of these claims were, of course, deliberately outlandish and comic, but the very number of them, and the fact that potential 'homes' for Homer expanded as the Greek world did (notably in the wake of Alexander's conquests), shows just how extraordinary Homer's 'universality' was felt to be. The Proclan Life of Homer notes that 'it would be reasonable to call Homer a citizen of the world', or as Antipater of Thessaloniki put it in an epigram, 'the broad heaven was [Homer's] fatherland, and no mortal woman gave birth to [him], but [the Muse] Kalliope was [his] mother'

If in this epigram Antipater seems to treat Homer as himself divine, then this too shares in a very familiar ancient rhetoric. Homer's omnipresence allowed him to be assimilated to other omnipresent beings, namely gods; like a god, he could have myriad local identities and cult sites which satisfied local needs and a sense of place, but never be confined to any particular site. As another Life puts it, 'his homeland was disputed because the greatness of his nature made it unbelievable that he was a mortal at all' (Hesychian Life 6.2 West). At the end of the third century BC, Ptolemy IV Philopator established in Alexandria a shrine to Homer in which the cult image was surrounded by

images of the cities which claimed the poet (Aelian, VH 13.22, cf. SH 979), and a famous late Hellenistic relief (the Apotheosis of Homer) sets Homer, crowned by Time and the Oikoumene (the inhabited world), in parallel with Zeus.⁴ If in time 'divine' (theos) became a banal description of poets, as it is already a standard epithet of bards in the Odyssey, with Homer the epithet retained its full force. His omnipresence also manifested itself in a claim, sometimes intended literally and sometimes more symbolically, that all subsequent forms of literature, and indeed all culture more generally, drew inspiration (and often subject matter and verbal expression) from Homer; Dionysius of Halicarnassus asserts, against Plato's alleged envious hostility towards Homer, that 'through [Homer] all culture (padeia) and finally philosophy itself entered our lives'. The most famous way in which this aspect of Homer's extraordinariness was expressed was in the image of the poet as the encircling Ocean from which all rivers and seas derived.⁵ Ocean too has no single locality: it is everywhere, quite literally 'all around us'. Like so many of the ways in which Homeric influence was figured in antiquity, Homer himself was the 'source' of the image. The 'great strength of the river Ocean' surrounds the cosmic images on the Shield of Achilles (Il. 18.607-8), and in Iliad 21, the raging Achilles boasts that he is a descendant of Zeus, before whom even Ocean must yield: Homer, Iliad 21.194-710

Not even the mighty Achelous is a match for Zeus, not even the great power of deep-flowing Ocean, from whom all rivers and every sea and all springs and deep wells flow.

In Iliad 14 also, Ocean seems to come 'second', as it were, when Sleep tells Hera that he would easily put to sleep any god except Zeus, even 'the streams of the river Ocean, which is the origin (of all' (14.243-8). The shield of Achilles, on which Ocean encircled Hephaestus' images, was itself interpreted as a 'mimetic image of the cosmos', and generated elaborate physical allegories to justify this;⁶ 'Heraclitus' calls the images on the shield a description of 'the origin of all things' which Homer depicted 'with an intellect that was great and cosmogonical' (Horn. Probl. 43.1). The universal shield reflected the universal nature of its maker,

Homer, who himself was 'the origin of all things'. Human life was essentially war or peace, pleasure or pain: the Iliad primarily depicted war and pain, whereas on the shield Homer foregrounded peace, civic life and pleasure to even the balance (bT-scholia on Il. 18.490). All of our existence is there.

As we have already noted from the Hellenistic Apotheosis of Homer, the poet could be associated not just with universalising images and with Ocean, but also with Zeus, and Homer is thus linked to the greatest powers in the heavens, as well as on the earth. In On the sublime Longinus linked images of Homer as the sun and as Ocean (De subi. 9.13), and at the head of his review of Greek literature Quintilian links Homer as Zeus and Homer as Ocean through a reworking of the poet's description of Ocean in Iliad 21:

Just as Aratus thinks it right to begin from Jupiter [cf. Phaenomena I], so it seems appropriate for us to begin from Homer. As Homer says that the courses of all rivers and streams have their origin from Ocean, so he gave a model and origin for all the elements of eloquence.

In this chapter I want to consider some of the ways in which Homer's universal reach across the Greek world is reflected at every level of literary sophistication; we will find Homer in some perhaps surprising places. In some senses, it is indeed Homer who makes the world Greek. <>

[Brill's Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic](#) edited by Robert C. Simms [Brill's Companions to Classical Reception, Brill Academic, 9789004249356]

[Brill's Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic](#) explores the long tradition of continuing Greek and Roman epics from Homer and the epic cycle to the contemporary novels of Ursula K. Le Guin and Margaret Atwood.

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Excerpt: The thematic interests of heroic epic are 'kings and battles' (reges et proelia), as Virgil has it at Eclogue 6.3. These interests dispose the genre toward a confident athanasia: that the great deeds of great men will endure into future ages and never perish. There is, however, another feature of heroic epic narratives that goes largely unconsidered. As Aristotle observes in making his

generic comparisons of epic and tragedy, where the latter should contain a single episode, the former is *polumythos*, 'replete with story' (Poetics 1456a12). Epic is capable of containing several stories, a feature that facilitates an extensive 'additive' program, such that the enterprise itself is prone to incompleteness and indefiniteness. But while songs may live forever, singers do not. Lamentable circumstances have allowed *mors immatura* to claim the ends of several works, but even poets of successfully 'finished' epics frequently acknowledge or imply that the story is incomplete. Historically, the incompleteness of epic has encouraged the production of continuations, observed as early as the cyclical epics of Archaic Greece, and Homer's *Iliad*. The *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* continue the *Iliad*, Silius' *Punica* continues the *Aeneid*, and so forth. There was also the Medieval and Renaissance vogue of continuing and elaborating unfinished classical epics, as well as the hybridization of Greco-Roman epic and courtly romance, which gave rise to further forms of continuation. The postmodern age also reveals an interest in the aggregation and serialization of epic. The present volume thus explores, in a decidedly interdisciplinary and transhistorical effort, the variety of ways that heroic epic narratives have been continued in the Greco-Roman and western classical traditions through prequels, sequels, and retellings.

As a glance at the table of contents will reveal, the lion's share of the discussions contained herein concern the Trojan mythos, a theme with which poets and authors of continuations have been continually occupied. This volume divides into two parts. In the first part we take up works more or less related to the Trojan War and/or the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer. In the second part, we look beyond Troy and Homer; however, there is, naturally, observable overlap and interconnectedness, and the divisions should by no means be considered distinct.

As slices from a larger whole of cyclic epics, which survive now only as epitomes and fragments, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by their nature offered gaps and points of departure to fill out and further a much larger and lengthier narrative picture. These Homeric redactions connect to a sequence that

spanned from what the Archaic Greeks understood as the nascence of the world down to the close of the heroic age; however, as Elizabeth Minchin discusses in our opening chapter, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are also tethered to one another. Minchin examines first how the *Iliad* speculates on future narrative events, external to its terminus, through the depictions of fate and prophecy; statements of conviction; threats, prayers, and wishes of characters; and the explicit words of the *Iliadic* narrator. Minchin then turns her attention to the ways in which the *Odyssey* does and does not pick up the offered strands of its predecessor.

Reinhold Glei then provides an examination of the *Ilias Latina*, a short Latin hexameter poem of 1070 lines attributed, with some controversy, to Baebius Italicus, and written in the Neronian 60's. The poem heavily influenced medieval literature and endured as a popular standard in Latin education. Were one to read of the Trojan conflict in the Middle Ages it would more likely have been in the *Ilias Latina* than in Homer's original. While Baebius' work presents itself as a condensation and summary, it also reveals, as Glei examines, features that suggest a Roman rereading and continuation of the Homeric *Iliad*, one informed by post-Augustan critique and influence.

The Hellenistic period enjoyed a particular vogue for extending Homeric material. The somewhat lesser known epyllia of Triphiodorus' *The Sack of Troy* and Colluthus' *The Rape of Helen* offer the subject matter for Orestis Karavas' chapter. Of the former we have a sequel composed in 691 verses in roughly the 3rd century that offers a continuation of Homer's *Iliad* and treats similar events to the second book of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Of the latter we have Colluthus' *The Rape of Helen* in 392 hexameters, which visits the seeds of the Trojan conflict. Karavas explores the ways in which these later poets drew their inspiration from other poets besides Homer. As the font of much narrative material it was a particular challenge to create original works within this Homeric dominance. Calum Maciver's discussion then turns our attention toward Quintus of Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica* where he explores Quintus' construction of a Homeric identity that draws on the hexametric poetry of

Hesiod and Apollonius as well. In this way, Homer is read through a Hellenistic lens.

The Byzantine poet and scholastic John Tzetzes also sought to enclose the open ends of origin and conclusion to Homer's *Iliad*. Marta Cardin's contribution addresses the *Carmina Iliaca*, or *Little Great Iliad*, of John Tzetzes. This poem treats the Trojan War from the origins of the conflict through to the fall of the city. As a teacher, Tzetzes' poetic efforts have strong didactic qualities that incorporate a variety of sources. In addition, Tzetzes creates his own myths, offers learned annotations to his own verses, and incorporates a style of allegoresis. Not long after Tzetzes' death, the English poet Joseph of Exeter, working from the influential narratives of Dictys and Dares, two purported eyewitness accounts of the Trojan war supposed to have been written in Greek and translated into Latin, produced an *Ylias* in six books spanning the origins and close of the conflict. Francine Mora-Lebrun's chapter thus explores Joseph of Exeter's agon with epic sources with an eye toward his overarching didactic motivations.

Robert Henryson's *The Testament of Cresseid* offers a curiosity in being a continuation of a continuation. During the Middle Ages the character of Troilus evolved from the brief surviving mentions of him in antiquity as a young son of Priam into a paragon of courtly lover. Chaucer, working most likely through Boccaccio's version of the tale, left his epic unfinished; however, Henryson provides in Middle Scots verses to complete the episode. Nickolas Haydock examines the competing tensions between irreconcilable narrations. Adam Goldwyn then examines the way in which epic continuation endorses genealogical justification for political power in Dudo of San Quentin's eleventh century *History of the Normans*, which claimed Trojan descent for the Normans, Geoffrey of Monmouth's 12th century *History of the Kings of Britain*, which claimed Trojan descent for the English, and three thirteenth century works: Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda* for the Scandinavian dynasties, and Marco's *Codex Marco* and Martin da Canal's *Les Estoires de Venise* for the Venetians.

The final three chapters of this section move away from the Trojan themes and take up more

Odyssean interests. First, Jarder Lohne explores François Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque*. Written between 1693-1694 in his capacity as Royal Tutor to Le Petit Dauphin (Louis, Duke of Burgundy), then grandson of the reigning Louis XIV. Fénelon's didactic continuation of the first four books of Homer's *Odyssey*, the so-called '*Telemachiad*', were aimed at grooming the young prince. In 1699, however, the manuscript was illicitly or intentionally passed to a printer and became an instant literary sensation. Next, Martha Klironomos situates Nikos Kazantzakis' *Odysseia* within a broader discussion of classical reception and national culture. Kazantzakis takes up the itchy-footed Odysseus' travels from the end of *Odyssey* through wanderings which eventually lead him to Antartica. In this chapter, Klironomos explores how Kazantzakis' adaptation of Homer can be interpreted as a dialectic on the rational and irrational. She concludes with a discussion of how Kazantzakis' example engages Simone Weil and Horkheimer and Adorno, who look to Homeric epic to conduct a critique of Axis aggression and virulent articulations of political nationalism. This section closes with Buket Akgün's discussion of Margaret Atwood's *Penelopiad*, in which she argues that Atwood subverts the phallogocentric and male-dominated discourse of Homer's epic through the first person narratives of Penelope and her maids.

From the Trojan themes our discussion migrates out to Roman historical themes. For a number of chapters in this section the presence of Virgil's *Aeneid* can be felt, and it is with regret that a discussion which treats that vital text as a continuation of the *Iliad* could not be secured. Nevertheless, Marie von Glinski offers an apt segue with a discussion of Ovid's rewriting of the epic tradition in the *Metamorphoses* by looking to its '*Little Iliad*' and '*Little Aeneid*' in his *carmen perpetuum*. Neil Bernstein then furthers this conversation with a chapter on the use of Virgil as a touchstone in both Ovid's *Little Aeneid* and Silius Italicus' *Punica*, their use having very different aims.

The next four chapters fall within the ambit of a Renaissance concern for supplementing Latin epics. In 1458 Maffeo Vegio completed a short continuation to conclude Virgil's unfinished *Aeneid*,

picking up at the moment his forebear leaves off. Anne Rogerson examines Vegio's continuation by looking particularly to how he imposes closure on his source text and engages the Aeneid as well as other texts within a Christian world view. Nearly a half-century later Giovan Battista Pio produced a furtherance of the Argonautica of Valerius Flaccus, which forms the subject of Emma Buckley's chapter. Robert Simms then examines the way in which Thomas May uses the affair of Aeneas and Dido to write Caesar's dalliance with Cleopatra in May's Latin and English continuations of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. Finally, where Silius Italicus' *Punica* stands as the longest surviving Roman epic from classical antiquity, Thomas Ross elected to take the narrative still further to the death of Hannibal. Antony Augoustakis discusses the literary value of Ross' three book supplement and his treatment of Silius' themes and characterizations.

The final two chapters take up epics that warrant considerably more critical attention than they have received in recent years. First, Kristin Lindfield-Ott looks to the epic tradition in 18th century Scotland. At the historical moment during which epic's prominence and potency had seemingly begun to wane, we find here a stubborn productivity. Lindfield-Ott looks to this tradition and situates Wilkie's *Epigoniad*, which takes up the events after the Argive loss at Thebes, within the tradition of other Scottish epics. Indeed, she goes some way in redressing the notion that epic was a defunct genre in the 18th century. The final chapter in this volume takes up Ursula Le Guin's *Lavinia*. This novel published in 2008, just three years after Margaret Atwood's *Penelopiad*, redeploys the latter, 'Iliadic' half of Virgil's *Aeneid*. As Nickolas Haydock observes, Le Guin's novelization contributes to the Virgilian and Trojan epic traditions in ways that subvert the quaint notion of being a translation.

The essays in this volume gather together works and authors that are largely treated in isolation from one another under a single theme, that of continuation. To be sure, there are few other places one might find Margaret Atwood on the same bill of fare as John Tzetzes. Yet, these two, as with all other works under consideration here, contribute to the open-endedness of epic and the invitation it extends to generations of poets and authors to re-

imagine and further the genre's stories. This collection of essays by no means intends a last word, but rather hopes to explore the variety of contexts and environs in which heroic epic has been reimagined and continued. <>

[Roman Literature under Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian: Literary Interactions, AD 96-138](#) by Alice König and Christopher Whitton [Cambridge University Press, 9781108420594]

This volume is the first holistic investigation of Roman literature and literary culture under Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian (AD 96-138). With case studies from Frontinus, Juvenal, Martial, Pliny the Younger, Plutarch, Quintilian, Suetonius and Tacitus among others, the eighteen chapters offer not just innovative readings of literary (and some 'less literary') texts, but a collaborative enquiry into the networks and culture in which they are embedded. The book brings together established and novel methodologies to explore the connections, conversations and silences between these texts and their authors, both on and off the page. The scholarly dialogues that result not only shed fresh light on the dynamics of literary production and consumption in the 'High Roman Empire', but offer new provocations to students of intertextuality and interdiscursivity across classical literature. How can and should we read textual interactions in their social, literary and cultural contexts?

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PART I BRIDGING DIVIDES: LITERARY INTERACTIONS FROM QUINTILIAN TO JUVENAL
1 Quintilian, Pliny, Tacitus Christopher Whitton
2 I Will Survive (You): Martial and Tacitus on Regime Change Victoria Rimell
3 Flavian Epic and Trajanic Historiography: Speaking into the Silence Emma Buckley
4 Pliny and Martial: Dupes and Non-Dupes in the Early Empire William Fitzgerald

5	Paradoxography and Marvels in Post-Domitianic Literature: An Extraordinary Affair, Even in the Hearing!	Rhiannon Ash
6	Pliny and Suetonius on Giving and Returning Imperial Power	Paul Roche
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9	Images of Domitius Apollinaris in Pliny and Martial: Intertextual Discourses as Aspects of Self-Definition and Differentiation	Sigrid Mratschek
10	Reading Frontinus in Martial's Epigrams	Alice König
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14	Extratextuality: Literary Interactions with Oral Culture and Exemplary Ethics	Rebecca Langlands
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Excerpt: These authors knew each other personally; some collaborated in literary production, attending recitals and exchanging drafts; several mention

each other or converse intertextually, whether unilaterally or in dialogue. They are joined by a host of personal acquaintances and public figures who walk off the street and into their pages to mingle with literary characters, past and present, in what thus becomes a complex and multifaceted tangle of socio-literary intercourse. Our volume sets out to probe those interactions and conversations, both as a literary-historical phenomenon and as an opportunity for methodological reflection. Some chapters consider dialogues between one contemporary author or text and another; others tackle more complex nexuses of three works or more. Several look beyond 'allusion', to set texts in conversation (with or without their authors' conniving), to explore 'extratextual' dialogue, or to confront head-on the challenges posed by absent dialogue. In unpicking interactions between very different kinds of texts — historical, epigrammatic, biographical, satirical, epistolary, philosophical, pedagogical, legal, technical, administrative ... — we seek to embrace the full range of literary production, and indeed to expand it. We look beyond texts, too, at the spaces — recitations, dinner parties, the schoolroom, philosophical debates — in which literary interactions were generated and refracted; the interface between textual and personal encounters will be a particularly recurrent theme. Between them, our eighteen contributors offer new readings of a wide range of texts. Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, Frontinus' *De aquis*, lawyers' letters, imperial rescripts and an anonymous Greek treatise claim attention alongside Martial's Epigrams, Pliny's Epistles and Panegyricus, Plutarch's dialogues, Tacitus' 'major' and 'minor' works, Suetonius' *Lives* and Juvenal's Satires. In the process they explore some of the implications of the term 'interactions': the strengths and limits of inherited approaches to intertextuality; potential alternatives; how, in short, we can most productively study relationships which exist both on and off the page. The scholarly conversation that results, we hope, not only sheds fresh light on the dynamics of Nerva, Trajanic and Hadrianic literary culture as a whole, but offers new provocations and challenges to students of other periods too. How can and should we read textual interactions in the increasingly cosmopolitan world of the principate?

Interaction has been hardwired into this project from the beginning, with scholarly dialogue on paper, online and around the seminar table serving as an essential corollary of individual work. The eighteen chapters of the present volume accordingly offer themselves to be read as a network of dialogues, implicit and explicit, and we actively encourage you to 'choose your own adventure'. The titles, and the summaries we offer here, should make for easy raiding by those hunting contributions on any given author, genre or theme, or simply by the impatient. But even such excerptors, we hope, will be struck both by the interchange between chapters and by the diversity of approach: this volume, to repeat, is intended as a lively conversation and prompt, not a methodological manifesto. It does have a manifesto, but one in which plurality plays a double role: *Literary Interactions* is a call to work harder at reading high-imperial texts in their mutual context, and to attend to their dialogues (and lacks thereof) in as many ways as may be profitable.

In that spirit, the sequence of chapters offers only one path through this volume, and a necessarily arbitrary one at that. We have not observed strict chronological order, though that claim, as so often, is disingenuous: each section does move roughly through time, and there are vestiges too of a progression across the volume as a whole — even if (not quite by chance) the closing dialogue between Pliny and Plutarch is staged before 'our' period gets underway. In some cases, chapters are juxtaposed for similarities of material (as with Harries and Lavan, two contrasting interventions on *Epistles* 10) or method (as with Mratschek and König, intertextual readings in which prosopography plays a central role): but in these pairs, as throughout, variety rules: nowhere, we hope, will both manner and matter turn out to be the same.

Part 1, 'Bridging Divides: Literary Interactions from Quintilian to Juvenal', takes an initial sweep through four decades of Latin literature, examining a variety of interactions across prose and verse, and looking repeatedly towards the double caesura of 96/98 — both to give due voice to a particularly concentrated moment of textual production, and to ask how firmly that Flavian door

can be kept shut. Christopher Whitton opens with 'Quintilian, Pliny, Tacitus', a summary triangulation of three prose authors writing across the chronological divide. Both Tacitus' *Dialogus* and Pliny's *Epistles*, he argues, respond not just *grosso modo* to Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, but are defined by textual engagement of a remarkable, and perhaps unprecedented, minuteness and extent. Such prose—prose intertextuality is often considered hard to pin down as 'allusions'; in response, Whitton tries to find a critical discourse beyond the brittleness of binary 'all or nothing' interpretations — and asks quite how 'public' these intimate dialogues may be.

Another of Tacitus' 'minor' works features in Victoria Rimell's chapter, 'I Will Survive (You): Martial and Tacitus on Regime Change'. The *Agricola* is rarely considered in the same breath as Martial's revised tenth book of *Epigrams*. But these two productions of (probably) 98 make stimulating material for comparative reading. Where Whitton focuses on author-generated allusion, Rimell combines that with a more capacious sense of reader-determined intertextuality to sound out some striking resonances, as Tacitus and Martial each confront the 'silence' of the Domitianic past and the challenge of literary re-creation facing its survivors.

Tacitus and taciturnity also loom large in 'Flavian Epic and Trajanic Historiography: Speaking into the Silence' by Emma Buckley. She too addresses two texts rarely mentioned together, Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* and Tacitus' *Agricola* and *Histories*, using a form of 'reverse reception' to probe that political caesura which so firmly sets Valerius in the Flavian camp, Tacitus in the Trajanic. Both *Argonautica* and *Agricola* emerge from this account as ambivalent reflections on heroism under a tyrant; responses to Lucan in Valerius' epic and Tacitus' *Histories* make for a second intriguing synchrony. Attention to 'periodic interactions' such as these, Buckley shows, can teach us a good deal about the works of both authors, about interdiscursivity, and about (the limits of) literary interactivity.

William Fitzgerald's chapter, 'Pliny and Martial: Dupes and Non-Dupes in the Early Empire', is the

first of three pieces on this most interactive pair. Fitzgerald is concerned less with intertextuality *per se* than with a comparative reading of two corpora in which 'sincerity, flattery, free speech and self-deception' (those inescapable themes of our period) play so prominent a role. Ranging through Martial's (Flavian) *De spectaculis*, (Nervan) Epigrams II and (Trajanic) Epigrams IO, as well as Pliny's confidently post-Flavian prose, this chapter holds up the 'booster' and 'debunker' for joint inspection, finding contrasts, to be sure — but also some notable commonalities, how they functioned is a less straightforward question. In *Amicable and Hostile Exchange in the Culture of Recitation*, Matthew Roller analyses a wide range of texts, foregrounding the societal role of recitation — and its implications for our understanding of literary as well as socio-literary interactions. Recitation emerges from his account as a notionally semi-private form of aristocratic exchange whose blend of competition and cooperation is in fact as uneasy as it is elegant.

Intertextual agonistics, that is to say, are just one part of a larger social picture. That insight is also central to the next two chapters, both of which demonstrate the value of combining prosopographical and intertextual approaches. Sigrid Mratschek's study, 'Images of Domitius Apollinaris in Pliny and Martial: Intertextual Discourses as Aspects of Self-Definition and Differentiation', explores the personal and textual bonds tying Apollinaris, consul of 97, to those two miniaturists, in the context of the 'competitive ranking games' that played out on the elite cultural stage. Teasing out the semiotics of visualisation on the one hand (as the political instability of a new regime is encoded through loaded imagery of Hades), ecphrastic villa descriptions on the other, Mratschek shows how interlocking images of Apollinaris are deployed for muscular ethical and political self-definition, by Martial and Pliny both.

That privileged political moment of the late 90s is also central to Alice König's chapter, 'Reading Frontinus in Martial's Epigrams', which explores another collision of personal and textual interaction through a figure familiar from our introduction. Julius Frontinus features twice in Epigrams IO; König considers how both poems, for all their

apolitical veneer, can be read as provocative reflections on the new, Trajanic regime. She also examines possible echoes of Frontinus' *De aquis* in Martial, challenging assumptions that poetry and 'technical' treatises are poles apart amid so dense a personal and literary network.

Questions over 'technical' literature are equally live in a pair of chapters which take us into the latter half of Trajan's principate, and to Pliny's tenth book of *Epistles*. Jill Harries' 'Saturninus the Helmsman, Pliny and Friends: Legal and Literary Letter Collections' introduces an often overlooked production of our period, the epistles of legal experts. The epistles in question were collections of 'questions and answers', such as Javolenus Priscus' discussion of one Saturninus, a helmsman in the British fleet. This submerged genre makes a stimulating comparandum with the more familiar output of Pliny, in particular *Epistles* IO. Itself a collection of working correspondence, it serves in Harries' reading not just to advertise Pliny's friendship with Trajan, but to administer some sharp elbowing to the 'competition' — further demonstration, then, of the 'competitive ranking games' to which Roller and Mratschek draw our attention.

Myles Lavan sustains the prompt to look beyond the 'literary' canon in 'Pliny's *Epistles* IO and Imperial Correspondence: The Empire of Letters'. Recent years have seen vigorous debate over the question whether *Epistles* IO was edited and published by Pliny himself, and that debate continues here: while Harries votes 'yes', Lavan prefers to problematise. Invoking the traces of imperial correspondence preserved in inscriptions, papyri and the jurists, he argues that *Epistles* IO displays not (necessarily) so much the hallmarks of Plinian editing as typical features of imperial communications in general. Not that we need resist reading *Epistles* IO as literature: rather, he suggests, we should start taking a more 'literary' view of other material too — while trying harder to read our 'literary' texts in their wider discursive context.

Another complementary pair of chapters rounds off Part 2, this time with a shared thematic interest in exemplarity. In 'Traditional Exempla and Nerva's

New Modernity: Making Fabricius Take the Cash', Ruth Morello considers counterexemplarity through a pair of case studies from Martial (Epigrams n.5) and Pliny (Epistles 7.29). Both invoke heroes of old not as models, but to produce hyperbolic counterfactuals involving one new emperor (Nerva) and one imperial freedman of times past (Pallas). How much pressure can these inverted exempla bear? Is their exemplary status itself brought into question? And what emerges out of them, within the broader discourse of early imperial exemplarity? Counterfactuality, Morello suggests, is a distinctly post-Caesarian phenomenon, shot through with political tensions.

Rebecca Langlands pursues related questions in 'Extratextuality: Literary Interactions with Oral Culture and Exemplary Ethics'. Here too exempla are the focus, this time positive, and in war. Tacitus' Histories and Suetonius' life of Otho each feature the noble suicide of a soldier-messenger — essentially the same episode, but attached to different emperors and with different narrative outcomes. Faced with this curiosity, Langlands puts source-criticism aside and offers a new model of 'extratextuality', the idea that texts interact not just with each other, but also intermedially with the 'floating anecdotes' (a term owed, interactively enough, to Rhiannon Ash) familiar in oral culture.

Langlands' invitation to look beyond textual and intertextual approaches made an immediate impact when first issued in Rostock, and leads us here into the volume's third and final part ('Into the Silence: The Limits of Interaction'), which offers four quite different approaches to the challenges posed by gaps, fissures and silences among our texts. Ilaria Marchesi's chapter, 'The Regulus Connection: Displacing Lucan between Martial and Pliny', offers a contrastive reading of how Epigrams and Epistles handle one contemporary figure (Regulus) and one author of a previous generation (Lucan). A combination of surprises — Lucan's presence in Martial and absence from Pliny's pages — and 'pulviscular allusions' (delicate intertextual 'clouds') produces a striking case study, as Marchesi explores what this might tell us, not just about contemporary readings of Lucan's notorious proem, but about how such interpretations may have developed, and considers what political stakes

attended literary interpretation and production on both sides of the Flavian divide.

Tom Geue carries us further into the second century, and back to verse-prose dialogue, in 'Forgetting the Juvenalien in Our Midst: Literary Amnesia in the Satires'. In an important interrogation of the terms of this volume, he squares up to some difficulties of 'interactions' as a model, both in general (do reconstructions of social networking threaten to overdetermine intertextual readings?) and in one problem case, Juvenal's apparently antisocial Satires. Both in Satire 2, with its notorious reference (if it is that) to Tacitus' Histories, and in Satire 8, (in)distinctly reminiscent of a letter of Pliny, Juvenal challenges 'allusive' readers. Gene's response is twofold: on the one hand, to think in terms of more broadly defined 'generic interactions'; on the other, he floats the idea of 'anti-allusion', in which the Satires pointedly fails to interact with an ideological antitype.

James Uden's chapter, 'Childhood Education and the Boundaries of Interaction: [Plutarch], Quintilian, Juvenal', also explores both Juvenalian intertextuality and more capacious models of 'interaction' — now applied to the silences between Greek and Latin literature of our period. The tract On educating children once attributed to Plutarch, the first book of Quintilian's Institutio and Juvenal's fourteenth Satire share a culturally urgent theme (infant pedagogy); how, and how far, can they be put in dialogue? Faced with allusions by Juvenal to Quintilian on the one hand, a distinct lack of conversation between them and the pseudo-Plutarchan tract on the other, Uden lays out a methodology for exploring the 'broader and largely extratextual exchange of images and ideas' of which intertextuality can be only one part.

Finally, Roy Gibson signals another response to the stubborn silences between Greek and Latin in 'Pliny and Plutarch's Practical Ethics: A Newly Rediscovered Dialogue'. The rediscovered dialogue in question is fragment in which Pliny and Plutarch are found conversing in the early 90s. Gibson's translation is accompanied by an introduction and notes revealing remarkable similarities with the published works of Pliny and Plutarch. In fact the two authors betray no hint in their own writings that

they even know of each other. Such silence across the Greek—Latin divide is not unusual, but it is made especially poignant in this case by the many overlaps in their circles of acquaintance: here is a pair 'who really ought to have met, but for whose actual encounter there is only slim or contestable evidence' — making for a fascinating but conventionally frustrating scholarly dead-end. Their exchange of views on ethics thus proves to be a serendipitous opportunity to reflect on 'the silences, omissions and exclusions inflicted by contemporary texts on each other' through imaginative engagement: with it Gibson offers, in all seriousness, a novel approach to the dynamics of literary and personal interactions which constitute the variegated threads of this volume.

With this final evanescent dialogue our volume of Literary Interactions reaches its own end. But that, John Henderson ('ENVOI/VENIO') calls in to say, is where the interactions really begin. <>

[Rome: A History in Seven Sackings](#) by Matthew Kneale [Simon & Schuster, 9781501191091]

"Kneale's account is a masterpiece of pacing and suspense. Characters from the city's history spring to life in his hands." —The Sunday Times (London)

Novelist and historian Matthew Kneale, a longtime resident of Rome, tells the story of the Eternal City—from the early Roman Republic through the Renaissance and the Reformation to Mussolini and the German occupation in World War Two—through pivotal moments that defined its history.

Rome, the Eternal City. It is a hugely popular tourist destination with a rich history, famed for such sites as the Colosseum, the Forum, the Pantheon, St. Peter's, and the Vatican. In no other city is history as present as it is in Rome. Today visitors can stand on bridges that Julius Caesar and Cicero crossed; walk around temples in the footsteps of emperors; visit churches from the earliest days of Christianity.

This is all the more remarkable considering what the city has endured over the centuries. It has been ravaged by fires, floods, earthquakes, and—most of all—by roving armies. These have invaded repeatedly, from ancient times to as recently as 1943. Many times Romans have shrugged off catastrophe and remade their city anew.

Excerpt: There is no city like Rome. No other great metropolis has preserved its past so well. In Rome you can cross bridges that were crossed by Cicero and Julius Caesar, you can stand in a temple nineteen centuries old or walk into a church where a hundred popes have celebrated mass. As well as the city's famous sights — the fountains, the Pantheon, the Colosseum, St Peter's, the Sistine Chapel — you can also see Mussolini's Fascist propaganda, much of it still intact. The Romans have even kept the city's Gestapo headquarters from the Nazi occupation. That so much has survived is all the more remarkable considering what Rome has endured over the centuries: dozens of catastrophic floods, fires, earthquakes, plagues and, most of all, attacks by enemy armies.

When I first came to Rome at the age of eight I had never seen a city that had so much of its past on show. My fascination grew and as I became older I returned many times. For the last fifteen years I have lived in Rome, studying it and getting to know every stone of the city. I realized I wanted to write about Rome's past and show how it has become the city it is today: to tell the city's whole story from three thousand years ago to present times.

There was a problem. Rome's past is a vast subject. The city has changed so greatly that there have been many Rome's, each of which would be largely unrecognizable to Romans of other times. Books that try to recount the city's entire history tend to suffer from being too long, and yet also too hurried, as they struggle to race through events. Much of my writing has been fiction, and novels, among many other things, require a strong, clear structure. I began wondering what structure could be used to frame Rome's history while avoiding an endless stream of and then. An idea came to me: focusing on a handful of moments throughout the city's existence — moments that changed the city and set it on a new direction. Sackings were the obvious choice. As Romans ruefully observe, Rome has had no shortage of them.

Seven seemed a good number. Seven hills, seven sackings. I found the ones that were most important to Rome's history, and which also fell at moments when the city had a character wholly distinct from

other eras. I began to envisage how each chapter could be told, like a story. First, we would see the enemy advancing on the city and we would learn who they were and what had brought them. Next, we would pause and look at what the city had been like before the crisis had begun, when it still enjoyed a sense of normality. We would be presented with a kind of vast postcard from Rome describing what it looked like, felt like and smelt like; what Romans — rich and poor — owned; what united and divided them; what their homes were like; what they ate; what they believed; how clean they were; how cosmopolitan; how they amused themselves; what they thought about sex; how their men and women treated one another; and how long they could expect to live. Along the way we would see how Rome had changed since the last postcard and so — like joining the dots in a puzzle — we would glimpse the city's whole history. Finally, we would return to the drama of the sacking, discovering how the enemy broke into the city, what they did there and how Rome was changed by what took place.

I have been researching this book for fifteen years. It has been a pleasure to write as it has allowed me better to understand a city which, for all its flaws, I greatly love, and which I find no less fascinating now than I did when I first came here as a child. In these strange days when our world can seem fragile I have also found something rather reassuring in Rome's past. Romans repeatedly shrugged off catastrophes and made their city anew, adding a new generation of great monuments. Both peace and war have played their part in making Rome the extraordinary place it is today.

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[Northern Italy in the Roman World: From the Bronze Age to Late Antiquity](#) by Carolyn E. Roncaglia [Johns Hopkins University Press, 9781421425191]

Carolyn E. Roncaglia's [Northern Italy in the Roman World](#) analyzes the effect of the Roman Empire on northern Italy, tracing the evolution of the region from the Bronze Age to the Gothic wars. A wealthy and strategically important region, northern Italy presents an interesting case study for examining the influence of the Roman state on the fluctuating geographic areas of Cisalpine Gaul that were under its control.

Using an array of epigraphic, archaeological, numismatic, and literary evidence, Roncaglia shows how Rome affected matters large and small, from loom weights to ritual horse burials, social networks to the careers of writers. Among the range of fascinating topics she discusses are Celtic migrations, the Roman conquest, Hannibal, long-distance trade networks, freedmen families, St. Ambrose, Catullus, and Pliny the Younger.

[Northern Italy in the Roman World](#) argues that the relationship between long-term trends and short-term events is key to understanding how Rome affected the territory within its empire. The book is the first major discussion of Roman northern Italy in English to appear since World War II and will be of special interest to scholars and students of the ancient world, European prehistory, the medieval world, and Italian studies.

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Excerpt: [Northern Italy in the Roman World: From the Bronze Age to Late Antiquity](#) by Carolyn E. Roncaglia is a history of a region created by the Roman Empire. Geographically, the region that the Romans called Cisalpine Gaul is a combination of varied features: Alps, plains, delta, piedmont, karst, glacial lakes, and solitary volcanic hills. While this region, broadly considered, served as a nodal point in trade between peninsular Italy, Europe, and the Mediterranean throughout its history, it was not a region unified in any political, cultural, or economic sense until the Roman conquest of the second century BCE. It was an artificial creation, an agglomeration of Po and Venetic plains with the Ligurian coast and of isolated Alpine valleys with the marshy Po Delta. Yet its creation provides insight into Roman fears and imperial aspirations, just as its development over time elucidates the ways in which being part of a larger, interconnected Roman world shaped the lives of individuals and communities.

Methods

Through the analysis of northern Italy as a region, this book aims both to understand how the Roman Empire created its own geography and also to examine the consequences of that creation. This work thus falls into a much-debated and long-established area of study, that of the nature of change in the territories of the Roman Empire. The changes undergone by the Roman provinces has been alternatively termed *bricolage*, *creolization*, *hybridization*, or—more frequently—*Romanization*. This work does not attempt to offer a new term for Romanization but rather outlines some of the mechanisms by which individuals and systems

changed the human and natural landscape in one particular region. Change in Roman northern Italy happened at varying rates, and this book argues that the often fast-moving political history of the Roman state not only intersected with long-term trends in northern Italian societies, economies, and networks but repeatedly directed those trends. Northern Italy, as the following chapters attempt to show, presents a case for the interconnection of political, social, economic, and cultural history in the Roman world. So while northern Italy is in many ways peculiar and distinct from other provinces, I hope that it can serve as a model for changes in other regions.

Since the conceptualization of the area between the Apennines and the Alps as being part of "Italy" was not static over time, the region also presents an opportunity to look more critically at the concept of Roman Italy, which was a creation born of a political and cultural moment and not a static, monolithic being. To do so, this book also examines the evolution of both northern Italian and Italian identity. I do not address the political elephant in the room—the prominent place of "northern Italian" identity in the politics of the Lega Nord, a federalist party that dabbles in Padanian nationalism—since that complicated issue requires lengthier discussions of Celtic revivals, European separatist movements, antiimmigration policies, and modern Italian politics than this book is able to give.

As a history of a region, albeit an artificial one, the book owes a significant debt to the study of the Mediterranean by Fernand Braudel and later by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, and while the task of gathering and analyzing evidence for ancient northern Italy is not as daunting as for the Mediterranean as a whole, the scale of the inquiry does require some selectivity.¹ This book cannot and does not claim to be exhaustive, and while the following pages use a combination of archaeological, epigraphic, and literary evidence, the reader will note a preponderance of epigraphic material in the middle chapters, sometimes at the expense of other types of evidence. This reliance on Roman inscriptions allows a partial reconstruction of social networks and local ideologies but unfortunately does not give the

fullest consideration to contributions from archaeology and literature. The reader may also find that the use of case studies excludes or minimizes important areas, sites, and persons, and where possible I point the reader to fuller treatments of those topics.

Organization

The three parts of this book trace the creation, development, and eventual destruction of Roman northern Italy. The creation of this region is largely a story of the Roman Republic, but in order to provide context and to argue for the unique nature of the Roman conquest, the first part looks back first to the Bronze and Iron Ages and the worlds of the Terramare and Golasecca before examining the Roman conquest and the subsequent political and cultural incorporation of northern Italy into the Roman world.

The second and largest section of the book follows the evolution of the region under the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries CE, and since the corpus of material from this period is so extensive, case studies of particular areas and cities—the Aemilia, Tanaro Valley, Novum Comum, and Aquileia—are used selectively to illustrate particular points.

The invasions and subsequent Roman restructuring of northern Italy in the third century mark a turning point in the region's history, and the book's third and final section details how towns and networks in the region responded to the changing Roman world of Late Antiquity. Here again the large amount of evidence requires a more selective approach, and this section's sole chapter functions as a miniature of the imperial section, with smaller case studies tracing Late Antique developments as well as the final dissolution of northern Italy, both as a unified region and as part of a larger Roman world.

Ravenna

Back on the western shores of the Adriatic, Ravenna's infrastructure was similarly developed. In the fifth century, the town became a frequent base for the Roman emperors. This is not to say that Ravenna became the new capital in the west, as has sometimes been claimed.¹ Emperors continued to spend time and hold celebrations in Rome, still

important as the symbolic heart of the empire. Emperors and their courts are still attested as visiting other northern Italian cities: Mediolanum, Ticinum, Placentia, and Dertona. These visits, however, were mostly made in a military context. Even Mediolanum, which had been so important in the fourth century as a center of the imperial court, witnessed no significant imperial ceremonies.

The emperors based at Ravenna protected it further. New walls were built and the port renovated. The fifth-century city benefitted from imperial patronage. Ravenna became the chief city of the northern Adriatic as Aquileia, no longer an imperial base and still suffering from its disastrous sack by Attila in 452, declined. By the sixth century even Aquileia's episcopal seat had been moved to Grado, the island just to Aquileia's south, where many of the town's refugees had fled.

At Ravenna the imperial court glorified themselves in the mosaics of new churches, such as that of San Giovanni Evangelista, which before its sixteenth-century renovation bore portraits of the emperors Arcadius and Theodosius II and their wives, Eudoxia and Eudocia, on its apse and of Saint John the Evangelist saving Galla Placidia and her children at sea on the apse arch. As with Ambrose's church-building at Mediolanum, Galla Placidia's construction of San Giovanni Evangelista at Ravenna had political benefits. The mosaic program highlighted her generosity and symbolically elevated her place within the imperial family, and the inclusion of Eudocia and Eudoxia made a claim for the importance of the women of the imperial family. These politicized mosaics highlight a key difference between Ravenna and towns like Tergeste, which, while important to the overall defensive network, were not bastions of the imperial court. While both Tergeste and Ravenna were fortified and protected, Ravenna's churches were more generously endowed and were adorned as much as political monuments as religious structures.

As imperial power in the Western Roman Empire collapsed in the second half of the fifth century, Ravenna found new patrons in post-Roman Italy's new Gothic rulers. In 490 CE King Odoacer took refuge in the city as Ostrogothic king Theoderic

invaded Italy from the Balkans. After three years of siege, Odoacer and Theoderic reached a settlement, mediated by Ravenna's local bishop, and Theoderic entered Ravenna to begin a joint and equal rule with Odoacer. Days later, Theoderic invited Odoacer to a banquet and killed him with his own hands.

After further conquests in the 490s and early 500s, Theoderic was in control of most of Italy and the Balkans. He embarked upon a building program in Rome and a few strategic Italian cities, including Ravenna, Verona, and Ticinum, all of which were important centers associated with late Roman imperial power. Theoderic was, at least in terms of his *evergetism*, portraying himself in the mold of Late Roman emperors, but there were limits to that emulation. He chose to use the title *rex* ("king") instead of *imperator* ("emperor") and, with the exception of one special issue, minted coins in the name of the emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire. While he gave benefactions to Rome, he chose Verona, Ticinum, and especially Ravenna as royal seats. He set foot in Rome only once.

At Ravenna, Theoderic rebuilt a fourth-century palace to act as the center of his court. This redecorated palace included a large audience hall, a triclinium (dining room) whose mosaic floor showed Bellerophon and the Chimaera, and an equestrian statue of Theoderic in front of the entrance. Another palace mosaic showed female personifications of Rome and Ravenna, the latter with one foot on land and one in the sea. Next to the palace was Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, whose magnificent sixth-century mosaic decorations on the nave walls still survive.

Among scenes from the New Testament and processions of martyrs and saints, the mosaics show Ravenna's port at Classe and the palace of Theoderic. The mosaic depiction of the palace was originally filled with figures of the court and altered after the city's reconquest by the Eastern Roman Empire to remove traces of Ostrogothic rule. Of Theoderic's mosaic court only disembodied hands remain.

In addition to his patronage of Ravenna's churches, Theoderic built new porticoes and restored an aqueduct built under Trajan. Just outside the city he

drained marshes and installed orchards. In emulation of imperial mausolea at Rome, Constantinople, Thessalonica, and Mediolanum, he built a mausoleum for himself in a Roman necropolis near Ravenna's lighthouse, which had most likely been built under Augustus or Claudius, two rulers who, like Theoderic, stressed their dominance of land and sea.

Theoderic's patronage of Ravenna and his placement there of his personal mausoleum was matched by inattention to Rome. While Theoderic sponsored building projects in the city, these were overmatched by his benefactions in Ravenna, Verona, Ticinum, and Parma. While Rome had in the Republic and Empire been the city that most influenced development in northern Italy, now northern Italian cities diverted imperial patronage from Rome and influenced that city's development. Theoderic's reign was yet another step in the dissolution of an Italy ruled from Rome. Even Honorius, whom contemporary historians criticized for retreating to Ravenna while Rome was under threat in 408, chose to build his mausoleum in Rome, not Ravenna.

Yet while Theoderic's choice of Ravenna as the site of his mausoleum suggests that city's primacy, other cities in the older Late Antique network of imperial cities served as bases for Theoderic's wandering court. Mediolanum was an important minting center, and Dertona's warehouses served an important resource for the Gothic court. Verona seems to have had particularly strong connections to the court; Theoderic strengthened the city's defenses and for a time, between 519 and 524, ruled there. Theoderic's *magister officiorum* (the high-ranking "master of offices") Boethius was tried in Verona and imprisoned just outside Ticinum. Thus, while primacy in northern Italy was contested by Mediolanum, Ravenna, and Ticinum from the third to the early sixth century, the network of towns and cities set up by the Roman state in response to the challenges of the third century proved remarkably durable.

After the Ostrogoths War between the Ostrogoths and the Eastern Roman Empire followed Theoderic's death. To illustrate the destructiveness of these sixth-century CE wars, Procopius—panegyrist,

scholar, and extremely disgruntled courtier—recounted the story of the Ostrogothic king Theodohad, who, upon the advice of a Jewish astrologer, shut up three groups of ten pigs in three huts for days without food. In order to predict how the war with the Byzantines would go, Theodohad was advised to label one of the porcine groups as Byzantines, the second as Ostrogoths, and the third as Italians. Upon reopening the huts it was discovered that most of the Byzantine pigs had survived, all but two of the Gothic pigs had died, and of the Italian pigs half had died and the surviving half had shed their bristles.

For Procopius the fate of the "Italian" pigs predicted the devastating impact of the extended wars of reconquest on Italy. Many smaller communities, such as Aquae Statiellae, had shrunk considerably during the sixth century, while even larger, fortified towns, like Verona, showed widespread abandonment of buildings. As in the earlier wars of the late third century, and even earlier in the Alemannic incursion during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, plague accompanied warfare and came in waves in the early 540s (the Justinianic Plague), the 570s, the 580s, and again at the beginning of the seventh century. To this Paul the Deacon adds serious flooding along the Po and its tributaries, as well as general famine throughout Italy.

Mediolanum's fate was the most brutal. In 539 CE the Goths sacked the city in punishment for the city's support of the Eastern Roman Empire. They massacred Mediolanum's male population and sold the women and children off to the Burgundian; Procopius claims that in the process more than 300,000 Milanese were killed. While Procopius's tally is probably exaggerated, even at a tenth of the total the sack would have been a demographic disaster for the town, although the town seems to have recovered somewhat by the Lombard period.

Mediolanum's sack meant that Ticinum was for a time the preeminent fortified settlement in the region. Accordingly, Ticinum was able to maintain many of the amenities built by the Romans and the Ostrogoths, including its extensive drain system. When the Lombards under Alboin invaded Italy in 568, Ticinum was a valuable prize, and the

Lombards spent three years besieging it. By the time the Lombards arrived, Paul the Deacon, writing in the eighth century, records:

The city of Ticinum, after withstanding the siege for three years and a few months, surrendered itself to Alboin and to the besieging Lombards. When Alboin entered it from the eastern side of the city through the gate of St. John, his horse fell in the middle of the gate, and, although goaded by kicks and afterwards hit by the whacks of spears, could not be made to stand. Then one of the Lombards said to the king: "Remember my lord king, what promise you have made. Break so harsh a vow and you will enter the city, for there is a truly Christian people in this city." Alboin had vowed that he would put all the people to the sword because they had been unwilling to surrender. He broke this vow and promised clemency to the people, and then his horse immediately rose, and he entered the city, and he did not inflict harm on anyone but kept his promise. Then all the people, thronging around Alboin in the palace that king Theoderic had built, after so many troubles began to feel relieved, trusting in hope for the future.

The Lombards subsequently made their capital at Ticinum, where they built churches and monasteries, enlarged the palace complex, and stocked their court with scholars like Paul the Deacon; in doing so the Lombard kings set the town up as a rival to Ravenna and Constantinople, as the Carolingians were later to do at Aachen. The Lombard choice of Ticinum as capital was based largely on the infrastructure established there by the Romans and the Ostrogoths, whose use of the town as an imperial base and subsidiary capital also lent the town and its Lombard heirs a useful legitimacy, as also seen in Alboin's use of Theoderic's palace.

Ravenna, under Byzantine exarchs for most of the period between 600 and 750, navigated a careful course between the demands of an often disinterested Eastern Empire and those of the papacy and the Italian aristocracy; in 755 the city passed into the hands of the papacy, a reversal of the two cities' Ostrogothic fortunes. At the end of the eighth century Ravenna's churches and palaces impressed Charlemagne, who used them as a

model—and sometimes as a source of marble—for new construction at his court at Aachen. Even Theoderic's equestrian statue in front of the palace was shipped off to Aachen, where it was repurposed for new political uses. The eighth and ninth centuries underwent some urban revival, but regional networks remained rudimentary, and the connectivity 100 of early-medieval northern Italy did not match that of its Roman predecessor.

At Ravenna, Ticinum, and throughout northern Italy, the urban fabric of the Roman era was adapted and repurposed throughout the sub-Roman and early medieval world. Even into the Renaissance, the Roman past both guided urban forms and could itself be manipulated by contemporary political interests to create civic identities. For example, by 1368 CE Verona's Roman-era forum had developed into the Piazza delle Erbe, where the city, then under the rule of the fratricidal Della Scala family, held its fruit and vegetable market. In that year Cansignorio della Scala ornamented a fountain in the center of the piazza with a second-century CE Roman statue, newly refurbished with head, arms, and a bronze streamer bearing a Latin motto proclaiming: "This city is the bearer of justice and the lover of fame." That statue came to symbolize the city itself as "Madonna Verona." On the north end of the piazza, a street followed the old decumanus maximus, itself a segment of the via Postumia of 148 BCE, through the Porta Borsari, a first-century CE gate reinscribed in the third century with an inscription of the emperor Gallienus. A road leading from the east end of the Piazza delle Erbe led to Santa Maria Antica, which housed the elaborate Gothic tombs of the Della Scala and which had been rebuilt on the site of a seventh-century Lombard church. Built into the walls of the church was part of a Roman funerary monument. A street on the west led down to the old Roman arena, still used for tournaments in the fourteenth century.

Conclusions

Fernand Braudel, in his history of the Mediterranean in the age of Philip II in the sixteenth century, described a landscape in the northern Italian region of Lombardy that dictated its history, one in which plains experienced growing

land reclamation and growing social misery, as wealthy landowners used their resources to build canals and establish vast rice fields that exploited peasant laborers. Braudel describes this as a slow, long-term change, started by twelfth-century monks and continued by sixteenth-century aristocrats, but above all predicted by the geography. Braudel compares the Po Plain to the plains of Spain, Portugal, Campania, and the Balkans and contrasts them with the forests and mountains of northern Europe. In this model, the plains produced "large estates and serf villages," whereas the forests, more easily and cheaply exploited than the large plains, empowered enterprising farmers and produced freer societies.

In the plains of Roman northern Italy, a different model emerges, again largely as a result of the region's place within the larger Roman world. The plains north and south of the Po River are not drastically different, but Roman preferences and concerns led to the Roman state's treating the Aemilia quite differently from the Transpadana during the Roman Republic. While large estates were a key feature of the Roman-era landscape, so too were small farms, wool merchants, and transalpine networks of enterprising freedmen. Freedmen and freeborn are more equally represented in the collegia of northern Italy than in central and southern Italy, and social mobility was a real, if limited, feature of an interconnected urban and rural life. In northern Italy an irrigated and canalized plain did not create a landscape of serfs.

This is not to minimize the importance of the region's geography but rather to argue that such importance stemmed not just from particular geographical features—plains, foothills, coasts, rivers, and mountains—but also from northern Italy's place within a larger world system, namely, a position between Europe, peninsular Italy, and the Mediterranean. Northern Italy was a lynchpin in trade networks between all three, from the Bronze Age through the Roman Empire and beyond, and this intermediate position also helped determine northern Italy's place within the Roman world.

Northern Italy was part of the Roman Empire for seven hundred years. During those years the

region's landscape, culture, society, and economy changed dramatically. Roman roads shaped urban networks for centuries. Colonization, immigration, veteran settlement, expulsions, and population transfers remade the human landscape. Latin replaced Italic, Celtic, and Venetic dialects and became the foundation not only of northern Italy's regional languages—such as Venetian, Friulian, Piedmontese, Ligurian, and Lombard—but also of the standard Italian that replaced them in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. New gods and sheep were imported, syncretized, and themselves exported.

Nor was change unidirectional. The Transpadani shaped Late Republican politics, while at the same time Vergil and the neoteric poets changed Roman literature. One of northern Italy's inhabitants, Livy, defined Roman history itself.

The Roman state treated the region differently across time, with three distinct phases emerging: (i) a period of invasive but unevenly applied state intervention, from the Roman conquest to the Augustan era, (2) a period of relatively hands-off governance, from the Augustan era to the third century CE, and (3) a return of direct, frequent, and invasive state intervention, in the third through fifth centuries. In the first and third phases, the impact of the Roman state was clear and pronounced, and the effects of the Roman state in the second phase, while largely indirect, were just as pervasive.

The sustained level of those effects across seven hundred years was partially a result of northern Italy's place within a larger imperial system, a shifting and interconnected Roman world in which legions, consumer cities, and administration pulled people and goods across the Europe and the Mediterranean world.

Even when the Roman government was not physically moving people down from the hills to the plains as it was in the Middle Republic, the pull of Rome and the borders nevertheless produced population movements of their own.

The long-term reshaping of northern Italy, however, should not solely be ascribed to the slow and sustained pull of Rome and the militarized borders. Rather, lasting changes also had their origins in the

relatively sudden shifts of imperial policy, as in the late first century BCE or in the 270s CE, or in the actions of individuals.

Within the historiography of the Mediterranean, a distinction has been made between a history of a region and history in a region, with the former being the history of a region as a geographical unit and the latter meaning events happening within that unit. It is this author's view that the two histories are not distinct, that in this case the history of northern Italy cannot be separated from history in northern Italy. Events dictated by political needs of a particular decade, year, or month, such as the creation of new imperial seats or of new administrative configurations for Italy, had long-term consequences. Individual personalities could and did have a lasting impact, as Ambrose of Milan ably demonstrates. Pliny the Younger's unique political circumstances after the emperor Domitian's assassination altered the urban fabric of *Novum Comum*, and the renovation of his image in his letters established long-lasting architectural ideals that found expression around Lake Como in the sixteenth century. The history of northern Italy is inextricably tied to its history in the Roman era, and the concept of northern Italy as a unified region, was itself a Roman creation, the product of particular eras, particular politics, and particular fears and ambitions. <>

[The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Nero](#) by Kirk Freudenburg and Cedric Littlewood [Cambridge Companions to the Ancient World, Cambridge University Press, 9781107052208]

The age of Nero has appealed to the popular imagination more than any other period of Roman history. This volume provides a lively and accessible guide to the various representations and interpretations of the Emperor Nero as well as to the rich literary, philosophical and artistic achievements of his eventful reign. The major achievements of the period in the fields of literature, governance, architecture and art are freshly described and analysed, and special attention is paid to the reception of Nero in the Roman and Christian eras of the first centuries AD and beyond. Written by an international team of leading experts, the chapters provide students and

non-specialists with clear and comprehensive accounts of the most important trends in the study of Neronian Rome. They also offer numerous original insights into the period, and open new areas of study for scholars to pursue.

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Excerpt:

Angles on an Emperor

For the ancient historians who write about Nero, the man and his "age" are synonymous. As if anticipating Carlyle's famous formulation about world history being "but the biography of great men," and with no Herbert Spencer to tell them otherwise, Nero's ancient chroniclers write the "age" of Nero as the biography of the man himself, the outsized performer who torched the city of Rome and brought the Julio-Claudian dynasty crashing down. Put differently, and perhaps more correctly, when Nero's ancient chroniclers wrote their histories and biographies, they were not setting out to write his "age." They did not think in terms of ages per se, but only of the larger-than-life Roman men who happened to initiate ages upon their rise, and to conclude them upon their fall. For "the big three" of Roman imperial history (Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio), "big men" are the drivers of history, and there was never a bigger man to spin history with than Nero.

To help us understand the implosion of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and the imperial crisis of 69 CE, Nero's ancient historians have precious little to say about social, political, and economic structures. They do not think in these terms, and they have neither the methods nor the vocabulary to tell us what we moderns would like to know. As we peer

back from our own present to the deep past, looking from this side of numerous paradigmatic "turns" (cultural, linguistic, spatial, performative, quantitative, and so on), we want to know what can be regarded as "factual," or at least "reasonably surmisable," about the workings of the Roman world under Nero, only to be treated to stories about palace intrigue, million-dollar mushrooms, asses'-milk baths, humans lit as torches, and torch-lit orgies. We find history put to us as brilliantly salacious entertainment: a performance of outrage that is also a bid for moral authority, performed by men who are themselves politically active and well placed (both Tacitus and Dio were Roman senators, and Suetonius was handpicked by Hadrian to hold multiple top-level posts in his administration), writing to men of similar cultural wherewithal and rank. History for the imperial "big three" has to do with uncovering and censuring the moral rot of their script's main players — their lack of moderation and megalomania. It is satire by other means, tragically tinged. Told the way the ancients tell it, Roman imperial history is tragic, not because historians look to tragedy for models (though they certainly do that), but because of what they take history's purpose to be, and because of where they choose to shine the genre's spotlight: on bigger-than-life protagonists feasting in their palaces, on their desires, their family intrigues, their delusions, and their cruelties.

Given the way that Nero has been passed down to us, it is no wonder that "the age" of Nero Claudius Caesar (37-68 CE) has appealed to the popular imagination more than any other period in ancient Roman history. It has been the object of repeated scholarly reevaluations, many of them focusing directly on the compelling figure of the emperor himself. The potent admixture of the historical and the imaginative in his reception, to include his immediate reception in the age that he came to define, has given us a deeply complex figure: a radical innovator who conformed to the traditions of Augustus; a leader among brilliantly talented poets who himself wrote laughably bad poems; a military bungler who pulled off a long-sought peace accord with the leaders of Parthia and Armenia; a self-delusional fool who was also a crafty propagandist. Abounding in such

incongruities, the fourteen years of Nero's rule have been approached with strikingly different emphases: as a golden age that went sour and a time of marked Christian persecution; an era of architectural innovation capped by the glory (or monstrosity) of the Domus Aurea; a time of rapprochement between the Romans and Greeks of the eastern empire, and, of course, the death throes of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, whose policies the Flavians would react against in turn.

It is because he has been passed down to us as too many outrageous versions of the same man that Nero remains imaginable as something other than what all, and what little, the ancients made of him. He does not take to being sewn together merely as the sum of his parts because we have been left with far too many parts to work with, and because many of them do not take to being sewn into human form. But it is from this mass of contradictions and monstrous assertions and open ends that new ways of thinking about Nero and his age must emerge and new versions of the man be conceived.

This [Cambridge Companion to the Age of Nero](#) proposes to offer a comprehensive overview of the period that pays special attention not only to the monsters that Nero was made into, by the ancients and many others since, but to the processes and the cultural stakes of these constructions. This Companion looks not only to the historical debates that the age of Nero has spurred, but also to the many ways in which Nero was received and interpreted in the Roman and Christian eras of the first centuries CE and beyond. It treats the refulgence of the plastic and literary arts in the Neronian period, and it offers fresh interpretations of the relations of the main authors of the day (Seneca, Petronius, Persius, Lucan) to the age in which they lived.

The historical facts behind the many Neros that have come down to us are looked for by many of the essays of this volume, and good headway is made in the posing of new plausibilities based on fresh critical reassessments of the information we have. That said, no single, generally accepted version of Nero and his age emerges from this effort. The coeditors of this volume thought it best not to try to make that happen because not only

would such a result be hard to pull off, it would risk sending the wrong message, since it would make the Nero so attained (the one offered as historically plausible by consensus) seem the point of this project, as well as somehow more real and historically significant than the monsters into which he was made. Whatever such a Nero would look like, he could be nowhere near as compelling and/or historically significant as the Neros he gave rise to.

A common thread of many of the essays in [The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Nero](#) concerns Nero the performer. His ancient chroniclers make Nero's failure to separate stage acting from ruling his signature delusion. But here (to give just one instance of where modern critical methods invite new reckonings of the same old information) we have a place where "the performative turn" in recent humanities and social sciences scholarship has added vast new dimensions to what an emperor's public playacting might be taken to entail and mean — as self-work, and as the assertion of a certain kind of political identity. No longer do we go looking for "the real man," Nero ipse, behind the mask (only to find him hollow inside). Instead, we look to the performances he put on as a means of centering and defining himself, in acts of posing (so as to become) a self of a certain kind. The use of such performances as a means of political self-realization and getting things done is by no means unique to Nero. Rather, it is the openness with which he staged himself as this, then that, then again as something else that made his self-performance unique among Rome's emperor actors. Taken this way, rather than as mere delusion, Nero's playacting has much to tell us about their lives by calling attention to the theatricality of the roles they had played as emperors. But what for Augustus was stylized rule, for Nero was rule both via and as style — performance devoid of substance. In his chapter, Josiah Osgood looks at one of the main interest groups that senatorial historians, such as Tacitus and Dio, tend to feature as chief among the suffering victims of the Neronian age: the members of the Roman Senate. Osgood examines what it meant to be a senator under Nero, in an age when the powers of the Senate had long since become

secondary and circumscribed, and yet were still, in some respects, very real. He reminds us that Nero was himself a man drawn from the Senate's own order who regularly sought out senators' advice

and approval. He ascended to the throne in 54 CE riding a wave of enthusiasm as the Wunderkind who would restore dignity to the institution that Claudius had relentlessly persecuted. The evidence suggests that there were many good years of cooperation between the emperor and the Senate before Nero began to feel threatened by certain members of their order. Many of the vices that later moralizing historians scold Nero for engaging in were in fact accepted modes of luxurious living among senators. Thus, rather than directly affronting the Senate and its mores with his parties, playacting, and poetry salons, Nero may in fact have been reaching out to the Senate as one of its own, playing to the Senate on the Senate's own terms: a bid for gratia and cohesion after the debacles of Claudius and Caligula. It was only late in his career that this symbiosis was spoiled and a new climate of suspicion and rivalry took hold. But, in the end, it was not the Senate that brought Nero down. Despite impressions of risk-taking and outright senatorial defiance that senatorial writers have left for us, the Senate was very slow to condemn him and desert one of its own.

Carlos Noreña looks at the way the empire was governed under Nero, and to do that he must first clear away a number of basic confusions about what "government" was under the emperors, and what role Nero himself may have had in running things in distant parts of the Roman world. Here again the ancient historians tend to paint cartoon pictures of an autocratic Nero doing whatever he pleased by deciding and decreeing. In fact, "government" under the emperors was a highly complex system that did not take to being worked that way.

Rather than a monolith of institutions, offices, and laws used as devices for carrying out the emperor's will, Rome's imperial government is better thought of as a set of evolving political arrangements worked out between the emperor, his imperial agents, and distant others whose interests were all being taken into account and promoted at the same

time. Rome's imperial government, in other words, was "a system for the management of interests." For his part, Nero was heavily managed, and his policies much worked upon, by these interests through his advisory concilium, the Senate, the knights, civil servants, local elites, and even his own freed slaves. Seen for the complex interests that they protect and promote, many of Nero's fiscal policies, vilified by historians, make good economic and political sense, and even the conspiracies of his last years can be seen as a shakeup and a re-composition of the emperor's inner circle made necessary by the emergence of new configurations of power. In the end, a new provincial elite emerged that "Nero" (the set of existing political and economic arrangements that operated under that name) was too slow to accommodate.

Anthony Barrett examines the interactions that took place between Nero and another group within his court, but not officially within his concilium: the women of his family (Agrippina, Domitia Lepida, Octavia), and certain other women who took his fancy (Poppaea Sabina, Antonia, Acte). Nero, he shows, had a long history of craving and developing the company of strong women, all of whom (excepting Acte) he would eventually tire of and destroy. The most famous of these women is Agrippina, who seems to have boldly inserted herself into the running of things early in his career, only to be rendered irrelevant not long after his accession, having split with Seneca and Burrus, whose careers she had done much to rescue and promote. Agrippina, Barrett makes clear, was not out of line for aggressively promoting the interests of her son, but for promoting herself as virtual co-regent with him, invested with powers of her own that she was determined to wield as she pleased. The other main example of the same type is Poppaea Sabina, Nero's second wife. Despite telling stories of her traveling with herds of asses to supply milk for her daily bath, the ancient sources (esp. Josephus) demonstrate that Poppaea was a woman who wielded very real unofficial powers that came with being who she was, as well as the emperor's wife. As her efforts taken on behalf of her friends from Judaea show, Poppaea could get demolition projects canceled and prisoners released. For the ancient historians who tell of

Poppaea's scheming and relentless ambition, such women were functions of the bad emperors who failed to assert their Roman male authority over them and keep them under control. But the fact that Nero was wont to welcome such women into his world, and to leave them free to develop and show off their powers in public, puts him solidly in the respectable traditions of Augustus (Livia) and Germanicus (the Elder Agrippina). Rather than a sign of weakness, Nero's association with such women might be taken to mean that he was not afraid of them and that he saw clear advantages to showing himself in their company.

Cedric Littlewood begins a series of essays on literature with a general discussion of the crucial role Neronian literature plays in establishing certain Augustan texts and authors as canonical. Especially in the high genres of epic and tragedy, the poetic reception of Augustan literature is characterized by inversion, contrast-imitation, and a determination to outrage decorum by saying what may not be said. But what exactly may not be said? Precisely the same material accommodates critiques of Augustan myths and ideals or, alternatively, a narrative of decline in which post-Augustan culture is portrayed as degenerate. A Neronian determination to remember the violence of pre-Augustan poems, for example, in Persius' reintroduction into satire of an "epodic" voice or in Lucan's allusions to the *Georgics*, is a pointed reversal of literary history and a challenge to Augustan reconciliations. The lament for lost grandeur, prominent in texts such as Petronius' *Satyrica*, is an ancient commonplace. The loss of political liberty is often advanced as a cause of literary decline, but, we should note, often by deeply unreliable narrators.

Much of the dissonance in post-Augustan literature is created not by inverting models of smooth perfection, but by exposing and amplifying inherited tensions. Through selective reminiscence, and often jarring juxtaposition, dialogs between Augustan authors are revisited by their successors. Seneca's *Medea* combines Virgilian and Horatian texts in a meditation on the sublimity of limitless power that is as much a fulfillment of Augustan imperial ambition as its tragic demise.

Gareth Williams begins his study of Lucan's Civil War with a reminder of the now lost or fragmentary historical epics that might have provided its author with models. From the Augustan age alone we know that Rabirius wrote an epic on the war between Octavian and Antony, and that Sextilius Ena and Cornelius Severus wrote civil war poems. The Elder Seneca compares their treatments of the death of Cicero. In a twenty-three line fragment of Albinovanus Pedo's poem on Germanicus' expedition in the North Sea in 16 CE, Williams detects the high declamatory pitch and artificiality that will characterize post-Augustan and especially Lucan's epic.

Lucan's Civil War is a poem of "chaotic contradictoriness" whose fragmented form mirrors its subject. Fractures in Lucan's authorial voice — now turning away from its subject and throwing up digressions to prevent the narrative of Rome's dissolution, now driven on by burning energy — parallel the characterization of the poem's opposing leaders. It is a conflict unresolved in the space of Lucan's poem, at least as it survives to us. The account of the elusive source of the Nile in Book 10 speaks perhaps to Nero's own ambitions (an expedition was launched ca. 61 CE), but more generally to all fantasies of global domination. If Nature is mysterious, so too are the gods who are invoked but never appear in Lucan's poem, as if to place the crime of the war and the shattering of the world beyond providence and understanding.

Kirk Freudenburg, in his chapter, "Petronius, Realism, Nero," explores the connections between the grandiose self-stylization and competitive playacting of the characters of the *Satyricon*, and the extreme aestheticization of politics in Neronian Rome. The playacting of Petronius' characters, and the confusions of art and reality, Freudenburg argues, "have less to do with their 'not getting' how things happen in the real world than with their 'getting' the ways of the late Neronian world all too well." The experience of Encolpius at Trimalchio's dinner, uncertain what is scripted, accidental, and improvised, is our own as readers of Nero's Rome. Nero singing while Rome burned, as if to the accompaniment of a play he had written, is the reverse image of Petronius making his own constrained and scripted death appear a

mere accident. Tacitus' account of Petronius' final fiction both parodies and surpasses Seneca's more labored attempt to stage an image of his life. The *Satyricon* offers a series of painted windows into Roman reality. The "call of nature" (and what could be more natural than that?) that forces an intermission in the performance (Sat. 41-6) is revealed as a literary echo of Horace, *Satires* 2.8 and an opportunity for Trimalchio, on his return, to display his medical learning. Time and again Petronius plays a trick in order to show us how the trick is done. In this respect, Freudenburg sees a comical resemblance between the illusions of the *Satyricon* and the fakery of Nero's Rome in which Nero's actor-emperor flippantly exposes the codes of his own manufacture.

In "Ain't Sayin': Persius in Neroland," Dan Hooley examines *nefas* (the unspeakable) in a satiric context. At the end of his programmatic first satire, Persius buries what may not be said in a hole, either sowing the seeds of free speech or consigning them to the grave. His close associate Thrasyllus Paetus, whose death ends what we have of Tacitus' *Annals*, once left a Senate meeting because "he could not say what he would, and would not say what he could" (Dio 61.15). Throughout his essay, Hooley looks in these apparently unpolitical satires for the words that cannot be spoken, for the implicit contrast between Persius' life under the guidance of his Stoic teacher, Cornutus, and Nero's life under the guidance of his Stoic teacher, Seneca. Nero's insincere speech of thanks to Seneca from *Annals* 14.55-6 is shockingly juxtaposed with Persius' gratitude to Cornutus, a gratitude that remains unspeakable (*non enarrabile*, 5.29) in a world whose rhetoric is bankrupt. The Roman Socrates cum Alcibiades of *Satires* 4 offers an unflattering portrait of Seneca and Nero, but not so as to place Persius' relationship with his own Socratic teacher beyond criticism. In Neroland, who doesn't have the ears of an ass? Simply naming Midas/Nero would be too easy a satire. "You want me to say that Midas has asses' ears, and worse?" writes Hooley's Persius. "I know it, and I want you to think about that and where you fit into this fallen world that I'm showing."

Seneca's works are treated in the next trio of essays. Chiara Torre argues for a more complex contextualization of Senecan drama in the art and culture of the Neronian age than it has previously received. Torre critiques the tendency to read the tragedies as *tragédies à clef*. Instead, she would have us pay attention to other less analyzed features. For one, she emphasizes the importance of the tragedies' continuing themes as echoed in the prose works, such as the relationship between monarchy and tyrannical power, the role of fate in the kingdom, and the role of the advisor figure. These themes, she suggests, are parallel across the poetry and the prose in their relentless movement from a more positive to a more negative view of power.

Torre's chapter also examines Senecan drama within a number of possible interpretive contexts related directly to their cultural milieu: as Augustanism "refigured" in order to reverse the optimistic stance of that earlier literature and represent the emperor as a sort of mad god; as a parallel to Fourth-style wall painting, in which domestic scenes are featured publicly and mythological innovation is striking; and as a reflection, metrically, of the heightened interest in music and pantomime under Nero. Examinations in this style, as she persuasively argues, help us fully understand the multidimensional nature of the theatricality marking the Neronian age.

Shadi Bartsch discusses philosophical, particularly Stoic, engagement in and disengagement from the state. Senators such as Thrasea Paetus could articulate political dissent in Stoic terms, but the philosophy was not opposed to monarchy. Although Stoics believed that "only the wise man is king" (S VF 3.369-700), there are many Stoic treatises on (actual) kingship from the third century BCE. Seneca's *de Clementia* exaggerates Stoic acceptance of monarchy as a possible form of government in the metaphor of the king as the mind of the body politic. This ideology for the new regime, Bartsch argues, stands in sharp contrast to the political writings of Cicero, for whom the Senate was the guardian, were, he made them as they seemed to be" (HN 34.65). Differently but relatedly, a reflection in sculpted marble of a painted Priapus in Pompeii's house of the Vettii

collapses "the space from street to garden, and between fresco and sculpture, art and life." The immersive, illusionistic paintings of the tragic figures of Pentheus and Dirce show the same taste for playing mythological scenes "for real" in the amphitheater and on the tragic stage.

Nero's building projects exemplify for historians of following ages the ruinous excess of a tyrant. Even his portraits show the face of unrestrained indulgence. Many modern scholars agree, but Vout argues that the swollen features on Nero's coinage show rather an ambition to appear larger than life. The numismatic record does not betray the emperor's gluttonous lifestyle, but is shaped by the same aesthetic impulse to exceed previous models that characterizes the emulative poetics of Seneca or Lucan. As these poets surpass and deform classic Augustan texts, Neronian portraiture pushes "visual prototypes to the point where the only move left is bursting."

In investigating the artistic and architectural achievements of Nero, Eugenio La Rocca shows that many of the most prominent stylistic innovations of the age, achievements generally taken to mark Nero as a stylistic maverick, are actually further developments and refinements of stylistic trends and traditions set in motion by Nero's Julio-Claudian ancestors. For example, in assimilating his image to that of Sol/Apollo, largely via suggestion rather than forthright assertion, Nero is doing something that Augustus had done, and thus he is conforming to the *mos maiorum* established by his ancestor. Many of the stylistic innovations of the Domus Aurea, La Rocca shows, can be read in the same way, and he indicates that, despite whatever Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio urge to the contrary, there is no reason to think that Romans were universally critical of Nero's remaking of Rome's center in the aftermath of the fire of 64 CE. Here too such large-scale remaking of Rome's urban spaces for the public good (hostile historians would have us believe that the Domus Aurea was a pleasure palace, strictly private) had a most respectable precedent in the transformation of the Campus Martius by Augustus and Agrippa. In the end, Nero's reputation as a stylistic trendsetter has less to do with bold innovation than it has to do with the way he unleashed the full potentials of

stylistic trends that were already available and ready to exploit.

John Pollini returns to the opportunity Nero exploited of remaking Rome's urban space, the Great Fire of 64, and asks anew whether the Christians were innocent scapegoats. Did they in fact play a role in that conflagration? The essay lays out the context for the Christians in Rome during Nero's era, and reminds us of the new and disturbing group whom Nero chose to blame for much of Rome's destruction. Pollini's first concern is to reexamine the traditional claim that it was Nero who "played the lyre while Rome burned." As he reveals, this accusation seems overdetermined: it comes from the elite classes who hated the emperor and had reason to claim he burned down a good part of the city to selfishly build his Domus Aurea. But the traditional account contains troubling inconsistencies: why, for example, would Nero not then start the fire at the site of the future building project? And what if his cronies apparently seen setting new fires were in fact trying to battle the blaze that had already started?

Pollini turns his gaze instead to another group scapegoated in the literature on the Great Fire: the followers of the Jew Christus (or Chrestus). Among the two camps of the Christians, it was not so much the Christians of the Jerusalem Church, but the followers of Paul of Tarsus who were dangerously targeting the conversion of Romans (rather than fellow Jews) and as such had good reason to incite anxiety. As Pollini shows, the reputation of the Christians in Rome was rife with charges of *superstitio* and apocalyptic thought. Is it possible that enthusiasm for the final conflagration described later in Revelation actually did drive this group to help along the flames? Perhaps the Christians were not only a scapegoat, and perhaps the fact that Nero not only blamed them for the fire, but also punished them accordingly by turning them into living torches for the amphitheater, is significant: he had them exit life by the very means that characterized what he blamed them for. This essay offers a different perspective on Harrill's study, the latter suggesting that much of Paul's treatment of persecution in the age of Nero was a later construct.

The reconstructed Rome that followed Nero's death has traditionally been described as a "Flavian aftermath" that sought to overturn Nero's artistic and architectural extravagance — for example, the Domus Aurea was torn down and partially replaced by the Colosseum. In his essay, La Rocca offered a corrective to this view, and Eric Varner, in "Negotiating Nero's Memory and Monuments in Flavian Rome," argues in some detail that the Flavian interventions in Nero's Rome were actually a careful recalibration of the Neronian visual program. Such "recalibration" can even be seen as a trait of Flavian statuary: while the repurposed statues of Nero were given the faces of the new regime, readable traces remained of the original image that let viewers see the shift in the political landscape. Likewise, if the Flavians sought to reshape Nero's Urbs Nova as their own Roma Resurge(n)s ("Rome Rising Again," as promoted in the coinage) after the civil wars of 68-9, nonetheless their additions to the civic landscape often pointed back to Nero's Rome rather than erased it altogether. As Varner points out, even if the Flavian Colosseum was a construction for the public's enjoyment, and not that of a single individual, the area of the Domus Aurea on which the Colosseum was constructed may have been one of the most publicly accessible parts of Nero's residence. The other great Flavian project, the Templum Pacis, or Temple of Peace, was a new building but was used to house Nero's works of art — a major part of its attraction. Even Nero's unfinished Colossus was finished and dedicated in 75 by Vespasian. As Varner concludes, "Notwithstanding the Flavian recalibration of Nero's legacy, it would seem his memory never ceased to resonate at Rome."

How this memory is repurposed, and what can be credibly taken as "known" about Nero and his age from ancient accounts that are overwhelmingly hostile and late, are the subjects of the next sequence of essays, covering the reception of Nero from Flavian historiography to Hollywood. Donatien Grau finds evidence for a consistently negative representation of Nero soon after his death in the *Naturalis Historia* of the Elder Pliny. Here criticism takes the form not of explicit political commentary, but of brief mentions and asides

casually tossed in that leave readers to conclude for themselves that Nero was depraved and out of control. Using a similar technique, both Statius and Martial offer incidental glimpses of Nero that add up to a consistent picture. But given what is made of Nero by later writers working in a full range of generic types (satire, histories, biographies, letters), it is surprising how little Overt and/or sustained criticism of Nero is found in the works of the Flavian writers who wrote in the immediate aftermath of his reign. It is only with the "big three" of the second and early third centuries, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio, that the Julio-Claudians (excepting Augustus) came in for the full rhetorical workup that featured a demented tyrant, tragically outsized and flawed, as the last self-immolating act of a decadent line. Taking us into the rhetorical workshops of these writers, Grau shows how the portrait of Nero becomes less complex and more exaggerated over time. The moral purposes to which these become the "right" kind of Nero is precisely why it was recommended that both kings and courtiers examine their conscience. Ironically, Petrarch himself was later accused of consorting with tyrants — like the very Seneca he had criticized. His defense was that his political associations left him free for the serious business of philosophy: unlike Seneca, he could enjoy liberty and monarchy together.

Elena Russo's essay pits two Enlightenment thinkers against each other precisely on whether tyrants such as Nero could have existed — and could still. It is a case of Voltaire versus Diderot, the former intent on playing down any possibility that such a monster as Nero could appear in history, the latter assimilating himself, through his historical writing, to Seneca, and suggesting that he himself had dealt with Neronian types in his experiences as an Enlightenment philosophe. Voltaire had defended both Tsar Peter and the Roman emperors as the victims of writers who swooped down upon the "cadavers of reputation" to dig out every foul rumor. And not only Voltaire, but indeed most of his fellow-philosophes also felt that decorum, at the very least, should require the rejection of some of the more hair-raising accounts in Tacitus and Suetonius. Diderot, however, took pains in his last work, the *Essai sur les règnes de Claude et de*

Néron et sur les mœurs et les écrits de Sénèque pour servir d'instruction à la lecture de ce philosophe (ECN), to represent Nero in the worst light possible and to defend Seneca, the philosopher-courtier, against his modern-day critics. His identification with Seneca is so strong that the ECN reads as "a tortured reflection on the present" and a statement of Diderot's own anxieties about being a philosopher in the world of politics. In particular, Russo suggests, Diderot saw reflections of his twenty-year-long experience with Catherine the Great in Seneca's experience with Nero: both philosopher-courtiers at first generously treated, but ultimately ignored and finally even hated by the royal figures they had tried to advise. Exploring "the tangled knot of hope, idealism, dependency, exploitation, disenchantment and shame that bound the philosopher to the tyrant," Diderot's work was not only personal, but also showed that when a Nero arose in history, the answer could be only tyrannicide.

As a foil to Diderot's bleak view, Martin Winkler brings us amusingly into the present with "Nero in Hollywood," a jaunty trip through some of Hollywood's most memorable Neros. Nero, amusing? But yes. Somehow the tyrant's deranged evil and debauchery translate on the big screen into figures so excessive as to be ludicrous. Often he is entirely under the thumb of his dangerously sexy (second) wife, Poppaea, as in DeMille's *The Sign of the Cross* and LeRoy's *Quo Vadis*, whence he emerges as a sort of pouty fat infant throwing regular tantrums. His very speech smacks of comic evil excess, his new Rome "springing from the loins of fire" (lest we forget his own loins were afire) while he proclaims, *qua artiste*, "I seek because I must be greater than man, for only then will I be the supreme artist" (*Quo Vadis*). And of course there are orgies. Already in DeMille's 1914 production we find "an astonishing lesbian seduction scene of a pagan dancer attempting, unsuccessfully of course, to undermine the virtue of the Christian heroine" 1932! It seems Nero brings out perversions even in film directors! — as in Victor Saville's *The Silver Chalice* (1954): peacock, boar, dormice, oysters, pheasant, ortolans, and grasshoppers (not mentioned in any Roman sources we know as part of Nero's diet). What could be

missing here but a cartoon Nero — although, as Winkler shows us, there were in fact many cartoon Neros, perhaps the most amusing one being the emperor featured in Friz Freleng's *Roman Legion-Hare* (1955), where Bugs Bunny manages to turn the tables and send the Colosseum lions after Nero and Yosemite Sam instead. In the end, however, it's Winkler — and we — who have the last laugh, with his ending line summing up more than a century of cinematic Neros: Vice cannot wither him, nor movies stale / his infamous variety.

After this last laugh, then what? Not a backward-looking glance at this volume's contents in order to offer a summation or to put the refracted pieces of Nero back together again, but a leap out of "Companion" mode altogether. What if we read Nero's final words, "What an artist dies in me," as a meditation on the nature of power rather than artistry? Erik Gunderson argues that the confrontation in Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* (2008) between Batman and the Joker (one of those men who, as Alfred puts it, "just want to watch the world burn"), offers a more recent cinematic meditation on masked power that resonates with the self-conscious playacting of Nero's rule. Gunderson considers what is at stake, both for Nero's ancient historians, and for us, in undertaking to strip Nero of his mask and to expose him as a fake. He shows how we establish our own dignity by exposing him as an actor and acting appalled at his act. He lays bare the power advantage gained by critics who undertake to divulge this as the big secret of his deluded age. In the actor scolded by historians, Gunderson finds not an emperor who has lost touch with reality, but an insider who speaks the truth about Roman power by performing his awareness of Rome's one biggest (unutterable) secret: that Caesars are "made" rather than just "are." This Joker-Nero parades his way through life as an actor, not to hide the truth, but to tell it. From antiquity on he is vilified for clownishly stripping the veil from the sanctity of power — for, in essence, not having had the decency to pretend, the way other emperors had done.

The question of imperial authenticity was a delicate and crucial one after the Senate had voted to depose Nero Caesar by declaring him a public

enemy (Suet. Nero 49), and after first Galba and then more successfully Vespasian had then taken the family name of Caesar as an indispensable part of being emperor of Rome. This crisis of power's legitimate foundation at the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty recalls the aftermath of Caligula's assassination, when some senators proposed that the memory of the Caesars be abolished. Not by coincidence does Suetonius remember Caligula as a man who so loved theater that he could not restrain himself from singing along with a tragic actor, a man who took advantage of the freedom — we should say rather the license (*licentia*) — of an all-night festival to appear for the first time on stage (Suet. Cal. S4). In closing, one might say: Nero's fascination with masquerade eclipses even Caligula's in the historical record because the change of dynasty after his death requires it.

Metastatic Neronianism

The present moment in Anglo-American society is hardly one that would be characterized as especially scholarly and historically minded. Unsurprisingly the historical figure of Nero is little known and difficult to find in the here and now. And yet the fable of Neronian decadence does live on: it subsists within a specific perspective that constitutes itself by sitting in judgment of (stupid) power and (vulgar) pleasure. But while one fiddles about sitting in judgment, the emperor's palace itself never burns.

Various moments from Suetonius' *Life* are resonant with contemporary life without, of course, being connected with the present via lines of direct transmission or even allusion. Profligate Nero bankrupts an empire, but his spending never abates, especially after he becomes enflamed with the idea of finding Dido's treasure in Africa. What could sound more modern than greedy, wastrel elites spending beyond their already lavish means while betting on some sort of speculative money-for-and-from-nothing? Whether it is Iraqi oil wealth or pyramid schemes like bitcoin or securities backed by underwater mortgages, the cynical (because powerless) academic elite are all able to play Tacitus and to decry the obscenity of wealth and its hollow charades. And yet such denunciations

do absolutely nothing to slow the quasiautonomous movement of global capital that circulates under the misleading albeit decadent label of vulgar money-lust. The profound economic connection between the universities that house the cynics and the economic and political elite remains singularly unaffected amidst all of the sighing and eye-rolling.

In Suetonius and other Roman accounts Nero's Golden House is metonym for his excess. The house swallows both the public space and the imperial purse. Nero's financial collapse is strongly associated with this specific building program in Suetonius' life of the emperor. Meanwhile we have our own fascination with the houses of the rich and famous. They act as symptoms of social maladies, but also sites of ambivalent projection for the critic. Between 1984 and 1994 one could tune in to *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* and tour various golden houses. Born amidst the febrile trickle-down economic dreams of Reaganomics, the show was decried by the intelligentsia for its vulgarity. Big, expensive, and tasteless homes were paraded in front of the eyes of a vulgar audience who lapped up the vulgarity. Or so said the cynics. And the show's logical successor is little better: MTV's *Cribs* (2000-11) offered a similar spectacle of tacky expenditure more or less tailor-made for the derision of the better sort: "What have we come to?" But the whole question of better-and worse or taste and tastelessness is itself a species of misdirection. What matters is only that the shows get ratings. Irony, overeducated viewers and hostile critics cannot possibly do harm to the corporate interests that are served by the promulgation of spectacles of Golden House-ism. Indeed, criticism frequently serves only to give a show buzz and to improve ratings. Accordingly, canny producers can be counted on to incite a certain brand of criticism.

Caesar's Palace: yes, but which Caesar? The answer is, "obviously" Nero. Nero's Golden House is the best fit: glitzy, faux-glamorous, and full of pleasures and shows. But it is also clear that one cannot say Nero's Palace either. A corporate entity has declared the name to be Caesar's Palace and not Nero's Palace. Moreover the name argues for the uncomfortable truth from the Octavia: all

Caesars are indistinguishable in their decadence. The nostalgic might long for a glamorous Old Vegas filled with colorful mobsters and they-don't-make-'em-like-that-anymore celebrities, but even that Las Vegas was all about the bottom line and the shattered lives that fed it.

Caesar's Palace manifestly sells a lie: beneath the mask — why, the same thing all over again. It offers real-but-fake glamor by radically democratizing access to luxury: all you need is a big enough pile of colorful chips. The Palace houses while instantiating a decadent feverdream. And amidst the lurid shapes that hover before the dreamer's eyes is a lewd figure beckoning us to commit — either earnestly or ignorantly or ironically or cynically: it does not matter, so long as you play — to the idea of voluptuous Decline-and-Fall. Meanwhile Caesar's Palace is palatial but not a palace. It is Caesar's, but not owned by Caesar. Indeed Caesar's Palace is not even really distinct as a corporate entity from a number of other "competing" establishments. The casino is one of a number of gaming properties owned by an umbrella corporation that is itself an element within still larger enterprises. All of these corporate relationships are relatively fluid and subject to a variety of mergers and acquisitions. Nevertheless the specific-and-generic name inscribed on the Palace itself never changes. And the (Golden) House always wins. It wins because, mathematically, it must. And it wins more than just money inasmuch as everyone who loses knows in advance that the house always wins and yet they gamble anyway, even the hipsters and to break the back-to-where-we-started cycle of cynical return and its conservative political economy, there will always be another man in a Nero mask who himself arrives to intone again certain uncanny home truths about the cynic himself; truths Nero once histrionically uttered as he wore his Nero mask.

Christopher Nolan's 2008 film *The Dark Knight* is a sequel to his reboot of the Batman franchise. Like Caesar's Palace, Batman is both a fantasy and a commercial entity. The film cost \$185 million to make and it grossed more than \$1 billion. The Batman franchise relies on the notion that it is set in some sort of parallel America overrun by criminals.

And this America needs a reclusive billionaire to save the law-abiding citizens from rampant lawlessness in the face of police corruption and impotence. Bruce Wayne will, with his own resources raise a personal army: himself.

The veiled allusion to the Augustus of the Res Gestae is not a casual one. The Dark Knight appreciates that it is addressing the question of Caesarism and the problem of the man who is both above and beyond the law and yet who also acts in the name of the law. The republic is restored when such a man successfully intervenes. Or, rather, the principate begins with a tickertape parade and banners celebrating restoration: *Nunc est bibendum*, said Horace when Cleopatra died. The mad queen is dead. But the threat to the Capitoline arose from neither the queen nor her alleged madness. Indeed, no matter who won that war, the Capitol as head of government would lose.

When over dinner district attorney Harvey Dent defends Batman against a charge Of vigilantism, Dent says, "When their enemies were at the gates, the Romans would suspend democracy and appoint one man to protect the city. It wasn't considered an honor, it was considered a public service." ⁴⁸ His date Rachel — who is also the woman Bruce Wayne had to give up in the name of his heroism— responds: "Harvey, the last man they appointed to protect the republic was named Caesar, and he never gave up his power." And to this Dent replies, "OK, fine. You either die a hero or you live long enough to see yourself become the villain." It's a cynical message delivered by the law itself: power has an innate decadence to it; it is destined to fall, no matter how noble its intentions. But even decadent law is better than lawlessness. A masked man (Batman) or a two-faced man (Dent) acting in the name of order is better than a homicidal clown (Joker). Who, did he possess but an ounce of dignity, would pick Nero over Augustus, or even Tiberius?

The film is preoccupied with good and evil as well as man and overman. The movie's villain is the symmetrical double of our hero Batman. Joker too is beyond ordinary mortals. Joker rewrites Nietzsche at the end of his first killing spree, "I believe whatever does not kill you simply makes

you stranger." He tells Batman, "I am not a monster, I am just ahead of the curve." The movie is not just interested in the good, the evil, and their beyond, but also in masks. The beneficent billionaire Wayne is hidden behind the mask of Batman. And even Wayne's life as a dissolute playboy is a façade that prevents people from suspecting that he is in fact a hero. Dent becomes the monstrous Two-Face, but this only makes manifest preexisting two-faced aspects of his character.

The whole Western tradition of reading power, including and especially imperial power, is quite comfortable with the idea of masks like these. Tacitus, Suetonius, and others are all happy to detect the hero or dissembling villain behind the public persona. But, like an extreme version of Nero playing Nero, Joker is always effectively wearing his Joker mask: he constantly wears makeup, and it barely disguises a horribly scarred face. In fact, his makeup only makes the hideousness of his scars more present and more real.

A Joker or a Nero unnerves cynics precisely by being so much less cynical than they are. These monsters embody something that subverts any investment in hermeneutics and the privileged position of those who can see more because they see deeper. No, they insist, we defy you to deal with a world where everything is immediate and only skin deep, a world where a random cithara player who may or may not be from Pontus can promise you the world and be every bit as "really real" as some other guy who played the cithara while the world burned. The secret of this sort of power is that Neronians can create themselves anywhere and everywhere, even and especially far outside of the allegedly dignified circuits that regulate the holding of offices lesser and greater within the grand imperial machine. The year of four emperors is a tawdry drama starring consulars, governors, and generals at the heads of the line and several steps ahead of them, Joker adamantly refuses to declare that there is any grand scheme behind it all: "Do I really look like a guy with a plan?" "I just DO things." But all of this is a prelude to his denunciation of the orderly order of things, the big corrupt scheme that is legitimate society:

"You know what I've noticed? Nobody panics when things go according to plan, even if the plan is horrifying."

Joker offers a commentary on Arendt and the Banality of Evil. And yet his alternative to fascism is mere anarchy in its most chaotic form. Viewed from the perspective of power, Joker-as-symptom posits a false antithesis that leaves us with only one legitimate — albeit cynical — option: "Either you live in a corrupt, authoritarian world ... Or you die a baroque death in a crazed, lawless one." Even if the world itself is fallen and dishonest, one is nevertheless told to refuse specifically Neronian decadence, a decadence that wears its depravity as its ghastly face.

Joker tells Batman, "You complete me." It is a lewd suggestion in every sense of the word given that that phrase is more or less exclusively reserved for lovers speaking to one another. Joker tells the truth in inverted form: what would the rule do without the crisis provoked by the madman? As Joker notes, the plan is free to be horrifying once we step outside of the rules of civilized humanity "of necessity." And one is reminded of the many (cynical) necessities of the (il)logic of the war on terror and all of the other unwinnable wars on abstractions whose concrete effects entail a transformation of our own society along authoritarian lines: "Of course we have to carry out extrajudicial killings in the name of preventing crazy people from killing us and therewith destroying our world of law and order." Whether Augustus restores the Republic or Vespasian is Augustus reborn, Roman imperial power is constantly saving the Romans from — imperial power. Republican *libertas* is not on offer from any quarter.

Batman utterly refuses to see any truth in what Joker says about his obscene intimacy with the monster. Instead Batman identifies with the words of two-faced Harvey Dent precisely at the moment when he grounds his own ethical fidelity to saving Gotham by pretending to be a villain. What Batman cannot see is the logic of nostalgic decadence folded into his own gesture, a gesture doomed to reproduce a polarized and victimized Gotham forever in need of saving by vigilante-heroes such as himself. This retrograde futurity can

and will enable innumerable sequels wherein the billionaire Wayne makes billions for various Hollywood production companies, but it blocks access to the radical critique of good and evil proffered by Joker. As many Caesars as you want and for as long as you want, but only Caesars, some good, some middling, some bad.

The schemer insists that beneath the mask of Nero one can find the truth of power, some sort of plan in accordance to which things happen. But Nero jubilantly insists there is no plan at all, only a glorious masquerade. The phrase "Neronian decadence" asserts that Nero was the aberration and that past and future require cauterizing the wound and circuiting around it. The likes of Tacitus will maintain this even though they know that both Augustus and Nero have already happened again (and again). Moreover, even Augustus was a lot more like Nero than one cares to admit. The so-called solution only consolidates the structural problem. Conversely Neronian *jouissance* short-circuits past, present, and future by insisting in the most painful way possible that Nero offers power's own truth emergent at last. This leer makes manifest what had been latent in the schema that links of power, plenitude, fall, and pleasure. The easy way out is to pretend that the madman's ravings are alien and aberrant rather than a structuring element part of our own fantasies about power. It is only when we have thought our way through this unfunny joke that we can move forward into a future where, *inter alia*, the political empowerment and gratification of the common man is not decried as vulgar and illegitimate and marked out as an unambiguous symptom of some sort of fall away from power's putative original dignity.

Decadent Or ahead of the curve? Nero most assuredly marks a turning-point if not a limit-point. And when we ourselves get there, do we loop back or jump ahead? Even when stuck within the circuit of the old palindromic run-around of power-and-knowledge we can at least fantasize about what might come after the world-engulfing flames: *In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni*. <>

[The Open Sea: The Economic Life of the Ancient Mediterranean World from the Iron Age to the Rise](#)

[of Rome](#) by J. G. Manning [Princeton University Press, 9780691151748]

In [The Open Sea](#), J. G. Manning offers a major new history of economic life in the Mediterranean world in the Iron Age, from Phoenician trading down to the Hellenistic era and the beginning of Rome's imperial supremacy. Drawing on a wide range of ancient sources and the latest social theory, Manning suggests that a search for an illusory single "ancient economy" has obscured the diversity of lived experience in the Mediterranean world, including both changes in political economies over time and differences in cultural conceptions of property and money. At the same time, he shows how the region's economies became increasingly interconnected during this period.

[The Open Sea](#) argues that the keys to understanding the region's rapid social and economic change during the Iron Age are the variety of economic and political solutions its different cultures devised, the patterns of cross-cultural exchange, and the sharp environmental contrasts between Egypt, the Near East, and Greece and Rome. The book examines long-run drivers of change, such as climate, together with the most important economic institutions of the premodern Mediterranean--coinage, money, agriculture, and private property. It also explores the role of economic growth, states, and legal institutions in the region's various economies.

A groundbreaking economic history of the ancient Mediterranean world, [The Open Sea](#) shows that the origins of the modern economy extend far beyond Greece and Rome.

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Excerpt: At the heart of this book is an effort to understand economic development during the first millennium BCE, a period of momentous political, economic, and social change in many parts of the world. I depart from most prior work on premodern economies by understanding Iron Age Mediterranean civilizations not as separate but as interconnected cultural entities within particular environmental and geographic niches. The economics literature that explains how and why institutions matter is now enormous. What premodern history contributes to it is to show how institutions are historically contingent and culturally determined. Climatic change and human adaptation to it, migration, demography, and cross-cultural exchange patterns were all important factors in moving societies, and in shifting political equilibriums. The cultural and temporal boundaries usually drawn between the civilizations of the ancient Near East and the classical world have been too sharply drawn at times This reification of the "classical," "ancient Near East," and "Egyptian" worlds has obscured cross-cultural exchange within what was the large region of western Asia/eastern Mediterranean, the "western core."

The conflation of "ancient" with "classical civilization" ipso facto misses much in terms of longer-run development, interaction, and change. To be sure, the differential impacts of climate change, and the strong rainfall/irrigation gradient between core Mediterranean territories and the Nile and Tigris/Euphrates River valleys played important roles in developmental pathways. Yet a broader Iron Age perspective modifies our understanding of institutional change and also sets in better relief the achievements of the "Greco-Roman" world. Rome did end up dominating the Mediterranean by similar processes that led to the later European divergence because of its more rapid evolution in adaptive competitiveness and in military technology, something Herodotus also noted for the Greeks.¹ But we must view these competitive advantages within a longer "Iron Age economics" perspective. The "minidivergence" in the first millennium BCE can be explained by the combination of military and fiscal innovation of the Greeks and, later, the Romans. But there were other important factors, including resource endowments (e.g., silver, noted by Xenophon writing in the 4th century BCE as a "gift of divine providence" to the Greeks) and environmental differences (irrigation versus dry farming), that played a role.

The competitive advantages imply two-way feedback mechanisms, and I argue throughout, therefore, that we must understand premodern societies as complex adaptive systems with positive and negative feedbacks. A consideration of the coevolution of "natural and human processes via an array of positive and negative feedback loops" is something that has up to now been almost entirely absent in the study of premodern economies.² We can see feedback mechanisms, for example, operate in the development of democratic institutions, in the scaling up of large empires, and in societal responses to climatic changes.³ Periods of economic expansion were driven not purely by politics but by a combination of factors that include favorable climatic conditions, population growth, and institutions among which are legal institutions that protected property rights. Above all else, I argue for an evolutionary adaptive framework for understanding first-millennium BCE economies. This

was a period when political and market integration grew stronger, and many important economic ideas (coinage, legal codes) spread far and wide.⁴ Military power and empire building were crucial factors in political change, but many other things must be brought in to understand economic performance. One of my interests, then, is to highlight the constraints as well as the enabling conditions in premodern economies imposed both by institutions and by environments that account for differences in performance.

The study of premodern economies has become a very large and very exciting field in the last forty years, as my bibliography, concentrating in works in English and by no means comprehensive, attests. But the discussion has been dominated by studies of the Greek and Roman imperial economies. Indeed quite often "ancient Mediterranean" stands in for "Roman," and all too often "ancient economy" is simply a cipher for the early European economy. In recent years, however, studies of ancient Egyptian and ancient Near Eastern economies have been catching up and are producing different understandings of the relationship between the Near East, Egypt, and classical economies. We can see much more clearly now that cross-cultural exchange was a vital part of Mediterranean economies throughout the first millennium BCE. Global history has become popular. Comparisons with early Chinese history are becoming more common. So too is the study of long-distance trade and the origins of the silk roads traffic especially.⁵ Work on New World societies can provide entirely new perspectives on Mediterranean economies. We need not focus, for example, just on price-setting markets. The Aztec economy, "without wage labor, private property, formal currencies, credit and lending institutions, and efficient forms of transportation," was "among the most sophisticated market systems ever to appear in the ancient world."

Since "history is a stimulus to the economic imagination," premodern economies provide rich and important information about how human societies were organized in the past and how problems were solved. Most importantly, the study of premodern economic behavior serves as a laboratory for understanding institutional change. A

broad and deep understanding of premodern economies is, therefore, an important, and an often ignored, part of understanding our own world. But history is nonlinear, and it was not a steady, progressive march from antiquity to the Industrial Revolution. What we can do with ancient material, though, is to understand historical processes over the long run. All three words in the phrase "the ancient economy" are problematic. There was no such thing as the ancient economy; the word ancient is too vague in terms of time and location, and the word economy carries with it many modern assumptions, and theory, that cannot simply be applied to phenomena of the ancient world not least because of the overlapping networks of social power that make it impossible to isolate economic behavior and institutions from religious, military, and political ones. Indeed it is also not possible to isolate economic behavior as a separate sphere of human activity in the contemporary world either. Here ancient history might inform the contemporary world.

I bring several assumptions to this book. These include the following: (1) a broad study of ancient economic structures and institutions is important to the wider field of economic history; (2.) we need not worry about Ranke's urge to tell "how it really was." Our main task should be to explain not only change over time but also persistence, or continuity, in institutions; (3) we must move well beyond ontological debates. To do that we need an evolutionary framework on larger timescales in which to understand short-term change; and (4) the heterogeneous and fragmentary nature of our sources demands a broad theoretical framework in which to understand change and continuity. Explaining change is what historians do best, but this can be lost under the imposed burden of "legalistic" evidence collection, language specialization, and the tendency toward elegant prose narratives or unitary focus on narrow corpuses of material. History matters; so does economic analysis, and so does culture. These need not nor should not be mutually exclusive, although cultural history, a dominant framework in classics, can obscure objective facts. Evidence derived from many fields, including natural sciences, but also the core disciplines of philology, paleography,

archaeology, and numismatics, must be sorted and analyzed together.

A somewhat unusual academic background informs my general approach to the premodern world. Three things have influenced me greatly. The first was a summer I spent in Kampsville, Illinois, while I was in high school. This very small river town was the hub of major regional excavations throughout the Illinois River valley, coordinated by the Center for American Archaeology and its summer school directed by Stuart Streuver and his team of "New Archeologists" (that was the preferred spelling at the time) who were rewriting the early history of indigenous populations in the Mississippi and Illinois River valleys. You could feel their excitement every day. I still remember the small car ferry that took you across the Illinois River to this tiny town (population in 2010: 328) teeming with scientific inquiry, and to this day I get goose bumps every time I cross the Mississippi just to the north of that ferry and look at the mighty river, and the smoky vistas of green Illinois farmland stretching out as far as the eye can see.

I worked on a small seasonal occupation site dated to the Early Wood-land Period, ca. 200 BCE (ironically the date that is a focus of my research and also the terminus for this book), and, at night, in the Soil Resistivity Survey lab. George Beadle gave a memorable lecture on the crop genetics of maize to a packed hall one hot and humid evening. I learned so much that summer about how science was contributing in various ways to reconstructing the past. I became a materialist that summer, something, I confess, that I have not shaken. I almost became a New World archaeologist but decided to pursue a childhood interest in Egyptology after college. I did my graduate training at the Oriental Institute in the University of Chicago. It was a rigorous degree, with emphasis on the historical linguistics of the Egyptian language and the reading of the various cursive scripts. It was an unabashedly traditional, formal, and long training. In my first week of graduate school I read Karl Butzer's *Early Hydraulic Civilization in Egypt*. It left an indelible impression on me. In fact I still remember the night on the fifth floor of the Regenstein Library when I first read it. My very first seminar at Chicago, in the spring and in

considerable contrast to the language training, was offered by Arnaldo Momigliano (one of his last I think) and Lawrence Stager, entitled *Economic and Religious Models of the Ancient World*. The seminar was filled with advanced students and faculty, and, if I remember correctly, there were two of us first-year graduate students—who did not know exactly what we had signed up for!—taking the course for credit. I did not know what a "model" was, or how I was supposed to put together a coherent paper—how did I go from textual sources to a model? Or was it the other way around? The crowded seminar room was abuzz each week, energized with ideas, differing perspectives, and a few bitter disagreements. The course, as with Butzer's work, made an enormous impact on me, and in ways that I only much later understood.

I gradually turned with a good deal of fascination to the later phases of Egypt's ancient history and to demotic Egyptian documentary papyri in particular. There was a strong future there, I thought, and they contained utterly fascinating data about individuals and families like nowhere else in the ancient world. After my fourth-year comprehensive PhD qualifying exams, which I somehow survived, I had an opportunity to go to Cambridge University arranged by John Ray, an extraordinary scholar of demotic Egyptian and a fellow at Selwyn College, and I jumped at it. I arrived two weeks after the death of Moses Finley. There I had the good fortune, indeed the privilege, of sitting in on seminars on the ancient economy by Keith Hopkins and Peter Garnsey, and on Greek law with Paul Cartledge. I worked with John Ray on demotic texts, and with Dorothy Thompson. With her I read through the first half of a large corpus of Ptolemaic Greek documents from the impressive [Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit](#), volume 1, at a time when she was working on what would become *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, now out in a second edition. I still have the notes I took. I also audited a wonderful course on the Greek of the book of Galatians at the Divinity School. I had the wondrous good fortune to meet an energetic group of advanced graduate students and young junior fellows. Talking to them regularly I soon realized, mainly sitting in a college pub after a stimulating seminar, that I was at the center of cutting-edge work in ancient history. The

conversations were sophisticated, comparative, and broad. I discovered that first-millennium B CE Egypt could be similarly situated. My eyes were opened to a new world of possibilities that year.

The more I read, the more I was struck by the fact that Egypt had often been and still is left out of general discussions about ancient economies. But how, I wondered, could a civilization whose language was spoken for two-thirds of recorded human history and cast such a shadow over the eastern Mediterranean be left out? How could I bring the exciting later Egyptian material into dialogue with other regions? Linguistic boundaries tend to define academic disciplines in the humanities: classics, Egyptology, Assyriology, early China, and so on are each dedicated to one set of languages and scripts. This virtually guarantees that treatments of economic phenomena are written from endogenous points of view of textual and archaeological material, and from a particular place and time. It tends to produce narrow and truncated kinds of histories and can miss the larger forces of cross-cultural interaction, the impact of climatic change across larger geographic space, the diffusion of technological change, and so on.

I have had the benefit of superb colleagues at Stanford, from each of whom I have learned a good deal. There were very stimulating series of workshops, seminars, and conferences sponsored or cosponsored by Steve Haber's Social Science History Institute initiative in the 2000s. I sat in on more economics workshops and seminars than I can count and had the good fortune to audit a survey course on economic sociology taught by Mark Granovetter, and the History of American Law course taught by the doyen of that field, Lawrence Friedman at Stanford Law School. I got to know Douglass North very well, and Avner Greif, Barry Weingast and Gavin Wright too. My former ancient history colleagues Ian Morris, Josiah Ober, and Walter Scheidel have all shaped my work. I remain especially grateful to Morris. It was largely under his pen that we coauthored a short survey piece on the economic sociology of the ancient Mediterranean world that is the origin of some of my macro thinking about ancient history. Ian and I hosted a meeting to which we invited not only specialists in various ancient societies but also social

scientists, economists, economic historians, political scientists, and economic sociologists to respond to the specialized papers. We produced a small volume in 200s, paying homage to two of Moses Finley's books, wherein Morris and I tried to set out some sort of agenda, including the challenge of integrating, or at least discussing, the ancient Near East and Egypt in the context of broader treatments of "the ancient economy." I think we both had in the back of our minds the famous "City Invincible" meeting at Chicago in 1958 that brought such an impressively broad group of scholars around the table. Morris's inspirational [Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future](#) is echoed throughout this book.

I moved to Yale in 2008, where I once again struck gold in the colleagues who surrounded me. My home base, as it were, is the very active economic history group, Jose Espin-Sanchez, Tim Guinnane, Naomi Lamoreaux, Noel Lenski, Francesca Trivellato, and the ancient history group, Noel Lenski, Andrew Johnston, and Jessica Lamont, wonderful colleagues all, and all of them were gracious enough at various points to offer suggestions or to read my work and critique what I had said, or had failed to say. I must also thank my friend and colleague Harvey Weiss, for teaching me much about paleoclimatology, and Ray Bradley at U Mass—Amherst, for being extraordinarily helpful in this regard as well. I list other friends and colleagues who have provided material or criticism of earlier drafts in the acknowledgments. I have also learned an enormous amount from my friend Peter Turchin at the University of Connecticut, over our monthly dinners and by having the pleasure of working with the Seshat global history project team, several of whom have also been generous with their comments.

At one point a few years ago, I thought that the study of ancient economies had reached a peak; research and writing was slowing down, and not much interesting was happening. So I thought. Then I taught an undergraduate survey course at Yale. Collecting some recent work around a few themes dramatically changed my mind. Not only was there much going on in the field, but things were moving forward, and coevolving with other disciplines in

very exciting ways. The literature was in fact exploding with new material, new ideas, and new approaches. I soon realized that I could easily write a book just summarizing summaries of "the ancient economy" that have appeared only in the last decade or so, let alone the last four decades.

What I want to do instead is to give the reader a sense of what is happening, and where at least some future work will go. There are two specific areas that will shape future work in important ways. The first will be more detailed work in explaining change with dynamic models. I think that evolutionary theories are very promising here. Secondly, and reflecting my own interest at the moment, there will be a better understanding of how climate and climatic change triggered societal responses and constrained premodern Mediterranean societies.

To paraphrase Frederick Jackson Turner, the great historian of the American frontier, not only does each generation of historians write their own histories, but there are now, as never before, an enormous variety of modes of historical writing, from microhistory to global history, now very much in vogue. So too with economic theory; each generation, or each economic crisis at least, from Adam Smith up to today, seems also to create its own theories and interpretations. "Mega" or "deep" histories that seek evolutionary perspectives on human history and on human institutions are popular at the moment, from the point of view of not only longer-term history but global history as well, and even the history of the entire cosmos. Microhistorical approaches, often not stated as such and with only a passing reference to the very large literature or the debates in the field, are common. They are the natural by-product of the kinds of archival evidence that has come down to us from the ancient world. But there is often no way of knowing if a particular case study is representative.

We live in a complex, messy world. But the premodern, or preindustrial, world was also complex, and in some ways even more complex than the modern world. It was certainly no less messy. Even though there were far fewer humans on the planet, it was also a more fragile world. Considering this, it is all the more remarkable that

political equilibriums could be established across enormous and complex territory for centuries at a time. Social scientists tend to build models of the world against which data can be tested, and the models recursively improved. Humanities-oriented historians tend to revel in the complexity of the society and the sources they study. The two don't often meet.

It is the premise of this book that understanding and taking account of the historical and cultural developments of the early first millennium BCE are a fundamentally important part in understanding the increasing Mediterranean-wide economic integration of the Mediterranean world during the Hellenistic and Roman periods (i.e., after ca. 303 BCE). That is to say, the long economic development of Mediterranean civilizations was driven by cross-cultural exchange, by the experience of empire formation, by heterogeneous institutional responses seen in local legal traditions, and by the use of money and coinage, of credit instruments, and of banks. This persistence of institutions must be understood in conjunction, of course, with new cultural features brought about by the movement of people, by migration, war, climate change, and by new opportunity. We should no longer be motivated by debates about whether ancient economies were "primitive" or "modern," or by narrow considerations of classical economies as being defined, over fifteen hundred years, just by elite status behavior. That approach reinforces the idea that premodern societies were static. Long timescales are indeed a crucial aspect of studying change. But equally important are broader accounts of cross-cultural exchange patterns of both goods and ideas. Even more important, I think, is to consider how premodern societies interacted with the natural world. This requires a coupled human-natural systems approach, which I explore in chapter 5.

I divide the book into two parts. In part 1, "History and Theory," I begin in the introduction by looking back at the debate about the nature of "the ancient economy" as it coevolved with the field of economics. Here Moses Finley's *The Ancient Economy* looms large, but it stands at the endpoint of a long fruitless debate, and the bulk of current work operates within very different frameworks. In

chapter 1, I highlight some of the important themes and new directions that studies of premodern economies are taking. Chapter 2, "Ancient Economies: Taking Stock from Phoenician Traders to the Rise of the Roman Empire," provides a historical survey of first-millennium B C E history and a brief overview of our sources for understanding economies of the Mediterranean. In chapter 3, "Time, Space, and Geography and Ancient Mediterranean Economies," I turn to one of the most difficult aspects of studying ancient economies, what I call time/space boundary identification problems. In part 2, "Environment and Institutions," I turn to an examination of key institutions in the economies of the Mediterranean and discuss the coupled dynamics between environment and economic institutions and the evolutionary forces that drove institutional change. Agriculture and labor, the topic of chapter 4, form the basis of all premodern economies, and a brief comparative study contained here shows that there were a wide variety of institutional solutions in the organization of agricultural production. In large part these solutions depended on the heterogeneous environmental endowments and climatic conditions of the Mediterranean basin. I explore these conditions further in chapter 5, "The Boundaries of Premodern Economies: Ecology, Climate, and Climate Change." Here I discuss the relationship between the physical boundaries of the Mediterranean world, climate. ***

I have endeavored to survey in this book the long history of economic institutional development in the Mediterranean world from the rise of Phoenician traders, to the dawn of the new world created by the Roman empire. Understanding the highly developed Roman imperial economy must be informed by the historical experience of the many other civilizations that preceded it in the wider Mediterranean world. Roman political dominance beginning around 200 BCE marks an end point, not the beginning, of the slow process of economic integration through the sea, the major rivers, and the extensive and very ancient overland routes of western Asia, North Africa, and Europe. The Roman achievements, built on Iron Age experience, rivaled anything else up to the 18th century CE in Europe in many categories. What I have presented here is an

outline of key themes and a sketch of recent work in the developments of "Axial Age" economics.

The Achaemenid Empire looms large in this story. Although often in the background, it was the central player, at mid-millennium, stretching from the Aegean into central Asia, its imperial institutions asserted over the largest land empire, controlling 5.5 km, in the West before Rome. This great empire is often forgotten about in the context of the first millennium BCE, but it had a profound impact on the second half of the millennium.

Much of the work by previous generations of scholars on the "ancient economy" has been static and descriptive, analyzing either the "classical" economy in a single framework, or particular regions or towns of the ancient Mediterranean. Work in the last forty years is moving dramatically beyond this framework, seeking dynamic models, emphasizing cross-cultural interaction and heterogeneity rather than a single line of development. In a very real way, the civilizations that grew up around the Mediterranean basin were like the gears of the Antikythera mechanism: some were small, others larger, each turning at different rates, but part of an interconnected whole. Decisive economic change was driven by political change.

I suggest that there was no such thing as "the ancient economy." Rather we must understand developments on several levels, not just on the local or the "microregional" level but how households were connected to each other, how regions were connected to polities, and how polities in turn were connected to wider economic interaction spheres. But all the rich new material, new archives, much new archaeological material, and new osteological, genetic, and climate data suggest that a larger framework in which to understand premodern economies must be built. The great debate between "primitivists" and "modernists" that I mentioned at the beginning of this book has long ceased to be productive, or even interesting. It was narrowly framed around the origin of markets and the construction of antiquity as it related to later European history. In other words, it looked forward to later developments in Europe rather than

backward to the historical experience of the wider eastern Mediterranean world.

New paradigms, using economic and social theory from a variety of social science perspectives, combined with human archives derived from written and archaeological material, and the new natural archives being generated by scientists in genetics, paleoclimatology, and a whole host of other disciplines offer us a new and very exciting window into the complexities of the premodern Mediterranean world. As in other historical fields at the moment, a variety of scales of analysis are not only possible, but also highly desirable. The way forward, I believe, is to be as broad and open as possible in methods, in theory, and in the use of data.

First millennium BCE imperial polity we have encountered, to a certain degree, absorbed, transformed, and erased what had come before (what we have lost of Phoenician commercial institutions is one of the more important), and in the larger empires from the Achaemenid to the Roman, increasing homogenization and market integration occurred. We have lost much through imperial "theft," one empire replacing another, but we have also lost much through neglect. The great library at Alexandria was lost not by some conflagration caused by Roman or Islamic conquerors, but, probably, for the mundane reason that the practice of copying out manuscripts, an important part of textual transmission and preservation, stopped. It is a lesson for our own age. Other vestiges of premodern Mediterranean economies remain. As I have suggested, when scholars remark on some feature mentioned in an ancient text as strikingly "modern," what they are pointing out is, in fact, an ancient feature of our own world.

To many economic historians, the Roman Empire, and the civilizations that preceded it, failed. They failed because they did not develop sustainable, "inclusive" political institutions. But this is to read against current success stories. The problems of modern Egypt lay in its ancient past, before the high dam at Aswan was built, but also in the 19th century colonial exploitation, not only because of its present narrow political elite, or because England had a revolution in 1688 and Egypt did not.' The

high variability of water, and therefore of agricultural production, and periodic drought, famine, and disease, produced in the Near East and in Egypt large institutional structures centered around temples that created buffers to interannual risks. But neither the king nor these temples constituted the totality of the economic activity of southwest Asia or Egypt. This was not conducive to real growth, in our terms, to be sure, but, rather, to stability.

Explaining real growth, while a crucial part of modern economics, is not especially important for understanding premodern economies. Growth trends are more accurately described as "running in place" rather than "stagnation," and it reflects highly adaptive and resilient civilizations, with long periods of stability.¹ In Egypt and western Asia such political stability could endure for three to five hundred years at a stretch. That is what these civilizations wanted to create, political stability, and the results look reasonably impressive. We need not crudely compare the economic performance of two different states but ask, rather, how and why particular political equilibriums were achieved, and what cultural values and ideas were at stake. What emerges is not a single narrative of "the ancient economy" but indeed a multitude of such narratives, at different temporal and geographical scales. Several things shaped the world of the first-millennium BCE Mediterranean. Radically different political economies emerged in the Greek world while new imperial states formed in western Asia. Egypt in the early Iron Age was a world of fragmented virtual city-states in the delta, and a theocratic state in the Nile valley, controlled by the great temple of Amun at Thebes. Political power was again centralized in the 7th century BCE as Egypt began to be connected to wider Mediterranean trade. Cross-cultural exchange and the trend toward increasing integration or connectivity were of great importance throughout the millennium. Iron and silver were important everywhere. The spread of coinage, important both for trade in for state fiscal systems, and new military technology undergirded the highly competitive world of Greek city-states and defined the age after Alexander. There was a rise in the use of writing, in legal codes and in private

agreements. Environmental boundary conditions and climate changes at various scales and the human responses to them were crucial determinants of performance, but much work remains to be done in this area.

We in the contemporary world live in an age of "disenchantment." All of us are increasingly removed from nature, from the environment, and from each other by technological developments. Almost all our daily needs can be met through Amazon.com, personal exchange transacted through the medium of the mobile phone. Those who lived in the premodern Mediterranean, and those who lived in other places in the world, lived in greater harmony with the natural world if not always with each other. Local environments shaped political economies and patterns of exchange. Climate change, both abrupt and slower-moving shifts, could have profound effects on grain production and distribution patterns, social unrest and war, but also on growth and expansion.

The shocks brought about by abrupt changes to the environment, drought or earthquakes for example, were well known to premodern populations. And they were more sensitive than we are today to climate changes because they were often better observers of nature. The Oracle of the Potter for example, a text written in Egypt probably in the late 2d century BCE, tells of catastrophic events and of things to come:

The river [since it will not have] sufficient water, [will flood] but (only) a little so that scorched will be [the land], but unnaturally. [For] in the time of the Typhonians [people will say]: "Wretched Egypt, [you have been] maltreated by the [terrible] malefactors who have committed evil against you.

And the sun will darken, as it will not be willing to observe the evils in Egypt. The earth will not respond to seeds. These will be part of its blight. [The] farmer will be dunned for taxes <for> wh<at> he did not plant. They will be fighting in Egypt because people will be in need of food. What one plants, [another] will reap and carry off.

When this happens, there will be [war and slaughter] which [will kill] brothers, and

wives. For [these things will happen] when the great god Hephaistos will desire to return to the [city], and the Girdlewearers will kill each other as t[hey are Typhonians] ... evil will be done. And he will pursue (them) on foot [to the] sea, [in] wrath and destroy many of them because [they are] impious. <the king> will come from Syria he who will be hateful to all men, ... and from Ethiopia there will come.... He (together with some) of the unholy ones (will come) to Egypt, and he will settle [in the city which] later will be deserted.

The sentiments expressed in this text (and there are many other such texts, including of course the book of Revelation) have usually been interpreted as purely theological manifestations of political oppression, as an anti-Greek (here called "Girdlewearers" and equated with the Egyptian mythic antihero Seth, here called the "Typhonians") "nationalist" tract against the Ptolemaic regime. But a better way to read the text is to take it in its historic context, the 2d century BCE (in fact other historical contexts could apply) and to read the text literally as a description of environmental and social distress caused by the continued fiscal demands in the light of Nile failure. Indeed one can even go a bit further without stretching credulity too much and say that the phrase "The river [since it will not have] sufficient water, [will flood] but (only) a little so that scorched will be [the land], but unnaturally ... the sun will darken.... The earth will not respond to seeds" is a perfect description of dust veils caused by the volcanic eruptions (in a similar way to the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries) and the subsequent impacts on the Nile flood and agriculture that I discussed in chapter 5. The prophecy was not anti-Greek directly but rather an ancient gloss on kingship that equated favorable environmental conditions with just kingship but also the reverse, that poor environmental conditions must indicate illegitimate kings. It is most interesting that the text also mentions taxation continuing after the poor flooding, and the invasion by the Syrian king (Antiochus IV) at the same moment, a time of Egyptian weakness.

If chronologically precise climate data are now being treated (as they should be) as an exciting

new historical archive, we also have considerable new information from the traditional material of ancient history. Many more texts are being published more rapidly than before, and being digitized and made available in relational databases. Archaeological research projects throughout the Mediterranean basin, and now well beyond it, have achieved astonishing results in the last forty years showing the connections between the sea, western Asia, and Egypt. We are beginning to have a better appreciation that "antiquity" was a much bigger world now than was conceived of in the pioneering work of Bücher, Meyer, and others. What results, I hope, is a richer understanding of the lived human experience, what problems past societies faced, and how these problems were solved (or not). First-millennium BCE economies gave momentum to the Roman economy, which, like Roman law, absorbed the historical experiences of other, more ancient, civilizations.

We are not going to find modern kinds of economic growth, or lost manuscripts of Xenophon that suggest that he really was an immediate precursor of Adam Smith or Paul Samuelson. But the first-millennium BCE documentation shows us the variety of economic life of the premodern world, a longrun view of economic institutions that are still with us, and prompts an entirely new range of questions. It remains difficult to study "the ancient economy" in the aggregate, even if we focus on the Greek or the Ptolemaic economy alone. The ancient Mediterranean world was extremely diverse. I hope I have conveyed both some of the rich contours of the premodern Mediterranean, the interconnections, and long-term institutional developments. We have improved our methods for quantifying what is quantifiable. Much exciting research on very many fronts is underway, and to be certain I have not covered every aspect worth considering.

Values, attitudes, beliefs, and meaning were very different from our own. The development of charity, evergetism, gift-giving, the more ancient tradition of "feeding the hungry and clothing the naked" of elite Egyptian tomb biography tradition, all were important aspects of premodern economies that must be further integrated into our conceptions of premodern economic life.'

In the evidence from the premodern Mediterranean world, we see individual humans, ingenious, adventurous, risk taking, inventive, and we also see a variety of state forms and institutions, some of them perhaps better at creating wealth and well-being than others, but we also see the topic of every society protecting their own interests; we see legal concepts that are incredibly far sighted, even in some cases not far from our own views of justice, but we also see the ugliness of human behavior. In short, we can see real human beings, solving problems, making a living, surviving, and we also see them as war captives sold on slave markets and as temple prostitutes.

Much recent work has emphasized the contours of economic growth, well-being, and quality of life of first-millennium BCE populations, the distribution of wealth, the impact of war. As I have tried to signal throughout the book, understanding the impact of abrupt and slower-moving climate change is just beginning. I have indicated that high-resolution paleoclimate data is providing historians with a "natural archive" that gives us the possibility of developing more dynamic models of premodern economies. By combining scientific and humanistic disciplines toward the understanding our own. The possibilities of writing new kinds of economic histories of the premodern world, global in scope and more refined in social analysis, are more open than ever before. I hope especially that the young generation of scholars will take up the mantle. There is much to do, and much promise for new kinds of work in the years ahead.

I close with two thoughts that occupy me at present. The first is that studying ancient economies is important for a longer-term view of economic development and is a reminder of how earlier sophisticated human societies lived within nature. The ancients had an intuitive sense of "nature as protagonist" to quote Bruce Campbell's excellent study. Here is a great contrast between the premodern world and us. The ancients lived within the boundaries and constraints of the natural world that they not only observed with great care, but, as the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries show us, in considerable detail. In many cases the natural world was worshipped as manifestations of the divine and of the cosmic order. When things were

out of balance, it was a sign of bad politics. We "moderns," on the other hand, are racing headlong away from the natural world. We have much to learn from our ancestors. If we do not learn from them we risk, to paraphrase E. O. Wilson, becoming nothing.

We stand, I believe, at the dawn of a new age of historical research, and ancient historians will be (or can be) major contributors to it. Science has advanced with incredible speed in the last quarter century and, for many problems, offers us new tools to allow more precision with dating, a better understanding of human and animal health and disease, and a more precise understanding of climate change on various scales and human response to it.

The "Roman Quiet Period" in the first two centuries CE, coincident with the Pax Romana, and a warming and stable climatic trend in much of the Mediterranean beginning ca. 200 BCE, may have reinforced the economic performance of the Roman empire. But the story of Antarctic and Greenlandic ice, and the records of volcanic eruptions deposited in them, tell us that the last two centuries BCE were neither a quiet period nor a good one for Egypt. Horden and Purcell, in their great book on the premodern history of the Mediterranean, made a distinction between history in the Mediterranean, analyzing politics, economy, and war, and history of the Mediterranean, concerned with how humans interacted with the natural environment of the sea.

What I have suggested in this book is that there can be no history in without history of. Human society and the variable and fragmented environments in which humans lived around the Mediterranean were coupled, and their fates intertwined in the open sea. <>

[Religious Deviance in the Roman World: Superstition or Individuality?](#) by Jörg Rüpke and David M. B. Richardson [Cambridge University Press, 9781107090521]

Religious individuality is not restricted to modernity. This book offers a new reading of the ancient sources in order to find indications for the spectrum of religious practices and intensified forms of such practices only occasionally denounced as 'superstition'.

Authors from Cicero in the first century BC to the law codes of the fourth century AD share the assumption that authentic and binding communication between individuals and gods is possible and widespread, even if problematic in the case of divination or the confrontation with images of the divine. A change in practices and assumptions throughout the imperial period becomes visible. It might be characterised as 'individualisation' and informed the Roman law of religions. The basic constellation - to give freedom of religion and to regulate religion at the same time - resonates even into modern bodies of law and is important for juridical conflicts today.

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Superstitio: conceptions of religious deviance in Roman antiquity

What does religious deviance comprise? In a collection of practice speeches, perhaps originating in the early second century CE, and later ascribed to the celebrated teacher of rhetoric Quintilian (d. about 100 CE), the following fictional case (Declamatio minor 323) provides the basis for the plea by the accused. When Alexander the Great attacked Athens, he burned down a temple lying outside the walls of the city (the writer does not take the trouble to link the temple with a particular deity). The anonymous deity wrought revenge by sending a plague over the Macedonian army. Through the medium of an oracle, Alexander learns that the epidemic will end only when the temple is

re-established. Alexander complies with the oracle's judgement, and rebuilds the temple more splendid than before. But rebuilding the temple is not enough: it has to be formally dedicated to the deity and consecrated. Regarding the sacred procedure to be followed, the writer quite specifically refers to Roman practice. Alexander wins over an Athenian priest with the promise to withdraw after the dedication. The priest agrees, and Alexander keeps to the agreement. And now comes the twist by which the story turns into a legal case: the priest is charged with having aided the enemy (*hosti opem tulisse*).

That this criminal case is replete with religion is a factor that the author's commentary does not neglect to emphasize. What interested the budding jurists and orators over the space of many pages need not concern us here. But how does the priest talk himself out of the charge, and — literally — save his neck? His final plea is based on the premise that if, in war, one does something that also indirectly helps the enemy, this cannot be construed *per se* as aiding the enemy (*opera ferre*). What is of interest to us is that the priest follows the logic of the religious norm: the Athenian god is angry; he demands a temple; so everything must be done in order to satisfy that desire. That the priest in addition compels the foe to withdraw must weigh in his favour, rather than his being blamed for the succour given to the opposing army. This is a case where a (seeming) military norm is departed from on the basis of religion; the question is primarily one of conflict between different norms, collision between different fields of practice. The author, writing much later under the Empire, is able to imagine that strict adherence to religious norms can lead to conduct that is seen in the wider social context as deviant.

At about the same time, the Greek philosopher Plutarch, who died in the twenties of the second century CE, was occupied with another case of religious deviance, also anonymous. But Plutarch's sights were set, not on the intellectual interest of an oratorical exercise, but on typifying an entire set of instances. A "superstitious" individual (*deisidaimonos*) would actually like to celebrate the cycles of festivals like anyone else; he would like to savour life and enjoy himself: but he cannot (On

Superstition 9 = 169 D—E). Just as the temple is filled with the scent of incense, his soul is filled with supplications and laments. He has the festive wreath on his head, but he is pale; he sacrifices, but is afraid; he prays, but his voice trembles; he offers up incense, but his hands shake. As a measure of his own assessment of the case, Plutarch cites an observation ascribed to the ancient philosopher Pythagoras: proximity to the gods should bring out the best in us. But this man enters a temple as if it were a lion's den. To summarize this contemporary of the anonymous follower of Quintilian: to adopt religious norms to excess is to go a step too far. Behaviour that does not amount to criminality in legal terms is aberrant or deviant when viewed from a religious perspective.

What the two instances have in common is the surprising third-party perspective, the outrage, the shift of norms that is required in order to make religious behaviour deviant. This book thus embarks upon a dual journey. By investigating deviance and infringements of norms, I intend to identify actual variations in religious behaviour. To what extent did individuality exist in the religious sphere in antiquity? Must the accepted view of the collective character of pre-modern religion be called into question? But the pursuit of the individual is merely one purpose of this journey. For, in investigating deviance, we encounter normative discourses aimed at either limiting or facilitating diversity. By whom were such religious positions established? How were they implemented? Whatever individual religious activity there may have been, it took place within a social context where a degree of rigour prevailed, and where the other way was the norm. That the context itself varied makes our work no easier, but it does make it more interesting. It is not our aim to portray Roman religion as unchanging, but to historicize it.

This book rejects the position that sources received from antiquity, especially the normative, judgemental, and condemnatory texts, reveal only that other way, and provide access only to the exclusive and excluding polemic of an intellectual elite. My argument, echoing Michel de Certeau,¹ rests on the assumption that such texts also provide a view of the highly varied, distorted, hyperbolic, and "devious" ways in which such norms were

appropriated by individuals, even if those individuals remain anonymous. In my concluding chapter, I seek to clarify how such individual modes of appropriation were in turn predicated upon particular historical circumstances. That the norms themselves were merely attempts to represent a complex reality that resisted being subjected to such formulations is shown by the often encountered reference to a close association of divination, divine "revelation" accessible to the individual, with deviance.

What is "religious deviance"? To achieve some distance from ancient terminology — which will of course have an important role to play — I refer to a textbook sociological definition of deviance:

Deviance is any activity perceived to infringe a generally valid norm of a society or of a particular group within that society. Thus deviance is not a phenomenon that is regarded merely as atypical or unusual ... In order for behaviour to be regarded as deviant, it must be judged to offend against binding, socially defined standards. And, as many such standards, but not others, are codified in statutes, the phenomenon of deviance includes criminal behaviour ... but also behaviour that, while not regarded as illegal, is generally seen as unethical, immoral, eccentric, indecent, or simply "unhealthy". (tr. D. Richardson)

Superstitio

What research strategy is appropriate in view of this state of the evidence? Building on older studies, Dale Martin and Richard Gordon have made important terminological and etymological investigations into a concept that is of central importance in the context of non-criminal religious deviance. *Superstitio* is normally translated as "superstition", and this in itself serves to make us aware of the weight of prejudice borne along by such a concept.

A New Testament scholar based at Yale, Martin concentrates on philosophical and medical discourse from Hellenism into Late Antiquity, and Christian reception of the term *superstitio*. His central thesis is that a fundamental change in the thinking of the political and cultural elite occurred during the course of the Imperial age. The world

picture typical of city-state republics can be summed up in terms of a fundamentally positive anthropology: all people should be good, and are capable of being so. This results in a positive picture of the cosmos and the gods: just as only the good person is happy, so the gods, who are by definition happy, must be good. Only in reaction to the experience of the Imperial age (admittedly never mentioned in such precise terms by Martin) did doubts arise, extending to the elite, in respect of this "grand optimal illusion": among the gods too there is capriciousness and wickedness; apart from the gods, and enabling the gods to remain good, there are demons, of whom it is reasonable to be afraid.

The term "superstition" (the modern usage makes it easier to bring together the histories of both word and concept) should be understood against the background of an initial premise: if the gods are good, it is unreasonable to fear them. The censure of behaviour as "superstitious", attested for the first time in Theophrastus in the fourth century BCE, serves to support this positive theology. Fearful behaviour towards the gods indicates a false theology. This redefining of the concept of *deisidaimonia*, which had long been and still continued to be a positive concept, was made plausible by a ploy that turned socially defined decorum into a theological criterion:

Theophrastus' rejection of many popular beliefs and practices as "superstitions" is at base a matter of ethics expressed as etiquette: superstitious beliefs are wrong because they cause people to act in ways that are socially inappropriate, embarrassing and vulgar.

A mere glance at Theophrastus' text makes it abundantly clear that a superstitious person is not "normal": in an entirely pragmatic sense, he is hardly even capable of life. Such a concept, once established, can also be directed against Christians, who do not share that illusion of the optimal world:

Deisidaimonía, I need hardly say, would seem to be a sort of cowardice with respect to the divine; and your *deisidaímon* such as will not sally forth for the day till he have washed his hands and sprinkled himself at the Nine Springs, and

put a bit of bay leaf from a temple in his mouth. And, if a weasel cross his path, he will not proceed on his way till someone else be gone by, or he have cast three stones across the street (to break the curse). Should he espy a snake in his house, if it be one of the red sort he will call upon Sabazius, if of the sacred, build a shrine then and there. When he crosses one of the smooth stones set up at crossroads, he anoints it with oil from his flask, and will not go on his way till he have knelt down and worshipped it. If a mouse gnaw a bag of his meal, he will off to the diviner, and ask what he must do, and, if the answer be "send it to the cobbler's to be patched", he neglects the advice and frees himself of the ill by rites of aversion. He is forever purifying his house on the plea that Hecate has been drawn thither. Should owls hoot when he is abroad, he is much put about, and will not be on his way till he have cried "Athena forbend!" Set foot on a tomb he will not, nor come nigh a dead body nor a woman in childbed; he must keep himself unpolluted. On the fourth and twenty-fourth days of every month he has wine mulled for his household, and goes out to buy myrtle boughs, frankincense, and a holy picture, and then, returning, spends the livelong day doing sacrifice to the Hermaphrodites and putting garlands about them. He never has a dream but he flies to a diviner, or a soothsayer, or an interpreter of visions, to ask what god or goddess he should appease; and, when he is about to be initiated into the holy orders of Orpheus, he visits the priests every month and his wife with him, or, if she have not the time, the nurse and children. He would seem to be one of those who are forever going to the seaside to besprinkle themselves; and, if ever he see one of the figures of Hecate at the crossroads wreathed with garlic, he is off home to wash his head and summon priestesses, whom he bids purify him with the carrying about him of a sea onion or a puppy-dog. If he catch sight of a madman or an epileptic, he shudders and spits in his bosom. (Theophrastus, *Characters* 16; tr. based on J. M. Edmonds, London, Heinemann, 1929)

Richard Gordon, a specialist in ancient religions based at Erfurt University, has paid particular regard to the Latin etymology, holding the philosophical discourse and its theological content as examined by Martin to be less important; instead, entirely in the sense of Émile Durkheim's comprehensive assessment of the positive aspects of deviance, he has concentrated on the further content and functions of that discourse. For Martin, the Greek theological discourse on *superstitio* trails centuries behind political events. Gordon, on the other hand, holds the Latin discourse of the senatorial elite to be an instrument forged in the white heat of political developments, serving to marginalize groups regarded as problematic.

Gordon and Martin nevertheless share one fundamental observation. The behaviour branded — after Plautus — as *superstitio* is improper and inappropriate, not technically false or ineffective. We accordingly find as antonyms such diverse terms as *religio* and, although rarely, *pietas*. Two fields of application can be discerned: essentially unnecessary fears of divine anger, and foreign religions. Both fields indicate an elite using the term to differentiate its own religion, which was highly important for political communication and the assertion of hegemony. It was this motivating principle — the presumption of judgement over others, the assertion of belonging, and the perceived need for sharp differentiation — that defined the effectiveness of the term's use, rather than any particular force inherent to it. In this "soft" form, the term fulfilled an important bridging function, and an integrative role: it was able to articulate the real tension that existed between the religion of the elite, calculated, in its public form, to legitimate the expansion of hegemony, and the religion of the general populace, with its function of managing the contingencies of everyday life.

Gordon also registers an important break that occurred during the Imperial age, coinciding with the recentring of religion on the ruler cult and the associated cult of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, the supreme deity of the Roman polity. This cult complex developed considerable integrative power, going so far as to embrace the population's need for religious succour in personal crises: an instance of an interest in the instrumental aspect of

religion. In this way, the polemical content of *superstitio* could be concentrated on foreign religions, which could readily be associated with stereotypes such as feminine, emotional, credulous, and barbaric: the Jews provided a good example. With the extension of Roman citizenship to the entire Roman Empire, the Empire's self-definition in terms of a commonality that was essentially merely imagined acquired a new degree of vagueness, which allowed it to elide with *humanitas*, while at the same time consigning opposing internal models of group identification to full illegitimacy. Now, in the third and fourth centuries, *superstitio* became coincident with magic and treacherous divination. To a corresponding degree, the expression entered legal texts and became a weapon that could be employed both against and by Christianity. As such it characterizes our late sources.

Religious deviance

At this point in the state of research, what questions remain to be answered? In a brief, peripheral remark, Gordon points to an important circumstance: by no means is the entire spectrum of ancient discourse on religious deviance covered by the term *superstitio*. This is true of the extreme forms of religious deviance mentioned by Gordon, which incurred the death penalty. But it also applies to those forms of aberrant behaviour, beginning with far smaller ritual errors, discussed in 1981 in a book, edited by John Scheid, on "religious crimes". Scheid further develops the theme in his book on religion and piety.²⁷ Here, he is interested in the religious character and religious classification of misdemeanours, including those that were covered by the term *crimen*. He is able to demonstrate that, in this internal discourse, instances of deviance were always constructed as a burden on the community. An emphasis was thus placed on rituals, incumbent on the community, designed to relieve that burden and restore the *pax deorum*, or harmonious understanding with the gods: "the necessity for religious mediation by the whole of society". Criminalization of the individual was largely absent. Here, the question of the grounds for, and possible expressive value of, such instances of aberrant behaviour remains open. The political and military contexts in which they occur suggest that it was in these particular areas, and probably not in

the religious domain, that the motivation for individual instances lay.

This leads us to the second area that remains open to inquiry: both Martin and Gordon point to the discrepancy between the standards of the elite and the religious practices of others. In the context of an inquiry into individualism, this discrepancy in itself gives sufficient cause to investigate the practices that were subjected to such criticism. It is perhaps at this very point — and here too we may refer to Durkheim — that we should investigate the productivity of such deviant practices, and, with regard to the history of religion, the dynamic they released. It is not, or at least not merely, the positions taken up by political and religious leadership groups that should be weighed as important factors in religious-historical developments; changes in religious practices among the populace at large are also relevant.

It follows that, in pursuing a sociological and criminological investigation of deviance, we should not inquire solely on constructivist lines into processes such as labelling, exclusion and the creation of otherness, regulation and the construction of deviance. It is my intention in this volume to use deviance as a means of approaching the question of individualization, and to inquire on an "objectivist" (or positivist) basis into the forms of and grounds for aberrant behaviour, while accepting the norm as a given. My justification in so doing does not lie in an "absolutist" assumption that particular forms of religious activity can be classified as deviant regardless of the contexts within which the judgements in question were made, as does the article on Aberglaube in the Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie (covering sixty-five columns) or the Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens (in ten volumes). To reiterate, my purpose is rather to obtain some idea of the breadth of individual religious activity and positions espoused by minorities, or marginalized by the dominance of the elite literary tradition, and, following Certeau, to peruse normative texts for indications of transgressive individual attitudes. For the creation of norms can also always be seen as an attempt to control diversity.

'These are the considerations that form the background to the remaining chapters of this volume. In a first step (Chapter 2), I will investigate normative texts from the Roman Republic for explicit statements and implicit indications regarding religious deviance, in respect of both their semantics and the content of the behaviour they designate as deviant. In so doing, and with the current state of research in mind, I will initially concentrate on legal and antiquarian fragments, taking my test material from the ancient collection of fragments of Roman jurists prior to the legal corpora of the emperor Justinian (*Iurisprudentia anteiustiniana*: there is still no more recent collection of these texts), and the two great summae, Varro's *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*, which we sadly have only in highly fragmentary form, and Cicero's *Laws*. In the third and fourth chapters I will turn to the first century CE, first to an interesting view on a concept of religious deviance as being due to lack of knowledge, developed by Valerius Maximus in the Tiberian age (Chapter 3). In Chapter 4, I will address the works of Seneca and Plutarch already mentioned. Here I will focus on one central — and surprising — phenomenon, which serves particularly to clarify the interplay between the public religious infrastructure and individual action; that is to say, behaviour in temples. For my third step I will proceed to later periods of the Imperial age, returning to legal texts and in particular the texts of statutes up to the period of Late Antiquity (Chapter 5). Finally, I will review ancient conceptualizations of the importance of individual religious experiences and decisions (Chapter 6), and will summarize my findings in a model of religious developments within the Imperial age (Chapter 7). <>

[The Passion Translation New Testament \(2nd Edition\) Floral: With Psalms, Proverbs and Song of Songs](#) edited by Brian Simmons [BroadStreet Publishing Group, LLC, 9781424556878] ISBN 978-1-4245-5682-3 (black faux leather) ISBN 978-1-4245-5683-0 (brown faux leather) ISBN 978-1-4245-5684-7 (purple faux leather) ISBN 978-1-4245-5685-4 (red faux leather) ISBN 978-1-4245-5686-1 (hardcover ivory) ISBN 978-1-4245-5687-8 (hardcover floral)

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Excerpt:

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[The Hellenistic Reception of Classical Athenian Democracy and Political Thought](#) by Mirko Canevaro and Benjamin Gray [Oxford University Press, 9780198748472]

In the Hellenistic period (c. 323-31 BCE), Greek teachers, philosophers, historians, orators, and politicians found an essential point of reference in the democracy of Classical Athens and the political thought which it produced. However, while Athenian civic life and thought in the Classical period have been intensively studied, these aspects of the Hellenistic period have so far received much less attention. This volume seeks to bring together the two areas of research, shedding new light on these complementary parts of the history of the ancient Greek polis.

The essays collected here encompass historical, philosophical, and literary approaches to the various Hellenistic responses to and adaptations of Classical Athenian politics. They survey the complex processes through which Athenian democratic ideals of equality, freedom, and civic virtue were emphasized, challenged, blunted, or reshaped in different Hellenistic contexts and genres. They also consider the reception, in the changed political circumstances, of Classical Athenian non- and anti-democratic political thought. This makes it possible to investigate how competing Classical Athenian ideas about the value or shortcomings of democracy and civic community continued to echo through new political debates in Hellenistic cities and schools. Looking ahead to the Roman Imperial period, the volume also explores to what extent those who idealized Classical Athens as a symbol of cultural and intellectual excellence drew on, or forgot, its legacy of democracy and vigorous political debate. By addressing these different questions it not only tracks changes in practices and conceptions of politics and the city in the Hellenistic world, but also examines developing approaches to culture, rhetoric, history, ethics, and philosophy, and especially their relationships with politics.

Excerpt: This volume examines in detail Hellenistic Greeks' varied, dynamic responses to, and

adaptations of, the Classical Athenian political legacy. It brings together historical, philosophical, and literary approaches to Hellenistic politics and political debate. This enables close attention to the wide range of media through which Hellenistic Greeks gained access to, and engaged with, Classical Athenian political history, institutions, and ideals: for example, rhetoric and rhetorical education; comic drama; historiography; philosophical treatises, commentaries, and teaching; and still-vibrant civic institutions and epigraphy. Physical monuments, art, and city-planning were another important medium, not discussed in detail here. Consideration of different media shows that the Classical Athenian political legacy was partly transmitted quite deliberately by intellectuals and citizens, perhaps especially by teachers in civic gymnasia and the schools of Hellenistic metropoleis. However, the legacy was also transmitted through more complex processes of osmosis. Indeed, it was one of the important strands which fed into the civic koine of the Hellenistic poleis, developed and refined through ongoing practical experimentation with civic institutions, practices, and styles of rhetoric.

Attention to this wide range of media and processes involves studying together dimensions of Hellenistic political life often studied separately: on the one hand, the everyday civic life of the Hellenistic poleis, attested mainly in inscriptions; and, on the other, the political thought of Hellenistic intellectuals, especially philosophers and historians. Through this approach, this volume builds up a picture of a complex, multi-faceted Hellenistic public sphere of political debate, whose participants engaged with the equally complex and multi-faceted public sphere of Classical Athens. A central theme in both the Classical and Hellenistic public sphere was that of the merits and shortcomings of democracy itself: in each case, democratic and anti-democratic voices were in dialogue, together with advocates of some third way such as the mixed constitution. Hellenistic Greeks frequently drew on Classical debates as they preserved, adapted, blunted, or overturned democratic institutions and practices, and as they re-imagined or criticized varying Classical Athenian ideals of civic freedom, equality, and virtue.

The cultural authority of Classical Athenian literature and philosophy in the Hellenistic world added urgency to a central theme of these Hellenistic debates that often emerges in this volume: the connection between politics, education, and cultural flourishing. Supporters of Athenian-style democracy could present Classical Athens as a coherent paradigm of political and cultural achievement, the basis for an integrated educational programme, with a prominent place for rhetoric. This left critics of Athenian-style democracy confronted with the challenge of somehow weakening or dissolving the link between Classical Athens' undoubted cultural and intellectual prowess, which they sought to harness, and its distinctive political culture of vigorous open debate and very wide political participation, about which they were sceptical.

These different approaches to the links between politics and culture shaped the emerging model of a truly 'Classical' Athens which was to play a dominant role in Greek culture in the Roman Empire, now very well and intensively studied by scholars." Indeed, an important role of this volume is to bridge the gap between that tendency in Imperial Greek culture and the equally wellstudied first stages in the development of a widely influential retrospective ideal of Classical Athens, which took place in Athens itself in the second half of the fourth century BCE, partly under the influence of the orator and civic leader Lycurgus and the Athenian intellectuals and teachers of that period, who developed extensive contacts with the rest of the Greek world. As has been pointed out in book reviews, recent volumes on the Greek East in the early Roman Empire offer excellent accounts of central aspects of Imperial Greek political thought and culture, from Classicism to cosmopolitanism, and their roots in Classical Athens, but mainly leave open for future study the complex processes of transmission and reinvention which took place in the intervening centuries.

This volume attempts to contribute to filling in this part of the picture. Recent work has helped to clarify questions of Hellenistic Greek identity, ethnicity, and culture and their connections with Hellenistic conceptions of earlier Greek history. This volume shifts the focus onto the question of how

Hellenistic Greeks processed the distinctively political aspects of the Classical Athenian past, cultivating cultural memories and developing political resources on which Greeks of the Roman Empire were to rely. The inclusion of two papers on Plutarch in a volume otherwise concerned with Hellenistic debates is geared towards this purpose: Plutarch drew on lost Hellenistic traditions of interpreting Classical Athenian politics, to which he gives revealing access, but he also reflected and promoted moves towards the new approaches to Classical Athens central to Imperial Greek political culture. It is as a crucial pivot between Hellenistic and Imperial Greek politics and culture that he is included here.

Below we summarize the papers in the two parts of the volume. Then we pick out for discussion some common themes which unify the different chapters: debates about democracy and the role of elites in the polis; varieties of Athenocentrism, and their critics; and the development of the anti-democratic tradition, and of alternatives to democracy, in Hellenistic political thought.

The Reception of Classical Athens in the Early Hellenistic World

Two powerful yet apparently contradictory phenomena characterized the early Hellenistic period, as Greeks came to terms with Alexander's conquests and their implications for civic life. On the one hand, as discussed by Ma (Chapter 13), a combination of factors—a variety of royal political actors in the Eastern Mediterranean who eliminated the possibility of one polis exercising hegemony over a large number of others, together with the disqualification of monarchical and oligarchical options within cities—led to a 'great convergence'. By the early third century BCE, a variety of manifestations of the city-state form converged towards a recognizable model of the autonomous and democratic polis—a widespread constitutional arrangement that involved the absence of censitary barriers to citizenship and to participation in decision-making; rigorous democratic accountability of magistrates; and wide publicity for public decisions. The existence of a roughly uniform constitutional polisscape increased the scope for peer-polity interaction, and produced a distinctly

polycentric world. Within this world, political change and innovation emerged from the interaction of a variety of loci, rather than from the hegemonic pull of particular centres, which had often been the pattern in the Classical period. As a result, while the constitutional model towards which the early Hellenistic poleis converged has much in common with fourth-century Athenian democracy, this was not in any way a convergence towards the Athenian model. In fact, Athens, because of foreign interference and oligarchic experiments, was rather slow in fully joining the 'great convergence'.

This wide phenomenon of convergence sidestepped, as it were, Athens itself. Another contemporary phenomenon, however, cemented the place of Athens as a key cultural and political reference point in the very world that was finally freed of the reality or threat of Athenian hegemony. While it finally lost its political centrality after the Lamian War, Athens preserved its centrality as an intellectual centre for culture and political reflection far beyond this point. In Chapter 2 of this volume and in another recent contribution, Luraghi has drawn attention to the fact that a variety of cultural forms that would come to characterize Hellenistic culture found their origin, to a considerable extent, in the 'thickly integrated social landscape' of Athens between the Lamian and the Chremonidean Wars, 'one in which politics and cultural spheres and activities such as philosophy, dramatic poetry, historiography, [and] antiquarianism [were] ostensibly more tightly interconnected than ever before'. At a time when the city was struggling to preserve its political system and its autonomy in the face of Macedonian expansion, the city was the epicentre of intense political and intellectual activity, characterized by features that were to become typical of what we now define as Hellenistic culture. From antiquarian interests such as inscriptions and chronology (typical of, for example, Timaeus and Philochorus), to New Comedy, literary criticism (practised by, for example, Douris and Demetrius of Phalerum), local history, and philosophical engagement, early Hellenistic Athens is a microcosm of Hellenistic culture as a whole.

Citizens and intellectuals of early Hellenistic Athens thus developed rich cultural ideals and idealizing

approaches to Classical Athens, extending and transforming similar tendencies of the preceding Lyncurgan era. Their achievements then arguably became Hellenistic Athens' most valuable and influential export. Through education at Athens itself and across the Hellenistic world, Classical Athens seems to have become a leading focus of civic education, civic culture, and civic discourse, as several of the chapters in the volume show: rhetorical exercises, philosophical speculation, and literary works in the Hellenistic world all took a generic or idealized Classical Athens, or a generic Classical polis much resembling Classical Athens, as their scene. As Konstan shows in Chapter 6, theatrical performances also played an important role in sustaining Athens' reputation as an exceptional and leading polis.

The chapters in Part I explore particular case studies of early Hellenistic reception and interrogation of Classical Athens, against the background of the two concurrent tendencies we have outlined. In Chapter 2, Luraghi develops his picture of early Hellenistic Athens as the originator of distinctive idealizing approaches to Classical Athens that would become principal lenses through which Classical Athens was viewed, in the Hellenistic world and beyond. He analyses, in particular, how the Athenians of the period between the Lamian and the Chremonidean War looked at their identity and their past, and particularly at the fifth century BCE, from the Persian Wars to the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War. Luraghi observes that the Persian Wars in this period were not used, as before, to underpin the Athenians' claims to hegemony, but rather to justify the city's struggle for freedom and autonomy—a representation that was appropriate not only for the new position of Athens, but more widely for a context in which the impossibility of hegemony had opened new opportunities for autonomy for poleis across the Greek world.

If the case study explored by Luraghi is arguably an instance in which the early Hellenistic Athenian point of view was to become a reference point, Wallace explores in Chapter 3 a case study in which we find no one-sided influence, but rather the interplay of different perspectives on Alexander's actions towards the Greek poleis, which highlight

the polycentric nature of early Hellenistic approaches to the recent past. The different treatments to which cities from different parts of the Greek world were subjected by Alexander (and Philip) gave rise to a variety of different traditions concerning his actions. If the Athenians came to conceptualize their right to democracy in opposition to the interference of Alexander and the other Macedonian kings, for the Greeks of Asia Minor Alexander's actions were the foundation of their right to democracy, and an example to which they would return for centuries in their dealings with Hellenistic kings. Elsewhere, Alexander's support of oligarchies across mainland Greece and the Peloponnese was to become less significant than the introduction of Macedonian-sanctioned autonomy against the hegemonic drives of Athens, Sparta, and Thebes.

The case of the behaviour of the Peloponnesian leaders towards Philip and Alexander is also central to the discussion by Canevaro in Chapter 4. Despite the polycentric nature of the formation of Hellenistic traditions, by the second century BCE Polybius (18.14) was forced to defend these Peloponnesian leaders against widespread representations of them as traitors. The popularity of these representations is due to the centrality that Athenian fourth-century oratory, and in particular the oratory of Demosthenes, acquired in education across the Greek world—Polybius himself shows significant signs of Demosthenic influence in his writing. The evidence of Hellenistic declamations as well as of Hellenistic scholarship on the orators shows that teachers and students in gymnasia across the Greek world engaged with these texts not only from a stylistic perspective, but primarily from the point of view of the democratic ideology and institutional environment they represented, which resonated with the reality of the vitality of the Hellenistic poleis. Side by side with the popularity of these texts, we find alternative traditions that challenge their worldview, in particular in the writings of the Peripatetics, and yet even these alternative traditions consist of engagement with Athenian political debates that have their origin partly in the world of early Hellenistic Athens investigated by Luraghi.

The last two chapters of Part I explore two different crucial forms of engagement with Classical Athenian political culture. Long in Chapter 5 shows that in debates about political philosophy, early Hellenistic philosophers often took as a principal point of reference, for development or deconstruction, the political philosophical debates of Classical Athens. The towering figures of fourth-century Athenian philosophy were ever present: for example, much Hellenistic political thought, starting with Zeno's Republic, responded to Plato's Republic. Nonetheless, as Long shows, Hellenistic philosophers also engaged with the thought and practices of a much wider range of Classical Athenian political thinkers, offering fine-grained responses to the Sophists and to Sophistic ideas and teaching methods. Konstan in Chapter 6 makes the case that the spread of New Comedy in the Hellenistic period made a generically Athenian political, social, and ideological setting—'not necessarily the historical Athens at any given stage, but an idealized image of Athens that had wide appeal'—extremely familiar to Greeks across the world of the Greek poleis. This must have been a contributing factor to the 'great convergence' discussed by Ma.

Changing Approaches to Classical Athenian: Democracy and Political Thought from Polybius to Plutarch

The second part of this volume focuses on developments in Greek approaches to the Classical Athenian political past in the period during which the Romans developed and entrenched their political authority over the Greek world. This period saw numerous changes in civic life and political thought which might, at first sight, appear to reduce the scope for intensive engagement with Classical Athenian politics and political philosophy. Those interested in promoting, or contesting, civic ideals now had to reckon not only with Roman power but also with distinctive Roman approaches to politics, ethics, and culture. Moreover, the spread of Roman power ran in parallel with other major changes in the politics of the Greek cities and in Greek philosophical life, which might also have been expected to push Classical Athenian political models to the margins. In many Greek poleis, civic elites gained new types of power, sometimes

outside the strict framework of institutions of democratic civic scrutiny. This changed the dynamics of civic politics in the later Hellenistic world, to a degree which is still being debated. At the same time, culture and paideia became ever more central to civic life, perhaps partly at the expense of warfare and traditional forms of political engagement. The decisive change in the practice of Greek philosophy came after Sulla's sack of Athens in 86 BCE: after the dispersal of refugee Athenian philosophers around the Mediterranean, Greek philosophy became far more polycentric, with flourishing centres in Rhodes, Alexandria, Pergamon, and Rome, not to mention the vast network of local teachers and travelling philosophers.

Despite first appearances, these changes could in fact serve to intensify engagement with Classical Athens, even if they also sometimes encouraged disengagement or focus on other models. Indeed, it was precisely in this period that members of the Greek philosophical diaspora, like many exiles excluded from their traditional heartland, displayed an intensified interest in the central figures and ideas of the world they had lost: in particular, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, on whose works they began to write detailed commentaries, initiating a long tradition. In the world of poleis and federal leagues, too, the various changes—subordination to Rome, changing power dynamics and new civic priorities—often provoked, rather than marginalizing, debates about Classical Athenian politics and political thought. For example, new roles for civic elites, who were expected to make ever more substantial voluntary contributions to the welfare of the city, gave a new urgency to past Athenian debates about liturgies, honours, and reciprocity, such as those found in Demosthenes *Against Leptines*. They also intensified the importance of the ideal of the voluntarily supererogative, devoted citizen, who must be moulded through civic education (paideia), common to the political thought of Plato, Isocrates, Xenophon, and Aristotle. Indeed, the great benefactors of the later Hellenistic world were perhaps not so sharply different from the leaders of the Classical Athenian democracy, in their complex relationship with their wealth and with the

demos: scholars have perhaps been too quick to see the liturgy system as a sign mainly of democratic control of elites in the earlier period, but of elite dominance in the later period.

The chapters in Part II explore varied aspects of the developing Greek reception of Classical Athenian politics against this background. Craig B. Champion analyses in detail Polybius' critical approach to Classical Athenian democracy, which he combined with unexpected admiration for some Athenian diplomatic achievements and some Athenian leaders. Champion analyses Polybius' complex and ambivalent approach to Classical Athens' 'imperial democracy' by placing it in the context of the rhetorical and political role of the *Histories*. Polybius' scepticism about Athens' constitutional order, with its prominent role for the demos, was related to Polybius' embrace of alternative political models, including a distinctive, Roman-influenced version of the mixed constitution, which retained democratic elements but also gave considerable power to civic elites. Benjamin Gray places Polybius' approach to Athenian democracy, and to other aspects of the Classical Athenian political legacy, in a later Hellenistic discursive context. He argues that Polybius' arguments can be situated in a broader later Hellenistic debate about whether to preserve and revivify those Classical Athenian democratic and philosophical traditions which prized civic equality and solidarity above all, or to supersede them in favour of alternative models of justice and stability, based on both Greek and Roman models. This ongoing debate can be reconstructed from historiography, epigraphy, and philosophical fragments.

John Holton and Nicolas Wiater then each examine case studies of the approaches to these problems of particular authors of the first century BCE. Holton examines Diodorus Siculus' complex handling of questions of Athenian and Western Greek democracy in his account of the Sicilian expedition. Both the Athenian and the Syracusan democracies emerge as centres of debate about ethical values central to Diodorus' own political thought, especially 'humanity' (philanthropia). In turn, Diodorus himself uses the history of these democracies to examine, and reflect about, issues of ethics, culture, and political decision-making, all

central to his aspirations to educate his contemporary readers. Wiater shows that Dionysius of Halicarnassus shared some of Diodorus' tendency to use Classical Athens as an ideal context for interrogating philanthropia and paideia. Nonetheless, Dionysius also saw in Rome a political and cultural paradigm which could even eclipse Classical Athens. This was so even though both the Romans and Dionysius himself had to remain constantly in dialogue with Classical Athens' legacy.

The following two papers examine Plutarch's approach to Athenian democracy, as both a summation of Hellenistic trends and a heralding of a distinctive Imperial Greek Classicism, which disparaged the democratic dimension of Classical Athenian flourishing. They both do so through the lens of Plutarch's biography of the later fourth-century Athenian leader Phocion. Andrew Erskine places the Life of Phocion in the broader context of Plutarch's critical approach to Athenian democracy, directed more at the unpredictability of the demos than at democratic institutional structures. This went hand in hand with Plutarch's admiration for Classical Athenian models of the integrity of the intellectual or philosophical life, partly illustrated by Phocion himself. Erskine also shows the close links with political issues of Plutarch's own day, such as city relations with superior powers and the connection between politics and paideia. After Erskine establishes the broader context, Raphaëla Dubreuil focuses on the specific example of Plutarch's use of theatrical imagery and concepts to study the decline of Athenian democracy in the Life of Phocion. This example illustrates Plutarch's keen interest in understanding the dynamics of democratic politics and oratory, but also his close and imaginative engagement with the Athenian anti-democratic tradition itself, especially the Platonic tradition, which had been sustained through the Hellenistic period (see, for example, Champion's chapter here).

John Ma's concluding chapter draws together the two parts of the volume, as well as looking forward to the Roman Empire and beyond. He begins by arguing for the idea of a 'great convergence' in Greek cities' institutions and civic life in the early Hellenistic period, around a consensual model of

participatory government and inter-polis interaction. He concludes by analysing the changes which occurred in the later Hellenistic and early Imperial period, sketching the background to the topics addressed elsewhere in Part II. Ma sees a gradual shifting away from the polycentric pluralism of the early Hellenistic period, in which Athens and Athenian influences were part of a complex, varied political landscape. Hellenistic civic life and Hellenistic creative appropriations of Classical Athenian politics were increasingly, though not universally, forgotten or obscured, in favour of a nostalgic image of Classical Athens as the ideal polis, distinguished more by its culture and power than by its democratic politics. This shift, and its long-lasting impact, has contributed to diverting attention from the complex Hellenistic processes and debates which this volume seeks to bring back into focus.

Political Institutions, Hellenistic Democracy, and the Elites

The spread of a recognizably coherent democratic constitutional model in the early Hellenistic period cannot help but invite comparisons between the institutional features that are characteristic of the 'great convergence' and the political institutions of Classical Athenian democracy. Such comparisons give rise to fundamental questions. One question concerns descent: is there a direct line of descent between Classical Athenian democracy and the generalized Hellenistic democratic koine? Another question has to do with evaluation: when assessing the democratic credentials of Hellenistic demokratiai, should Classical Athenian democracy be considered the paradigmatic, normative example?

These questions are appearing again and again in current research. To give only two examples, what should we make of Domingo Gygax's confident statement, at the end of his extensive investigation into 'the origins of euergetism', that 'civic euergetism was invented by Athenian democracy'? If Domingo Gygax is correct, how should we imagine that line of descent working in practice? A different yet connected issue that has taken centre stage in recent work on the Hellenistic polis is that of the social and political character of the

Hellenistic democratic polis: were the Hellenistic poleis actual democracies, as they called themselves? Or were they democracies only in name, in fact dominated by social elites that controlled all political institutions? Recent studies have tried to find an answer to this question, and the two most recent monographs on the topic, by Susanne Carlsson and Volker Grieb, use opposing criteria to define whether relevant Hellenistic poleis' political systems were in fact democracies. Carlsson uses abstract definitions taken from modern political theorists, while Grieb and others use Classical Athenian democracy as the paradigm by which to measure Hellenistic democracies.

In order for historians to make inroads into these problems, institutional comparison is not enough in itself. As argued by Ma in Chapter 13, there are institutions that are typical of the Hellenistic democratic koine that are unparalleled in Athens and vice versa. Ma mentions *prographe* and *prosodos* (i.e. the power of initiative by bodies or individuals in the polis), which are widespread in the Hellenistic poleis but unparalleled in Athens. Conversely, amendments from the floor, common in Athens, are absent from the record for the Hellenistic poleis. To these examples, one may add the important distinction between public and private charges in the courts, which is unattested outside Athens. Similarly, although variants of a distinction between *nomoi* and *psephismata* are found in a number of Hellenistic poleis, the distinction is never identical to the Athenian one, and the relevant procedures, inasmuch as we can reconstruct them, never reproduce fourth-century Athenian *nomothesia*. Moreover, their attestations start at the time when the Athenian procedures were actually discontinued. These examples alone should warn historians against postulating simple lines of direct descent from Athenian democracy to the Hellenistic democratic koine. On the other hand, there are several cases in which Classical Athens clearly pioneers institutional practices that later become typical of the Hellenistic democratic koine, and these cases—from pay for judges and assembly-goers, to a variety of measures of financial administration, public accountability for magistrates, anti-tyranny measures, public epigraphy, and, indeed, civic *evergetism*—cannot

be dismissed. A significant level of influence is undeniable.

This volume helps to put these institutional similarities and differences in a broader context, by shedding light on the specific processes through which Athenian models contributed to Hellenistic political reflection and experimentation. Several chapters show us Hellenistic Greeks thinking and writing about issues that were central to the experience of the Hellenistic poleis through engagement with Athenian texts and the Athenian past. For example, Canevaro (Chapter 3) draws attention to the remarkable level of engagement with Athenian political oratory and institutions shown by a Hellenistic rhetorical exercise. This exercise is a response to Demosthenes' *Against Leptines*, which concentrates on the relation between the city and its wealthy benefactors, explores various available policies for the liturgical taxation of the wealthy, and (against Demosthenes) downplays the reliance of the city on benefactors and plays up the duties of the benefactors towards the community. The implications of civic *evergetism* for the democratic equality of the community are the key theme of this exercise, and they are explored through engagement with an Athenian text which provides the most extensive extant exploration of these themes in ancient Greek literature. This rhetorical exercise is not in any way untypical: the *Against Leptines* was in fact, throughout the Hellenistic period and beyond, one of the most popular of Demosthenes' speeches. In the first century AD Aelius Theon ranks it among the five best Demosthenic speeches (*Progymnasmata* 61.15). It is a clear favourite in the early Hellenistic treatise *On Style* by Ps.-Demetrius (10-11, 20, 245-6), and it is praised by Cicero (*Orat.* 111) and by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ad Amm.* 1.4), who considers it 'the most charming and vivid' of Demosthenes' speeches.

Seeing the engagement of rhetors and critics with this text within the context of the challenges civic *evergetism* posed to egalitarian ideals in Hellenistic democracy not only allows us to appreciate the reasons for its success but also shows us that Classical Athenian democracy, for Hellenistic Greeks, was good to think with. Indeed, engagement with Classical Athens helped the

successive generations of Hellenistic and early Imperial Greeks studied in this volume to investigate, from their different perspectives, the central and enduring issue of the relationship between a city's demos and its elites (see, for example, Chapters 11 and 12 on Plutarch). The inscriptional record of the institutions and ideologies of the Hellenistic poleis can thus be greatly enriched through attention to the wider cultural context—what Hellenistic Greeks learned, read, and discussed.

Athenocentrism as a Focus of Hellenistic and Modern Debates

The previous section makes clear that this volume is intended as a contribution to a lively debate about the central issue of Athenocentrism in Hellenistic history. This debate has taken stimulating turns in recent scholarship: for example, studies stressing the Classical Athenian influence on such symbols of Hellenistic civic vitality as organized ephebic education and anti-tyranny legislation have stimulated reflection concerning the issue of Athenocentrism. This volume contains within its own chapters contrasting approaches to this central issue, for example in the opening and closing chapters of Luraghi and Ma respectively.

But the volume also shows something else: debates and disagreements about Athenocentrism, and its advantages and problems as a political ideal and interpretive tool, were already in full swing in the Hellenistic world itself. For all that many Hellenistic Greeks consciously looked to Classical Athens for political and cultural inspiration, there is also strong evidence in this volume for the opposite phenomenon: conscious rejection or questioning of Athenocentrism, in favour of a more pluralist or non-Athenian vision of the Greek world. Wallace, for example, shows in Chapter 3 how the cities of Asia Minor nourished their own ideals and traditions of democracy and autonomy, consciously distancing themselves from the democratic Athens which had once been their political overlord. Similarly, Champion and Canevaro show that Polybius insisted on the distinctiveness, and distinctive value, of Peloponnesian political traditions; these included federalism and a co-operative diplomatic style, based on careful, rule-

governed negotiation with superior powers, from Macedonians to Romans, which stood in contrast with Demosthenic ideals of autonomy and defiance. Polybius also held up Rome and the West as an alternative source of political models, and focus for political analysis, in some ways superior to Athens. In this his approach was partly picked up by Diodorus Siculus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, discussed by Holton and Wiater. Even in Hellenistic Athens itself, nostalgic longing for past Classical glories was certainly not the only available cultural option. Rather, the expansion of the Greek world introduced many new possibilities: as Paraskevi Martzavou has shown, for example, the originally Egyptian cult of Isis was a thriving and prominent part of the cultural life, but also the power politics, of later Hellenistic Athens.

We hope that the different positions and evidence presented in this volume will stimulate further debate on this issue. Any new synthesis will have to do justice to a nuanced, mixed picture. New centres of culture and politics developed distinctive identities and perspectives in the Hellenistic period—but they often did so through dialogue with Classical Athens. The city of Rhodes, for example, was a new and innovative political and cultural centre in the Hellenistic world: it developed its own form of mixed constitution, certainly not a straightforward democracy, and became a new centre of rhetorical and philosophical education, the base of innovative Stoic teachers (Panaetius, Posidonius) in the later Hellenistic world.

Nonetheless, we know that Athenian literature and philosophy was a staple of education in Hellenistic Rhodes. A Rhodian inscription contains a list of books held by the library (probably) of the local gymnasium: young Rhodians, in the second century BCE, were reading and studying texts such as Demetrius of Phalerum's *On Law-Making at Athens* and *On Constitutions at Athens*, Hegesias of Magnesia's *Athenophiles*, *Aspasia*, and *Alcibiades*, and several speeches by Theopompus including a *Panathenaicus*. Traditions were also developing about the exile of Aeschines on Rhodes, which would have offered an excellent aetiology for Rhodes' new role as a centre of rhetorical education, well-suited to continuing and revising Athenian traditions.

To concentrate only on long-established poleis such as Rhodes would obviously be to underestimate the extent of innovation and experimentation in forms of community and interaction in the Hellenistic world, often sharply divergent from Classical Athenian precedents: it is necessary also to take into account, for example, new forms of federalism, cross-polis collaboration and festival communities, and new types of local or travelling associations, such as the associations of Dionysiac artists. Nonetheless, even the most innovative and polycentric Hellenistic communities also often relied on an ideal of Classical Athens in order to articulate their aspirations and identities. This is clear from a decree of the Delphic Amphictyony (c.120-115 BCE) responding to an embassy from the association of artists of Dionysus based at Athens. The Dionysiac artists had sent as envoys a priest of Dionysus and tragic poet, together with two epic poets, in order to ask the Amphictyons to uphold their honours and privileges.

This is clearly a distinctively Hellenistic context of interaction between fluid, cosmopolitan, predominantly cultural-religious communities, which adapted for their own purposes traditions of civic decision-making, diplomacy, honours, and epigraphy. Nonetheless, precisely this characteristically Hellenistic decree contains fulsome praise from the Amphictyons for Athens—specifically, the *demos* of the Athenians—as the origin and centre of human civilization. Significantly, the representation of Athens' achievements here was tailored not only to recalling the past glories of imperial Athens by evoking the tradition of Thucydides and Isocrates, but also to expressing these groups' specific concerns: the focus is the Athenian *demos*' role in introducing education, religion, and literature under the guidance of ideals of civility, trust, and humanity. As these examples show, Classical Athenian influence and Hellenistic polycentrism went hand in hand in different contexts, through complex interactions which invite further study.

Political Thought, the Anti-Democratic Tradition, and Alternatives to Democracy
This volume is also intended to contribute to another ongoing development in the study of the Hellenistic

world: at the same time as historians have come to lay more stress on the vitality of the Hellenistic polis, scholars of Hellenistic philosophy and thought have brought into greater focus the often underestimated vibrancy and range of Hellenistic political thought, including reflection about citizenship.⁴⁶ This volume contributes to this tendency by studying the detailed and argumentative engagement of many Hellenistic Greeks with Classical Athenian political reflection. This is partly a question of studying the full range of Hellenistic philosophical enquiry: as Long shows in his chapter, even Stoics and Epicureans, often thought to be keen to transcend the polis, were very consistent and rigorous in their engagement with Classical Athenian civic life and thought. This dimension of the volume is also built on a very broad conception of Hellenistic, and Classical, political thought: reflections about politics ranging from philosophy, through historiography, to the everyday political rhetoric of speeches and inscribed decrees.

As has already emerged in this introduction, the chapters in this volume show that Hellenistic Greeks kept alive, and adapted, the Classical Athenian anti-democratic and extra-democratic traditions in political thought. This was not only a question of the perpetuation of aristocratic and philosophical arguments against the rule of the *demos*—conceived as unsteady and capricious—well-attested in this volume in the thought of Polybius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Plutarch. It was also a question of imaginative reworkings of Classical Greek political theories, arguments, and utopias. For example, reworkings and extensions of the Sophistic and Peripatetic traditions of linking education with politics, for the sake of improving both, are prominent in the chapters by Long and Gray. Several chapters also engage with Hellenistic writers' grappling with the possibility of an alternative republican political system to democracy, marked by greater wisdom, justice, and stability—something they usually thought could best be achieved through a form of mixed constitution, perhaps best realized in practice by the Romans. Such ideas stood in a tradition which linked Hellenistic thinkers not only with Plato and Aristotle but also with (for example) Thucydides

and Xenophon. The ambivalent desire to preserve something of the strengths of democracy and the rule of law, while taming the demos, also aligned relevant Hellenistic thinkers with engaged internal critics of the Athenian democracy such as Isocrates.

Relevant Hellenistic political thinkers and teachers were also the conduit through which Classical Athenian political and ethical ideas were passed on not only to Imperial Greek but also to Roman political thought. Indeed, the Hellenistic political debates reconstructed in this volume, including the development of anti-democratic arguments and the fashioning of republican, mixed alternatives, provide an excellent discursive context for the political and ethical philosophy of Cicero, especially his *De re publica*. Cicero himself, for example in the opening to Book 5 of his *De finibus*, gives a vivid picture of Hellenistic Athens partly as a philosophical and political museum, but also as a centre of ongoing, dynamic teaching and reflection: the interlocutors in that dialogue have to stroll to the Academy in the heat of the afternoon in order to have it to themselves, even at this dramatic date, not long after Sulla's sack of Athens. They look for inspiration in their debates about the highest good not only to Plato and Aristotle themselves, but also to Hellenistic Academics and Peripatetics, such as Carneades and Critolaus, whose inspiring presence they feel looming in this place along with that of the fourth-century founders.

A significant consequence of this analysis is that even the most doctrinaire aristocratic thinkers of the Hellenistic or Roman world had to take into account that Classical Athens' achievements were those of a democratic polis, whose constitution enabled even the poorest citizens to participate fully in politics. This unavoidable fact must have helped to sharpen the political thought of post-Classical intellectuals: there was no space for blankly denying the plausibility or efficiency of democracy, rather than arguing against it as a viable option trumped by a better alternative, which had to be defined and defended. As a result, we hope that this volume will offer much to those interested in ancient political thought, as well as ancient politics: its story is one of Hellenistic engagement with Classical Athenian political discourse as a whole, constituted by

tensions between democrats and anti-democrats.
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[Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times](#) by Alison McQueen [Cambridge University Press, 9781107152397]

From climate change to nuclear war to the rise of demagogic populists, our world is shaped by doomsday expectations. In this path-breaking book, Alison McQueen shows why three of history's greatest political realists feared apocalyptic politics. Niccolò Machiavelli in the midst of Italy's vicious power struggles, Thomas Hobbes during England's bloody civil war, and Hans Morgenthau at the dawn of the thermonuclear age all saw the temptation to prophesy the end of days. Each engaged in subtle and surprising strategies to oppose apocalypticism, from using its own rhetoric to neutralize its worst effects to insisting on a clear-eyed, tragic acceptance of the human condition. Scholarly yet accessible, this book is at once an ambitious contribution to the history of political thought and a work that speaks to our times.

'This is an excellent addition to the burgeoning literature on political realism. Straddling political theory and International Relations (IR) in a fresh and creative fashion, McQueen offers us a strikingly original portrait of realist responses to apocalypse. Moving seamlessly from Machiavelli to Hobbes to Morgenthau, from early modern debates about the nature of God to modern fears of nuclear annihilation and catastrophic climate change, she tells a fascinating story that raises profound questions about the dangers and the possibilities of political theology. Combining acute textual interpretation, felicitous historical contextualisation, and subtle normative analysis, *Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times* makes a major contribution to political theory and International Relations.' Duncan Bell, University of Cambridge

'Richard Hofstadter famously coined the term 'the paranoid style' to describe a certain histrionic strand within American politics. In *Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times*, McQueen audaciously outdoes Hofstadter by demonstrating the more widely pervasive 'apocalyptic' style characteristic not only of American political theorizing and

practice but also of modern political thought more generally. McQueen shows how and explains why the rhetoric of doomsday, visions of tribulation and redemption, and 'end times' ideologies not only persist but actually pervade the supposedly secular age. She meticulously and ingeniously traces the apocalyptic quality of the contexts in which political authors/actors such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau wrote, and how this apocalypticism infiltrated their writings. The book is certain to make an enormous impact in the fields of political thought, intellectual history, and American studies, especially given the now fashionable 'theological' turn in political theory and the dramatic surge in apocalyptic politics throughout the world.' John P. McCormick, University of Chicago

'Alison McQueen uses the common, apocalyptic context of their thinking to give us a novel perspective on the unlikely trio of Machiavelli, Hobbes and Morgenthau. The perspective unifies and illuminates, revealing aspects of their writings, and connections between their concerns, that are unseen in other treatments.' Philip Pettit, Princeton University and Australian National University

'The most important achievement of Alison McQueen's fascinating new book is that she launches an overdue conversation between and among different versions of 'realism', past and present. Shedding fresh light on Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hans Morgenthau, and other 'realists', McQueen ignores the usual disciplinary boundaries between and among competing realist brands. Hers is an indispensable contribution not only to a growing body of realist scholarship but to political science and philosophy.' William E. Scheuerman, Indiana University

'The heart of the book is four case studies that attempt to contextualize the apocalyptic thinking of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the efforts to contain it by Paul and Augustine, followed by a case study each on Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, and Hans Morgenthau. The strength of the book is in the detailed, well-researched reconstruction of the apocalyptic historical context that animated the thought of each, including Augustine.' W. J. Coats, Choice

Excerpt: Over the course of [Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times](#), we have seen that Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, and Hans Morgenthau were deeply engaged with the apocalyptic hopes and fears of their times. We have seen how attending to their responses to apocalypticism gives us a more nuanced understanding of the contexts in which their paradigmatically realist arguments developed and, in some cases, were eventually abandoned.

In their works, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau all recognize the motivating force of the apocalyptic imaginary. All three also struggle to negotiate its dangers. Despite their firm resistance to the possibility of enduring political settlements, all three thinkers succumb at some point to the apocalyptic imaginary's most radical hopes.

In this summation of the main themes of [Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times](#), I would like to revisit and assess the three thinkers' responses to apocalypticism. We will see that the strategies of rejection and redirection both carry their own practical and moral costs. Taken together, these encounters with apocalypticism give us an instruction "in the art of living through an age of catastrophe" that is as relevant today as it was in the unique circumstances of their own respective times.

Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau all came to recognize both the seductions and the dangers of the apocalyptic imaginary. These seductions and dangers are connected. The very features that make apocalypticism politically seductive also render it politically unstable. First, the apocalyptic imaginary is hostile to established political order. In Chapter 2, we considered the ways in which this hostility manifests itself in the books of Daniel and Revelation. Drawing on the symbolic resources of Near Eastern mythology, both books cast sovereign power as a sea beast, a chaos-monster that God must slay to reassert his authority over the world. The appeal of such a message in the face of real or perceived persecution is understandable. For the afflicted, it confirms a suspicion that our world is out of joint. For the comfortable, the message defamiliarizes sovereign power by casting it in a new and terrifying light.

As we saw in Chapter 4, this apocalyptic hostility to established authority was powerfully deployed during the English Civil War. Radical Protestants and parliamentarians identified the Laudian Church and Charles I with Antichrist and the Beast of Revelation, casting established ecclesiastical and royal power as deeply alien and antithetical to God's rule. The danger of seeing things this way is that it legitimizes violent extremism. When one's enemy poses an apocalyptic threat, almost anything goes. As Stephen Marshall advised in a speech before Parliament in 1642: "If this worke be to revenge Gods Church against Babylon, he is a blessed man that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones." Those allied with the forces of evil become targets for divinely sanctioned obliteration.

Second, the apocalyptic imaginary makes the crises of the day intelligible. It imposes a narrative coherence on them. The books of Daniel and Revelation made the persecution and trauma of foreign rule meaningful. The suffering of believers was transformed from an experience of inexplicable evil into the birth pangs of a new world. As I discussed in Chapter 3, apocalypticism, especially in its Savonarolan form, imposed a divine plot on the troubles of Florence and Italy. In a matter of days during November 1494, Florence witnessed the crumbling of the Medici regime and invasion by Charles VIII's forces. These were terrifying events whose outcomes seemed radically uncertain. Savonarola promised to give these events both a meaning and an end. He imagined Charles as a divine agent who would purge Florence of its sins and initiate the apocalypse described in Revelation.

Savonarola's genius lay in his ability to adapt this narrative to suit changing circumstances. When Charles and his forces left Florence intact, the friar claimed that this was proof of the city's elect status. While this narrative appealed to many, its promise of a spontaneous and peaceful transformation masked some important challenges. Building a stable spiritual republic proved to be difficult work that unleashed deep political tensions. Within four years of Charles's invasion, Savonarola had been executed as a heretic and Florence was once again at the mercy of factional conflict. Far from giving

the city's political difficulties a meaning and an end, Savonarolan apocalypticism likely made them worse.

Third, the apocalyptic imaginary holds out the seductive promise that difference, disagreement, and conflict can be eliminated. Daniel envisions a new order in which God gathers his people together to be ruled as one. All differences of race, nationality, and language will disappear. Similarly, John of Patmos promises that Jesus' faithful followers will receive new clothes and new names. Markers of individuality will be eliminated as the elect surrender to his transformative omnipotence. With difference and individuality abolished, "death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." If politics is defined in part by inescapable conflict and enduring differences, apocalypticism does not just promise an end to crisis and contingency. It promises the end of politics.

As we saw in Chapter 5, Hans Morgenthau diagnoses a secular variant of this hope in American liberal internationalism, which he thinks sees a final war for humanity as the prerequisite to a millennial democratic future. Underlying this seemingly attractive end, writes Morgenthau, is the fantasy of an escape from the political condition. He argues that this apocalyptic vision is at its most dangerous when the expected end fails to materialize. Then, the "final war" becomes the forerunner "of wars more destructive and extensive than any liberal epoch had witnessed." Some might say that Morgenthau's worries were vastly overstated. Others may find them disturbingly prescient. Our own conclusions will depend on an assessment of the wars that the United States has waged in the name of liberty and democracy over the past century.

We might easily conclude that a typically realist suspicion of utopian or idealist schemes insulates these thinkers from the dangers of apocalypticism, at least in its more hopeful expressions. After all, hopes about the end of the world carry utopian or idealist commitments to disturbing extremes. Frustrated with the limited gains of incremental progress toward a utopia or an ideal, apocalyptic enthusiasts anticipate a cataclysmic end to the

known world and a violent purging of its attendant evils.

However, there may be less obvious ways in which realists are especially vulnerable to the seductions of apocalypticism. Realists may struggle to remain faithful to a vision of politics as "an infinite process" from which there is no final exit. E. H. Carr suggests, not implausibly, that this view of politics "seems in the long run uncongenial or incomprehensible to the human mind. Every political thinker who wishes to make an appeal to his contemporaries is consciously or unconsciously led to posit a finite goal." Carr proposes that the thoroughgoing realist faces both psychological challenges and rhetorical barriers. Citing Machiavelli's *Prince* and the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as examples, Carr argues that these challenges account for a tendency of "realist" tracts to culminate in an appeal to an ultimate goal that assumes "the character of an apocalyptic vision [which] ... acquires an emotional, irrational appeal which realism itself cannot justify or explain." So, we might conclude that while its core commitments make political realism especially attuned to the dangers of apocalyptic thinking, the difficulties of being a thoroughgoing realist lead to unexpected vulnerabilities.

Considered together, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau develop two lines of response to apocalypticism that track this tension. The later Machiavelli and the earlier Morgenthau reject apocalypticism on normative grounds. They each turn toward a tragic worldview that insists on the limits of effective of political action and resists the allure of final solutions. We saw that Machiavelli only comes to this tragic position after having flirted with the apocalyptic imaginary in *The Prince*. His most famous work culminates in an apocalyptic exhortation because he fails to fulfill the opening promise of the book — to make the variability of politics intelligible and subject to mastery.

I find a more developed and tragic realism in the *Discourses*, where Machiavelli subjects apocalyptic hope to serious normative scrutiny. This extended engagement with the apocalyptic imaginary coincides with a maturation of his political realism from an ambitious project of intelligibility and

mastery in *The Prince* to the more modest but difficult attempt to cultivate a tragic wisdom in the *Discourses*.

The early Morgenthau responds to the secularized apocalyptic elements of liberal internationalism with a tragic stance that similarly insists on the inescapability of conflict and the limits to transformative politics. For Morgenthau, however, this tragic stance ultimately proves unable to confront the radical novelty of nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to the future of the world.

In the works of Hobbes and the late Morgenthau, we saw a different response to apocalypticism. Rather than turning away from it, Hobbes and the late Morgenthau redirect it. They fight apocalypse with apocalypse. That is, they redeploy apocalyptic images and rhetoric to get their audiences to imagine the end of the world in order to prevent it. Hobbes does this in two ways. In his scriptural argument, he offers a deflationary Christian eschatology that affirms important parts of the narratives of Daniel and Revelation while making apocalypticism safe for sovereign power and civil peace.

Hobbes's secular political argument borrows from the apocalyptic plot, casting the violence and unpredictability of the state of nature as the narrative prelude to an enduring commonwealth ruled by a mortal God. While he might have preferred to persuade the radicals and enthusiasts of his day with rational argument, he was also willing to burrow into the darker corners of the imagination.

Morgenthau adopts a similar strategy in response to the novel threat of nuclear weapons. He offers a terrifying account of an apocalypse without redemption to generate the salutary fear required to avert catastrophe. Both thinkers redirect the apocalyptic imaginary in the pursuit of aspirational projects. For Hobbes, this project is the creation of a stable Leviathan state that he hopes could endure for all time, while for Morgenthau it is the creation of a world state with a monopoly on nuclear violence. The hope that each has for his ambitious project rests uneasily with the core commitments of political realism.

Rejection and the Burdens of Tragedy

So far, I have refrained from any explicit normative evaluation of these two strategies of response. It is now time to turn to this task. The strategy of rejection — the move away from apocalypticism and toward tragedy — is consistent with realist commitments. The tragic worldview recognizes the difficulty of reaching settled solutions to our deepest disagreements. It resists apocalypticism's dangerous moral clarity about the means and ends of politics. It embraces an incrementalist view of politics as "the strong and slow boring through hard boards."

For these reasons, the tragic worldview is equipped to resist the seductions of apocalypticism. An example might help to draw out this point. Looking back on her own reaction to the post-9/11 rhetoric of the Bush administration, feminist theologian Catherine Keller remembers that she was troubled by what she took to be a dangerous apocalyptic certainty at its core. She detected a certainty about the direction of history, about who and what was evil, and about "our" goodness and "our" righteousness.

Like other forms of apocalyptic rhetoric, the discourse of the War on Terror seemed to target the features of the contemporary world that are valued by some and feared by others — its indeterminacy, ambiguity, and pluralism? Bush seemed certain about the direction of history when he proclaimed: "the untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world." He allowed for no moral ambiguity when he declared: "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." And he evinced a faith in America's righteousness when he described the country's mission as the defense of "freedom ... civilization ... and universal values."

Yet, on Keller's account, Bush and his supporters were not the only ones captured by the apocalyptic imaginary. Those most critical of the president's rhetoric and the policies it was meant to defend were also seduced by the apocalypse. She describes her own reaction:

Even the progressive U.S. response gets caught in the apocalyptic mirror-game. Chickens come home to roost: the real

cause is our policy in the Middle East, especially Israel, or the real cause is the global economy. While I heard myself in the initial shock laying these propositions on my students, and heard them echoing through my theological community, their indignant certainties rang hollow at ground zero. I needed something more difficult and honest than the monocausal explanations, the warmed-over and misfitting Vietnam-era slogans ... Indeed the very model of a monocausal explanation, with its linear predictability and its indignant certainty, echoes with the hoofbeats of secular apocalypse.

The "apocalyptic mirror-game" that Keller describes is a process in which those who most want to resist apocalyptic thinking are nonetheless drawn to it. In this diagnosis, Keller identifies the power of the apocalyptic imaginary — the profound hold it can have even over those who are trying to resist it.

Keller tries to disrupt this mirror-game by adopting what she calls a "counter-apocalyptic" position. This stance resists the linear temporality, righteous certainty, and totalizing violence of the apocalypse while attempting to preserve the radical political traditions of apocalypticism that value "disclosure, rather than final closure."

I think that the tragic sensibility of the late Machiavelli and early Morgenthau can cultivate this counter-apocalyptic stance. Tragedy encourages us to "doubt the providential image of time, reject the compensatory idea that humans can master all the forces that impinge upon life, [and] strive to cultivate wisdom about a world that is neither designed for our benefit nor plastic enough to be putty in our hands." The late Machiavelli and the early Morgenthau further demand that we resist the urge to turn away from our world. They ask us to shore up the resolution needed for political actions whose success is never guaranteed. They counsel us, as Max Weber does, to arm ourselves "with that steadfastness of heart which can brave even the crumbling of all hopes." Without such resolution, we "will not be able to achieve even that which is possible today."

Nevertheless, the turn to tragedy is not without difficulties and dangers. First, as we saw in chapter

5, Morgenthau's tragic realism seems to leave him ill-equipped to confront the radical novelty of nuclear weapons. The tragic world-view insists on a cyclical conception of political time. Politics is not "one damn thing after another." It is "one damn thing over and over." While this may strike us as bleak, there is optimism here. If we face the same kinds of conflicts and challenges again and again, then the past becomes a source of wisdom. Current challenges will always have historical analogs.

But tragedy's temporal commitments also make it suspicious of claims about radical novelty. The tragic worldview struggles to recognize or guide us through genuinely novel situations. This is one reason why Morgenthau might have turned away from tragedy and toward the apocalyptic imaginary to avert nuclear annihilation. Given its difficulty in coming to grips with novel threats, we might expect the tragic worldview to be similarly unhelpful today in orienting our response to, for example, global climate change. This is, after all, the most complex collective problem that humanity has ever faced.

Second, insofar as it is committed to a severe epistemic and practical humility about politics, the tragic worldview is vulnerable to a familiar charge that it amounts to an apology for the status quo. In the *Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli offers countless examples of thwarted political intentions and actions whose outcomes could hardly have been predicted. One plausible reading of these examples is that they are aimed at chastening political hubris. Expecting too much of politics is foolish. Promising a collective rebirth through the crucible of violence is potentially catastrophic. Morgenthau makes a similar argument. Let us assume that we can tame our drive to dominate. The complexity of our political world means that we will not be able reliably to control and anticipate the effects of our actions. For both thinkers, epistemic and practical humility about politics is a salutary bulwark against violent utopian and apocalyptic enthusiasm.

However, we can easily imagine how an insistence on the tragic limits of politics might engender a kind of paralysis. Consumed by the worry that our political actions will always escape our intentions,

we might fail to act at all. We might leave the status quo — however unjust — in place by default. Machiavelli and Morgenthau each try to resist this paralyzing conclusion. Machiavelli praises those who found and refound states knowing that they will eventually decay. Morgenthau commends statesmen who are able to recognize the tragic limits of politics but still manage to act. And yet the combination of epistemic modesty and political decisiveness that both thinkers celebrate seems to be more suited to a world of tragic heroes than one of ordinary humans.

Third, the tragic worldview may well impose deep burdens on those who hold it. Let me approach this point somewhat indirectly. In her attempt to craft "a virtue ethics framework for thinking about oppression," Lisa Tessman argues that the virtues required for liberatory struggle impede the flourishing of those who practice them. Compassion, she suggests, is such a virtue. It requires inviting the pain of others into our own lives, "being pained by their pain." When faced with suffering, "one's felt pain is part of the response to the other that constitutes the morally recommended responsive action." Yet this action may be so painful that it impedes the flourishing of the compassionate agent. For this reason, Tessman calls compassion a burdened virtue. If, as Tessman reasons, "the sufferings to which one is attentive were to be experienced firsthand, they would clearly qualify as the sorts of external conditions that could ruin an otherwise potentially flourishing life; the person who takes on these sufferings in a secondary way — and feels pain — becomes burdened too."

In a similar way, the tragic worldview is a burdened worldview. While it may, despite its limitations, be a morally appropriate response to the dangers of the apocalyptic imaginary, its insistence on a world so resistant to mastery, so unresponsive to virtuous intentions, so capricious in its rewards for goodness does not offer much consolation. It is a difficult worldview to hold without a painful reckoning and a hardening of the heart.

Redirection and the Politics of Fear
The strategy of redirection — using apocalypticism to fight its own most dangerous enthusiasms —

avoids these difficulties, but manages to generate new ones. This strategy is consistent with political realism's sensitivity to context. This sensitivity is grounded in realism's resistance to moralism and utopianism. Instead of formulating and applying abstract normative principles to particular cases, the realist attends to the actual complaints of particular people in specific circumstances.

As a matter of practical political intervention, this means that the realist must be attentive to the ways in which these complaints are understood and expressed. For instance, if they are expressed by appealing to apocalyptic imagery and rhetoric, this is a fact to which the realist should be sensitive. The strategy of redirection, which attends to and incorporates elements of the apocalyptic imaginary, displays this kind of practical and pragmatic sensitivity.

There may also be cases in which an appeal to apocalyptic imagery and rhetoric is a morally appropriate response. Avoiding nuclear war and averting the worst effects of global climate change may be two such cases. These are particular kinds of catastrophes that pose unique motivational challenges.

Both are prospective catastrophes. That is, they are the kind of catastrophes that, given existing patterns of human activity, we have reason to think could or will arise in the future and that pose an existential threat. They are catastrophes with the potential to bring about human extinction or, at the very least, to radically alter the character of human existence in profoundly undesirable ways.

Prospective catastrophes present us with a unique set of challenges. Because the catastrophe is prospective, we can put it out of our minds. In contrast to a contemporary or ongoing catastrophe, "the act of thinking about it is always voluntary, and the choice of not thinking about it is always available." Because the catastrophe is gigantic in its scope, we have difficulty imagining its effects. We are, as Günther Anders notes, "incapable of mentally realizing the realities which we ourselves have produced." Prospective catastrophes are difficult to visualize because they lack imaginative analogs. While some of their likely effects (e.g., widespread radiation sickness, droughts, and

floods) have been experienced before, both the vastly increased scale and interaction of these effects mean that imagining prospective catastrophes requires "thinking about the unthinkable."

Yet this thinking is essential if we are to meet the challenges posed by these looming catastrophes. To the extent that we cannot properly conceive of the devastation wrought by nuclear war or global climate change or the part that we might play in bringing either about, avoiding honest confrontations with questions of moral responsibility and guilt becomes much easier. The imaginative challenges of prospective catastrophes enable dangerous forms of denial.

In the nuclear case, this denial took the form of optimism about the capacity to survive and even thrive after a nuclear attack. At its most extreme, nuclear denial held out hope for some kind of redemption through destruction. I have argued that Morgenthau's turn toward a strategy of redirection can be read as a response to these dangerous tendencies.

In the case of global climate change, individual and collective denial have centered on challenging scientific and expert claims about the existence, causes, and likely effects of the phenomenon. The most powerful instances of global climate change denial have come from organized and well-funded movements whose goal is to generate epistemological and scientific doubt. A different but ultimately complementary strategy has been to accept the scientific findings on climate change but to challenge the seriousness of the problem or the priority of its mitigation relative to other policy goals. These challenges and questions have been amplified by a media environment where the norm of balanced reporting has given members of the denial movement an amount of time and airspace vastly disproportionate to the balance of evidence on the issue.

Given the kinds of difficulties that attend prospective catastrophes, it may be that a strategy of apocalyptic redirection is, all things considered, the most appropriate response. In Chapter 5, we saw that one way to interpret Morgenthau's strategy of redirection is as a self-defeating

prophecy — an attempt to cast a nuclear apocalypse as a certain future, but with the hope of escaping this horrifying end. There may well be a good case to be made that such a strategy is also appropriate in other cases of prospective catastrophe as well.

To see how the strategy might be used, let us revisit an example we saw in the introductory chapter. In Davis Guggenheim's *An Inconvenient Truth*, which was marketed as "the most terrifying film you will ever see," Al Gore shows viewers a particularly devastating set of images of communities, neighborhoods, and landscapes annihilated by "natural" disasters. These images visually perform the task of Hobbes's and Morgenthau's apocalyptic rhetoric. They are metonyms at once of our common worldly life and of its annihilation. Pausing briefly to allow the viewer to take in the force of these images, Gore then notes that they are "like a nature hike through the book of Revelations [sic]."

There is little doubt that, for Gore, the fear elicited by the apocalyptic imaginary is a salutary one. With distinct echoes of Morgenthau, Gore suggests:

Today, there are dire warnings that the worst catastrophe in the history of human civilization is bearing down on us, gathering strength as it comes ... The tragedy of Hurricane Katrina ... as horrible as it was, may have been the first sip of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us over and over again until we act on the truth we have wished would go away ... This crisis is bringing us an opportunity to experience what few generations in history ever have the privilege of knowing: a generational mission; the exhilaration of a compelling moral purpose; a shared and unifying cause; the thrill of being forced by circumstances to put aside the pettiness and conflict that so often stifle the restless human need for transcendence; the opportunity to rise.

We can discern several familiar moves here. First, Gore casts the prospective catastrophe of climate change as both an imminent and a contemporary problem. It is "bearing down on us, gathering strength as it comes." This catastrophe, he notes earlier, "could be set in motion in the lifetime of children already living — unless we act boldly and

quickly ... We are in grave danger of crossing a point of no return within the next 10 years!"

Second, Gore makes the catastrophic potential of global climate change more vivid by invoking a terrifying contemporary analog — the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, "the first sip of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us over and over again." Beyond echoing Winston Churchill's condemnation of Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy, the language of "proffered cups" calls to mind the bowls of God's wrath in Revelation. Like Morgenthau, Gore gestures to the totalizing imaginative analog of the Holocaust when he compares the gathering storm of ecological devastation to the "evil threat posed by the Nazis."

Third, also like Morgenthau, Gore discerns in the looming threat of global climate change a transcendent and unifying purpose. It is an opportunity that must compel us to "put aside ... the pettiness and conflict" of everyday politics and "to rise." For Morgenthau, the looming threat of nuclear annihilation was, if rightly imagined, capable of making individuals conscious of their shared humanity, allowing them to overcome the conflicts, differences, and particularities that normally defined the political condition. Gore's apocalyptic framing of climate change seems to rest on a similar set of connections. Rightly imagined, the looming threat of climate change will be an opportunity to put aside the petty conflicts of everyday politics and acknowledge a "compelling moral purpose."

Gore, like Morgenthau, uses apocalyptic images to elicit a salutary fear. Political uses of fear have been criticized as fear mongering. This is not what either Morgenthau or Gore seem to be doing. To see why, consider a clear case of fear mongering — the discourse on crime in the United States during the 1990s. Despite a dramatic drop in violent crime starting at the beginning of the decade, the evening news throughout the 1990s was perpetually punctuated with murders and warnings by pundits about the rise of dangerous young "super-predators." It is estimated that between 1990 and 1998 there was a 600 percent increase in American network news stories on

murder. Most Americans are still not aware of the declining trends in violent crime.

This sort of fear mongering relies on predictable patterns of human bias. A recent and easily recalled news story or an emotionally intense invocation of violent crime causes many of us to overestimate the frequency of such events. We will then be more likely to support tougher laws on violent crime. Fear mongering prevents an unbiased evaluation of the risk of crime and encourages support for bad policies.

However, cultivating apocalyptic fears of nuclear war or climate change is not fear mongering in this sense. Morgenthau tried to elicit a salutary fear of nuclear war in order to correct for irrational denial of the threat. In the case of climate change, many are similarly subject to cognitive biases and motivated reasoning that cause them either to ignore or underestimate this global risk. Morgenthau and Gore are not trying to elicit irrational biases; they are trying to cultivate rational fears.

So, evoking apocalyptic fear may be an appropriate response to prospective catastrophes such as nuclear war and global climate change. Yet the strategy is still politically risky. As we have seen throughout this book, apocalypticism resists efforts to contain, tame, and successfully redirect its powerful rhetoric and imagery. Despite the efforts of early Christians such as Paul and church fathers such as Augustine to discipline and redirect the political radicalism of apocalypticism, the imaginary has continued to reemerge as a challenge to sovereign power. While Savonarola tried to deploy apocalypticism in the service of a new republican order in Renaissance Florence, this same imaginary was eventually used to condemn the friar himself as Antichrist.

Similarly, in seventeenth-century England, the apocalypticism that had supported sovereign and ecclesiastical power in the sixteenth century became the basis for a radical challenge, less than a hundred years later. Once loosed upon the world, the rich imaginative and semiotic resources of the apocalypse have consistently proven difficult to control. We have little reason to think that similar

dangers would not attend strategic attempts to redeploy the apocalyptic imaginary today.

Beyond acknowledging the difficulty of controlling it, we have good reason to worry that the apocalyptic imaginary leads to three dangerous political postures. The first and most dangerous response is a full-throated embrace of the apocalyptic worldview, one that divides the world into good and evil, vilifies opponents, and pushes the battle for ultimate justice to its violent consummation. This cosmic vision animated the European wars of religion and the English Civil War. Today, its main champion is ISIS.

The remaining postures are less explosive but perhaps more likely. The second response is to withdraw from participation in politics, as John of Patmos encouraged early Christians to do. Those who care about the fate of their souls must not be complicit with evil, he cautions. Christians who accepted this counsel were left with no option but to give up on their political world and await the New Jerusalem. The problem with this focus on the imminent afterlife is that any number of more mundane injustices may go unchecked in the meantime.

The third posture is resignation. The world is going to hell, concludes the apocalyptic believer, but there is nothing to be done. This is a common reaction to apocalyptic images in the climate change debate. While these images make the prospective catastrophe more salient, they tend to decrease people's sense of efficacy. Instead of rousing people to action, these calamitous warnings leave them defeated and disengaged. Faced with terrifying and often overtly apocalyptic representations of the effects of climate change, many are inclined to conclude — not entirely without good reason — that any actions they can take will be futile.

Do these risks mean that the strategy of apocalyptic redirection should be abandoned entirely? We need not be so hasty. In cases of prospective catastrophe, our judgment about the strategy of redirection must hinge on how effectively it helps us avert the unwanted end while guarding against the risk of perverse apocalyptic politics.

In the end, much of the normative work of political realism is about cultivating the art of living through catastrophe without apocalyptically surrendering to it. The experiences of the thinkers in this book suggest that, regardless of the strategy one ultimately adopts, this is a practice to which one must repeatedly recommit without any reliable hope of success. <>

[Joseph Albo on Free Choice: Exegetical Innovation in Medieval Jewish Philosophy](#) by Shira Weiss [Oxford University Press, 9780190684426]

Scripture is replete with narratives that challenge a variety of philosophical concepts; including morality, divine benevolence, and human freedom. Free choice, a significant and much debated concept in medieval philosophy, continues to be of great interest to contemporary philosophers and others. However, scholarship in biblical studies has primarily focused on compositional history, philology, and literary analysis, not on the examination of the philosophy implied in biblical texts.

In this book, Shira Weiss focuses on the Hebrew Bible's encounter with the philosophical notion of free choice, as interpreted by the fifteenth-century Spanish Jewish philosopher Joseph Albo in one of the most popular Hebrew works in the corpus of medieval Jewish philosophy: Albo's *Examining narratives commonly interpreted as challenging human freedom--the Binding of Isaac, the Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart, the Book of Job, and God's Choice of Israel--Albo puts forward innovative arguments that preserve the concept of free choice in these texts.*

Despite the popularity of *The Book of Principles*, Albo has been commonly dismissed as an unoriginal thinker. As a result, argues Weiss, the major original contribution of his philosophy--his theory of free choice as explained in unique exegetical interpretations--has been overlooked. This book casts new light on Albo by demonstrating both the central importance of his views on free choice in his philosophy and the creative ways in which they are presented.

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Philosophical originality can be uncovered in the unique individual interpretations of biblical narrative found in Joseph Albo's *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* (Book of Principles), one of the most popular Hebrew works within the corpus of medieval Jewish philosophy. Several of Albo's exegetical analyses focus on free choice, which emerges as a conceptual scheme throughout his work, though he does not consistently expand upon his views of choice in the same way in each reference. These isolated expositions have heretofore been overlooked, since ingenuity can be detected in a biblical exposition in one chapter, though not similarly developed in other places in the work that recount more traditional and familiar readings. An exploration of Albo's innovative exegetical interpretations reveals his libertarian views, which were significant during a historical period of religious coercion. Free choice was an important topic, subject to vehement debate in the medieval era in which Albo lived, and it continues to be relevant as contested in modern analytic philosophy.

Recent scholarship has similarly identified Albo's originality, but also a lack of systematic consistency, in his individual discussions of philosophical concepts.¹ For instance, Albo's unique concept of time as an "imagined flow" (*ha-meshekh ha-medumeh*) is described in *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* II.18, but it is not mentioned elsewhere in his book, nor is it supported by his discussions of physics.² Similarly, Albo's theory of passionate love (*hesheq*), which he innovatively defines as reasonless love, is developed in *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* III.37, but it is not

referred to in other discussions of love throughout the book.¹ Albo's unique concept of repentance, which reflects Aristotle's influence, is consistently presented in Sefer ha-`Iqqarim IV.27, but it is not mentioned elsewhere, nor is it supported by the other chapters in which he deals with the topic of repentance.

Albo's brilliance and originality as a philosophical darshan (homilist) is reflected in his confrontation between scriptural text and philosophical theory as he develops his philosophical conceptions in the course of his creative derash (homiletical interpretation). Though the explicit objective of his Sefer ha-`Iqqarim is to provide an explication of dogma to meet the needs of his persecuted coreligionists, he integrates homilies that convey theological lessons within his discussions of principles of faith, as he attempts to defend the authenticity of Judaism and create a uniform set of Jewish doctrine. While he did not aspire to compose a biblical commentary, his use of exegetical interpretations of biblical episodes throughout his work effectively provides a vivid and accessible understanding of complex philosophical ideas. His focus on free choice in many of his creative and original biblical expositions demonstrates the significance of the philosophical concept, even though he does not offer a uniform explanation of his views on choice in each reference. Homiletical interpretations that recur frequently throughout a work indicate issues central to the preacher's self-conception and his perception of the challenges of his historical environment. Albo's focus on free choice—a concept that was highly debated in the medieval world and had added significance in his generation—connects many different discussions throughout Sefer ha-`Iqqarim and is a prominent part of his work, which reflects ingenuity. Through different exegetical contexts, Albo is able to articulate his conception of free choice as it relates to love, repentance, and providence. While Albo incorporates aspects of his predecessors' and contemporaries' philosophy into his own position, his originality can be detected in the way in which he advances an understanding of theological issues in general, and the concept of free choice in particular, through his creative interpretation of

difficult biblical stories. Thus, Albo innovatively utilizes the Bible as a source that demonstrates the philosophical truth of free choice.

However, the embedding of his originality in exegetical interpretation contributes to the lack of systematization in the work, and to critics' perception of Albo as an unoriginal philosopher.¹ Since Albo is interested in the homiletic or philosophic meaning of the Bible and strives to interpret the text in a novel or creative way, one verse leads him to one interpretation, while another verse leads him to a different interpretation. His work, therefore, may lack conceptual consistency, as criticized in modern scholarship. Whereas Albo was an extraordinary philosophic homilist and perceptive thinker, he was not a systematic thinker. Even his well-known theory of natural law appears at the beginning of the Sefer ha-`Iqqarim,¹ but it is not elaborated upon in any systematic way in the rest of the work. Since he does not systematically or comprehensively develop his philosophical opinions throughout his work, his conception of free choice, a topic that was particularly significant to his persecuted generation during a historical period of religious coercion, must be pieced together from disparate remarks, as he creatively interprets biblical episodes, including stories that seem to deny free will, in a manner that asserts the existence and importance of free choice. Biblical narratives commonly understood as challenging human freedom, such as the binding of Isaac, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the Book of Job, and God's choice of Israel, are innovatively interpreted by Albo to preserve free choice. The significance of human freedom in his worldview is further demonstrated in his sole surviving responsum, in which he highlights the philosophical concept and its impact on his halakhic ruling.

Albo's Delineation of a Hierarchy of Dogma

Albo may have been motivated to compose such a philosophical work, even though Maimonides had already delineated thirteen articles of faith, because Maimonides made no mention of such a creed in his philosophical work, the Guide of the Perplexed, which was written for the intellectually elite, but rather included his dogma in his

Commentary on the Mishnah in an attempt to prevent the uneducated masses of his time from arriving at erroneous theological conceptions. Albo may have felt it necessary to focus on a comprehensive explanation of Jewish dogma and related concepts in a philosophical text that reflected and expanded upon the influence of Maimonides and others.

Albo enumerates the three general 'iqqarim (principles) of all divine law, distinctive from natural and conventional law without which divine law could not exist: Existence of God, Revelation, and Retribution. Albo's delineation reflects the influence of his contemporary Simeon ben Zemah Duran (1361-444), who lists the same three essential beliefs in his philosophical work, *Oheb Mishpat*:

The fundamental principles are three and no more. Belief in God and what follows [from that Belief] is one principle. [The consequences of this principle are:] existence, unity, eternity a parte ante, incorporeality, and that one ought to worship God and no other. Belief in the Torah and the necessary corollary beliefs constitute one principle, which is that God, through the intermediation of the Separate Intellects, causes a divine overflow to extend to those who cleave to Him so that they become prophets of various ranks. Included in the principle are four [derivative] principles: prophecy, Mosaic prophecy, Torah from heaven, and that the Torah will never be changed or altered, for divine activity is perfect, enduring, and eternal. Belief in retribution and its necessary corollary beliefs constitute one principle which is that God knows the deeds of men and rewards and punishes them according to their deeds.... Included in this principle are four [derivative] principles: God's knowledge and retribution, the coming of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead.

Duran essentially divides Maimonides' principles into three hierarchical categories, in which his derivative principles comprise the remaining ten Maimonidean principles. Duran maintains that the individual achieves a share in the World to Come through purity of the soul and observance of all of the divine commandments. His delineation of three

fundamental beliefs aims to group all of the revealed beliefs around what he considers to be three essential themes of the Jewish religion. Duran, like Albo, conceives of his principles as chapter headings introducing the entire traditional divine law. Albo uses the same three categories, but reworks Maimonides' delineation in a new way.

Albo's three principles can be traced back further to Averroes' *Decisive Treatise on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*:

Acknowledgement of God, Blessed and Exalted, of the prophetic missions, and of happiness and misery in the next life; for these three principles are attainable by the three classes of indication, by which everyone without exception can come to assent to what he is obliged to know: I mean the rhetorical, dialectical and demonstrative indications.

Although Averroes influenced Albo's derivation of the three basic dogmas from the concept of revelation, unlike in *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim*, Averroes' conception has no exclusive significance, since he believes that prophecy was a widespread natural occurrence, and therefore that the many historic faiths are all of divine origin. Albo, by contrast, argues that only Judaism achieves the three criteria necessary to constitute authentic divine law.

According to Albo, the criteria for a believer are not solely acceptance of the three principles, but also include the derivative principles, *shoreshim* (roots) that follow from them. From Albo's first 'iqqar, Existence of God, are derived: God's Unity, Incorporeality, Independence from Time, and Freedom from Defects. From his second *iqqar*, Revelation, are derived: God's Knowledge, Prophecy, and Authenticity of God's Messenger. From his third 'iqqar, Reward and Punishment, is derived: Divine Providence. In addition to the three fundamental and eight derivative principles of divine legislation, Albo specifies six dogmas of lesser-status 'anafim (branches), which must be believed by every Jew: Creation ex nihilo, Superiority of the Prophet Moses, Immutability of Torah, Human Perfection can be achieved by any one of the Torah's commandments, Resurrection and Messiah.

Several of the *`anafim* were anti-Christian in their intent and may reflect the influence of Albo's hostile times. For instance, belief in the immutability of the Torah enabled Jews to counteract the Christian claim that Christianity superseded the Jewish tradition and the New Testament had supplanted the Torah. Belief in the coming of the Messiah allowed Jews to counteract the Christian claim of the past arrival of the Messiah.

Kadish argues that the overall preoccupation with the principles of the Torah in Jewish philosophy and the development of hierarchical systems began with, and was the hallmark of, Gerondi's school. Albo's hierarchical structure of dogma reflects the influence of his teacher, Crescas, and his fellow disciple, Rabbi Abraham ben Judah, author of *Arba'ah Turim* (Four Rows), which was composed in 1378, prior to Albo's composition, as well as his contemporary, Duran.

While Albo seems to assert the fundamental nature of free choice on numerous occasions, integrated in philosophical exegesis within the delineation of his hierarchical system of dogma, he, like Maimonides, does not enumerate it as an essential principle of divine law, since free choice is not exclusive to divine law, but pertains to conventional law as well. Conventional legal codes are founded on justice, rewarding and punishing the individual on the basis of his free decisions. Divine law similarly presupposes freedom:

Freedom is not a principle of divine law as divine; it is a principle of divine law by virtue of being a principle of all human acts and conventions and of legal customs by which a political community is kept in order and without which it cannot exist.... Though freedom is an essential dogma in divine law, it is not a principle thereof in so far as it is divine.

Although Albo does not identify free choice as an *`iqqar*, he does assert the Torah's allusion to freedom—"See I have set before you this day life . . . therefore choose life"—in order to refute those deterministic opinions that deny free choice. These, Albo argues, are "obviously unsound, because they nullify all human acts and human purpose, not to speak of undermining all laws." Albo explicitly states his agreement with

Maimonides' assertion of human freedom while maintaining belief in divine omniscience, a topic of significant debate among Albo's predecessors. Duran also asserts that humanity is endowed with freedom of choice.

Despite numerous innovations, Albo's delineation of dogma does not oppose the systems of his predecessors, but rather reflects their significant influence. In fact, he writes how his three *iqqarim* can be viewed as a condensed version of Maimonides' thirteen:

It may be that Maimonides has the same idea concerning the number of fundamental principles as the one we have just indicated, and that his list consists of the three chief principles that we have mentioned, plus the derivative dogmas issuing from them, all of which he calls principles.

While Albo may have been in general agreement with Maimonides, he does take issue with some particulars:

The question still remains, however, why he [Maimonides] did not include under existence of God life and power and other attributes, seeing that he included eternity and other attributes. The same criticism applies to the dogmas he derives from the other fundamental principles.

Albo takes into consideration all thirteen of Maimonides' articles of faith, but places them into three categories of descending rank. Albo's first *`iqqar*, the Existence of God, and its derivative principles parallel Maimonides' first five principles. His shresh of freedom from defects is implied in Maimonides' fifth principle that God alone should be worshipped. Albo excludes from his *`iqqarim* and shreshim Maimonides' seventh principle of the superiority of Moses' prophecy and the ninth principle of the immutability of Torah, because he does not consider them to be essential to divine law, but rather like branches (*`anafim*) issuing from the belief in the authenticity of a prophet's mission. Unlike Maimonides, Albo includes God's knowledge in his shreshim, since he argues that if God does not know the world, prophecy and the Torah could not have been revealed to humanity. Additionally, unlike Maimonides, Albo does not consider the

Messiah or the Resurrection of the Dead to be essential to divine law. He excludes them from his 'iqqarim as a response to the Christian affirmation during the Tortosa Disputation that the Messiah had already come. Albo responded to his opponent, de Santa Fe, in the disputation: "Even if it were proven to me that the Messiah had already come, I would not consider myself a worse Jew for all that." Although not a fundamental principle of divine law, Albo does regard belief in the Messiah, similar to creation ex nihilo, as a dogma that "it behooves every one professing a divine law to believe."

Though Albo does not consider the 'anafim to be essential to divine law, he does regard them as critical for Jewish law, and denial of any therefore constitutes heresy and loss of one's portion in the World to Come. Therefore, he concludes that he is in general agreement with Maimonides' conception of dogma, even though he disagrees with various details.

Regarding such details, Albo differs from Maimonides not only in the number of obligatory beliefs, but also in the status of his tenets. Maimonides taught that anyone who does not accept any one of his thirteen articles of faith is punished by being deprived of a share in the World to Come. His rationale behind the harsh punishment was to motivate the masses to acknowledge these cognitive beliefs, the integral prerequisites for the intellectual perfection necessary for the afterlife. As a result, even an individual who mistakenly arrives at a false belief that contradicts one of the Thirteen Principles is subject to such punishment, as he would be intellectually unprepared for existence in the World to Come. Albo rejects Maimonides' position with regard to accidental heretics and argues for a less intellectual approach in which intentions are considered.

Albo, echoing Duran's position on accidental heresy, considers an individual who was led to a belief that violates an 'iqqar as guilty of error and in need of forgiveness, but not a heretic who deserves to be punished. Since human rational capacity is limited, he argues that an individual who is accidentally misled by his speculation to a misinterpretation of a principle is considered among the pious and simply

needs to atone for his error. Albo elaborates upon four ways that an accidental heretic may arrive at his erroneous beliefs:

When he undertakes to investigate these matters with his reason and scrutinizes the texts, [he] is misled by his speculation and interprets a given principle otherwise than it is taken to mean at first sight; or denies the principle because he thinks that it does not represent a sound theory which the Torah obliges us to believe; or erroneously denies that a given belief is a fundamental principle, which, however, he believes as he believes the other dogmas of the Torah which are not fundamental principles; or entertains a certain notion in relation to one of the miracles of the Torah because he thinks that he is not thereby denying any of the doctrines which it is obligatory upon us to believe by the authority of the Torah. A person of this sort is not an unbeliever. He is classed with the sages and pious men of Israel, though he holds erroneous theories. His sin is due to error and requires atonement.

Albo brings support for his view from Rabbi Abraham ben David of Posquieres, who, in his glosses on Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, rejects Maimonides' opinion that one who, due to insufficient knowledge, interprets biblical texts literally and arrives at belief in a corporeal God is to be considered a heretic. Albo's lenient attitude toward unintentional heresy seems consistent with his view on the limits of human rationality. After all, if he argues that the human mind is limited, how can he then condemn those who arrive at false beliefs due to speculative errors? Additionally, Albo's ruling of an accidental heretic may reflect the mood of his generation. As a public religious preacher and political leader, Albo was trying to dissuade the oppressed Jewish community from succumbing to the pressures of the Christians. Albo may have wanted to articulate to those who had been persuaded or coerced by other religions that they have the free choice to repent, and that the erroneous beliefs to which they may have been led do not constitute heresy.

Albo's deviation from Maimonides' extreme rationalism, which emphasized the role of theoretical speculation over other religious values,

was characteristic of the end of the Middle Ages. Late medieval Jewish philosophers were deeply involved in defending "conservative" theistic doctrines expressed in rabbinic tradition in an effort to combat the attacks of Christian theologians and the criticism of radical philosophers at the time. In search of philosophical confirmation of their theistic doctrines, fifteenth-century Jewish philosophers, such as Albo, returned to the less radical, more moderate rationalistic conclusions of many earlier medieval Jewish philosophers, such as Saadia Gaon and Judah Halevi, in their defense of Judaism. Albo and his philosophical contemporaries stress the limits of human knowledge and object to the Maimonidean notions that rational speculation constitutes the purpose of

Torah and can lead an individual to human success and perfection. Instead, Albo argues that faith, performance of commandments, proper intention, and fear of God,—not intellectual development—can merit the reward of miracles, divine union, immortality," and prophecy. Whereas Aristotle (and thus Maimonides) argues that the (unaided) individual can develop his intellect to grasp theoretical truths, which is the ultimate human end, Albo argues that the human intellect's limited capacity requires divine law to guide the individual both to proper truth and conduct. Albo rejects Aristotle's and Maimonides' conclusion that human perfection is defined in intellectual terms, since, he argues, such perfection would not be attainable by the majority of humanity, whose lives would then be in vain. God, he asserts, would never make the desired purpose of humanity only achievable by a small minority. Thus, according to Albo, individuals of every intellectual capacity have the ability to reach spiritual perfection; after all, the entire nation of Israel achieved prophecy at Mount Sinai.

While fifteenth-century Jewish philosophers in Spain opposed the radical (Aristotelian) trends that had emerged from southern French and Iberian Jewish philosophers, they were unwilling, despite their theologically conservative leanings, to adopt an antirationalist approach that denied the propriety of philosophical study, as advocated by Christian theologians. Albo felt the need to deviate from the extreme views that emerged from the Maimonidean school, which brought him closer to

the position that blurs the distinction between Judaism and other religions. However, the need to oppose Christian thought returned him closer to the Aristotelianism of Maimonides. Thus, Albo integrates a dialectical approach in *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim*, as he attempts to deviate from Maimonides' focus on rationalism, while also opposing the irrationality of Christianity.

Such dual objectives are not unique to Albo. They are also espoused by his (theologically conservative) teacher, Hasdai Crescas, albeit in two separate works. In *Or Adonai* (Light of the Lord), Crescas consistently challenges Aristotelian metaphysics and the Maimonidean view of rationality, as he attempts to replace Maimonides' *Guide* with a less radical theological work that suits the needs of his generation. Yet in his anti-Christian polemical work, *Bittul 'Iqqare Ha-Nozrim* (The Refutation of the Christian Principles), Crescas utilizes Aristotelian arguments to attack the irrationality of Christian theology.

Following his teacher's model, Albo also develops a theology that deviates from radical rationalism, as well as a philosophical polemical treatise, but incorporates both within his *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim*, in which his rational polemical critique of Christianity (III.35) is at the heart of his theological work.

Numerous points within the *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* in which Albo departs from Maimonidean dogma reflect Crescas' influence. In *Or Adonai*, Crescas, as an anti-Aristotelian opponent of Maimonides, develops his own list of dogma and criticizes Maimonides for neglecting to distinguish between fundamental and derivative tenets. Crescas modifies Maimonides' enumeration of dogma influential among the Jewish masses in a religiously precarious period, and continue to impact Jewish philosophy today.

Even though *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* contains several remarkable discussions of free choice, they have been overlooked and neglected by scholars precisely because they are dispersed throughout the book and are not systematically presented. I intend to examine these diverse discussions and to present Albo's view on free choice in a coherent manner. Through an analysis of his innovative interpretations of biblical narratives previously

interpreted as challenging human free choice, such as the binding of Isaac, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the Book of Job, and the divine choice of Israel, Albo's views on free choice can be uncovered and criticisms regarding his supposed lack of originality as a philosopher can be refuted. Such individual homiletical discussions within the Sefer ha-'Iqqarim reflect Albo's ingenuity as he preaches to the persecuted in his generation.

The significance of the concept of free choice to Albo, however, is not only evident from his philosophical work, but figures prominently in his halakhic writing as well. As the rabbinic authority in Daroca, in addition to his role as preacher and philosopher, Albo also served as halakhic decisor for his community. In his only surviving responsum, Albo demonstrates the essential Torah value of free choice, as he does repeatedly in his philosophy, further illustrating his unique perspective and the pervasive nature of freedom within his entire worldview.

Albo's theory of free choice can be gleaned essentially from principles found in various isolated references throughout Sefer ha-'Iqqarim, each of which is presented in the context of biblical texts that further illustrate his philosophical analysis. Each principle will be introduced here and then further analyzed in the subsequent chapters of this study. In III.36, amid a discussion of the nature of love, Albo defines a free act as that which the agent, at the time of doing the act, was able to do the opposite without prevention, yet chose to do the act. Albo describes true love as free and uncaused by reason, and accordingly interprets the Bible's unusual word *hesheg* as characterizing God's reasonless choice to love Israel although He could have chosen a more righteous or numerous people. Additionally within the chapter, Albo describes humans' love for God as exemplified by Abraham at the binding of Isaac, who was regarded as "Abraham, My Lover," because he acted freely with no other purpose in mind than to do the will of God whom he loved.

In a later reference, in IV.5, Albo clarifies misconceptions about the nature of free choice. He explains that some actions are determined, others are due to absolute free will, and others are a

combination of both, yet people often ignorantly misattribute the source of their acts. Albo interprets the different views articulated and rebuked in the Book of Job to refute such misperception and elucidate the true nature of choice, justice, and human responsibility. While other medieval philosophers and exegetes associate the characters in the biblical dialogue with different theories of divine providence, Albo uniquely identifies the diverse opinions of Job and his friends with various positions within the free will debate, further illustrating his own perspective on the philosophical topic.

In two discussions pertaining to the concept of repentance, Albo clarifies that free choice is a necessary criterion in order to achieve forgiveness. In his distinction between repentance out of love and repentance out of fear in IV.25, Albo subdivides repentance out of fear to differentiate between "repentance out of fear of God," which is achieved due to free choice and conveys a general awe of God as the source of both reward and punishment, from "repentance out of fear of punishment" in which the affliction of the punishment coerces the sufferer to submit in repentance. Albo concludes that repentance requires freedom, and thus that one who is coerced by fear of punishment does not merit forgiveness. Albo then characterizes Pharaoh as such a penitent and creatively interprets God's hardening of his heart as strengthening the king's fortitude to withstand the debilitating pressures of the plagues in order to make a free choice whether or not to truly repent out of fear of God. Since Pharaoh only expressed remorse when compelled by the plagues, but refused to liberate his slaves when relieved from his suffering, Albo deduces that Pharaoh received just divine retribution for his failure to repent sincerely.

In a subsequent chapter (IV.27), which deals with the way in which repentance benefits the penitent, Albo reaffirms that only that which is done voluntarily and out of free will deserves praise or blame, and further develops his notion of free choice. As in III.36, Albo defines a voluntary act as requiring the agent to know at the time of the act that he is doing it, and desires to do it in preference to something else. Albo revisits the three

categories delineated in IV.5 and discusses the difficulty of classifying acts that are a combination of compulsion and freedom and the praise or blame associated with them. For instance, if an agent acts out of fear of violence at the hands of strong men, the act would be deemed necessary. However, if the act is such that one should endure pain rather than do it, it would be considered voluntary and the agent would be blameworthy. Albo here adds another criterion to his previous definition of a voluntary act, an element that was not required by Albo's influence, Aristotle, that the agent desires to maintain the act after it is done, or desires it to have been done, even if at the beginning of the act there was some element of compulsion.

Albo's conception of free choice is further illustrated through his creative homiletical interpretations, which preserve human freedom in biblical narrative by fulfilling the criteria delineated in IV.27, namely, choosing freely among alternatives, acting consciously, and desiring to maintain the act. In his exposition of the binding of Isaac, Albo describes how Abraham was praised by God for his willingness to carry out the divine command to sacrifice his son, since Abraham achieved Albo's three requirements for which an individual is deserving of praise. Abraham acted voluntarily and desired to obey God's command. With no compulsion, Abraham chose to offer Isaac, in preference to the alternative of sparing his beloved son by disobeying God's call to sacrifice. Abraham acted knowingly and consciously at the time of the *'aqedah* and not in a passionate trance in which he was unaware of what he was about to do. As a result of the binding, Abraham is blessed for not withholding his cherished offspring from God and demonstrates no regret or misgiving in the text about what he was prepared to do.

Albo's interpretation of the divine hardening of Pharaoh's heart similarly fulfills Albo's criteria of free choice. Pharaoh exercised choice, since he had the ability to free the Israelites or refuse their liberation. The Egyptian king acted knowingly at the time of his refusals. Pharaoh's desire to maintain his previous choices to keep the Israelites enslaved was evident by his pursuit of them into the wilderness following their exodus. Due to the

compulsion of the debilitating effect of the plagues at the beginning of the narrative, God hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to preserve his choice by giving him the fortitude to withstand his afflictions. When afforded opportunities to repent sincerely, Pharaoh, time and again, freely and knowingly refused to acknowledge the divine source of his suffering and persisted in his denial of Moses' requests. Thus, Pharaoh was held morally responsible, blameworthy, and punishable, since he acted voluntarily and knowingly in continuously choosing to keep the Israelites enslaved, even though he is given many occasions to free them throughout the narrative. Had God not hardened his heart, Pharaoh would not have been blamed for his choice, since his decision would be considered involuntary (*me-hekhrach ha-ones*) due to the compulsion of the plagues. Pharaoh would have released the Israelites in order to rid himself of his suffering, but such a decision would not have been an exercise of choice, nor a knowing act, and he would not have later desired the act to have been done, since he was no longer experiencing the coercive effect of the plagues.

Albo's interpretation of the Book of Job also demonstrates his notion of choice. Albo associates the different views espoused by the characters of the biblical text with different opinions regarding necessity and choice. Due to his suffering, Job consciously chose to rid himself of his earlier attribution of humanity's good and evil fortunes to the determination of the heavenly bodies, in preference of the attribution to punishment, human choice, and a combination of the two, implying that even the category of that which seems compelled is a result of human free actions. When initially afflicted, Job did not serve God out of perfect love, but rather out of fear of reward and punishment, and, as a result, was unable to bear his suffering with equanimity. Like Pharaoh, Job had free choice whether or not to internalize the divine message of his suffering and serve God sincerely. By the end of the narrative, Job was ultimately deserving of praise and divine providence, as he fulfilled Albo's criteria, since, voluntarily and of his own free will, Job transformed his perception of necessity and choice and regretted his earlier misconception.

Albo develops his notion of choice most radically in his discussion of love, and it is within such a context that he innovatively interprets God's love for Israel, again reflecting the three requirements of his nuanced philosophical position on choice. Albo characterizes God as the ultimate free chooser, as He, at the time of choosing the Israelites, did so voluntarily, knowingly, and out of His free will. Albo uniquely defines the biblical term *hesheq* to depict God's reasonless love for His nation, since He desired to have chosen them in preference of other nations and did so knowingly despite reasons not to select them, as they were neither the most numerous nor righteous of the nations. God's desire to maintain His choice even though Israel was obstinate and rebellious is reflected in His characterization of Israel as His eternal *segulah*.

As in his exegetical expositions, Albo demonstrates his criteria for choice in his sole surviving responsum. Albo rules that a twice-widowed woman whose late husband died in martyrdom does not constitute a *qatlanit* (a woman who is twice widowed and thereby forbidden to remarry) and is not prohibited from remarriage, since her husband acted voluntarily in his choice to die in sanctification of God's name, as he knew what he was doing in choosing martyrdom and desired to do so rather than be killed by his persecutors or forced to convert to Christianity. Like Albo's example in IV.27 of an act that one should endure pain rather than do, the martyr, though coerced, is considered to have sacrificed his life voluntarily (as an expression of his *behira*), despite his motivation to avoid other evil. Thus, he is deserving of praise for his sacrifice, and his widow is not a *qatlanit*, as neither her *mazzal* nor *ma'ayan* is responsible for his death.

While not presented systematically, Albo's nuanced conception of free choice is developed in a highly original manner throughout his philosophical and halakhic writing. The following analysis of his philosophical arguments and exegetical readings aims to demonstrate Albo's creative ingenuity, which has been overlooked in modern scholarship. A summary of medieval Jewish philosophical conceptions of free choice in chapter 2 will be followed by discussions of Albo's philosophical and homiletical interpretation in subsequent chapters, which demonstrate how he deviates from his

predecessors and contemporaries and charts his unique path in philosophy.

Contrary to the consensus of modern scholars, Joseph Albo demonstrates philosophical originality in his exegetical homilies in *Sefer ha-'Iggarim*, which focus on the concept of free choice, an issue that was highly debated in the medieval world, and one with particular significance during a period of religious coercion. Characteristic of fifteenth-century Jewish philosophy, Albo conveys his doctrine in a popular manner, as he illustrates his philosophical notions through accessible and creative biblical interpretations. Though not a systematic thinker who comprehensively articulates his original philosophic views, Albo synthesizes ideas of both his Jewish and non-Jewish predecessors and contemporaries, yet he also incorporates much of his own ingenuity into individual discussions of philosophically challenging biblical narratives. Albo uses innovative exegetical interpretations staggered throughout his philosophic work to teach the philosophic truth of free choice.

Albo's emphasis on free choice in both his philosophical work and his halakhic responsum highlights the importance of freedom within his worldview. Albo not only advocates for free choice in nuanced philosophical arguments, but he also manages to interpret biblical texts that seem to challenge free will innovatively in a manner that preserves human freedom. Albo seizes numerous opportunities in his exegetical and halakhic writings to articulate his theory of free choice. He rejects astral and physical determinism, and instead argues that humans have the ability to circumvent the influence of the stars and nature. Albo consistently maintains humans' capacity to choose freely, despite God's immutable omniscience, since, he argues, God's knowledge does not determine human actions. By fulfilling the criteria delineated in *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* IV.27—namely, choosing freely among alternatives, acting consciously, and desiring to maintain the act—humans bear responsibility and deserve praise or blame for their choices. Albo encourages his generation to exercise their free choice to maintain their faith, as opposed to submitting to the coercion of their persecutors.

Albo's position on free choice is further defined and illustrated through his unique biblical interpretations. He asserts Abraham's ability to choose to freely carry out the binding of Isaac, thus actualizing his potential, notwithstanding God's foreknowledge that Abraham would pass the test, or his alternative options that appealed to his moral conscience and paternal instincts. In his exegetical interpretation of the Genesis narrative, Albo weighs in on the medieval debate over theological determinism, maintaining, like Maimonides, both complete divine omniscience and human freedom. He explains that Abraham was deserving of praise by God for not withholding his beloved son, since Abraham acted knowingly and voluntarily, with no compulsion, and in preference of the alternative of sparing his son in disobedience of God's call to sacrifice. Abraham remains steadfast in his commitment to the divine, demonstrating no regret or misgiving throughout or following the ordeal.

Albo's perspective on free choice is apparent once again in his interpretation of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, which is often interpreted as God depriving Pharaoh of the opportunity to repent. In a highly innovative exegetical exposition, Albo transforms an episode that is philosophically problematic with regard to free will into a narrative in which human freedom is preserved. According to Albo, God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart gave the king the ability to withstand the pressures of the plagues, and, restored to a proper state of mind, he chose consciously and freely between the alternatives regarding the source of his afflictions and, thereby, whether or not to liberate the Israelites. Pharaoh's desire to maintain his previous choices to keep the Israelites enslaved was evident by his pursuit of them into the wilderness following their exodus. Had God not hardened his heart, Pharaoh might have succumbed to the pain caused by the plagues and released his slaves in order to alleviate his agony. Such a decision, however, would not have constituted true repentance, since atonement requires free will, and his decision to free the Israelites in order to gain relief from the plagues would not have been based on free will, since external stimuli would have coerced his choice.

Albo's view of free choice is most explicitly revealed in his interpretation of the Book of Job. It is in that context that he articulates the idea that some acts are to be attributed to compulsion (punishment), some to freedom, and some to a combination of the two. He innovatively uses the story of Job to illustrate his opinion by associating the various characters with different opinions regarding necessity and choice. According to Albo, Job consciously chose to rid himself of his earlier attribution of humans' good and evil fortunes to the determination of the heavenly bodies, in preference of the attribution to punishment, human choice, and a combination of the two, implying that even the category of that which seems compelled is a result of human free actions. At the beginning of the narrative, Job did not serve God out of perfect love, but rather out of fear of reward and punishment, and as a result was unable to bear his suffering with equanimity. By the end, however, Job was deserving of praise and divine providence, since, voluntarily and of his own free will, Job transformed his perception of necessity and choice and regretted his earlier misconception. Following the precedent of Saadia Gaon, Albo interprets Job's suffering as a divine trial, an opportunity for the afflicted to demonstrate that he serves God sincerely. Through his ordeal, Job recognizes God's concern for the contingent and learns how to serve God freely and wholeheartedly in times of struggle as in times of tranquility.

Albo's sensitivity to the intense religious and political hostility of his historical environment is evident in his philosophic and halakhic writings. A religious leader, preacher, and homilist, Albo sought to convey his theological ideas to his embittered generation. In addition to his objective of articulating the authenticity of Jewish dogma in order to enable his coreligionists to defend themselves against persecution, his focus on free choice in many of his biblical interpretations may have been intended to teach implicit lessons to strengthen the will and conviction of his community. In the aftermath of the Tortosa Disputation, Albo may have used his biblical teachings as a means to encourage Jews to exercise their free choice to withstand the coercion of their persecutors and maintain their religious commitments.

Through his interpretation of the binding of Isaac, Albo was perhaps using Abraham as a paradigm for Israel (as Saadia Gaon and Maimonides suggest) to teach his audience that it is insufficient to have faith in God merely internally; one must also demonstrate such faith by physically withstanding afflictions and actualizing one's commitment to God. Albo may have opposed Crescas' view in an effort to motivate his community to resist the religious coercion that they faced during the Inquisition. After all, had the Jews in the fifteenth century internalized Crescas' deterministic views, they might have succumbed to the Christians' pressure, excusing their actions by denying their free choice and personal responsibility. Hence, Albo argues:

Some people think that all the evils befalling them are determined and necessary, owing nothing to free choice; and they find in this way an excuse for their evil deeds, because they think that everything is determined.

It is possible that in order to counteract such an influence, Albo maintained the notion of universal free choice. He interpreted the binding of Isaac episode in a manner that could serve as a lesson for his community that, like Abraham, they had the ability to choose freely to obey God's will despite the emotional and moral hardships of doing so, and could, thereby, actualize their potential for love of God. His intention in advancing such an interpretation may have been to teach his generation that God is aware of—although He does not cause—contingent human action, and He does, in fact, extend providence to the deserving individual. Additionally, such a biblical interpretation can be viewed as a rebuke of the efforts of the Marranos who acted as converted Christians externally while internally maintaining their Jewish convictions. As many Jews opted to convert to alleviate persecution, Albo perhaps wanted to stress that proper intentions alone do not suffice; proper actions are required as well.

Similarly, in his interpretation of God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart, Albo may have intended to teach the theological lesson that humanity maintains free choice and has an eternal opportunity to repent. Even Pharaoh had the ability to choose

freely to recognize God and liberate Israel. Similarly, the afflicted Jews of Albo's generation could learn from Pharaoh's example, despite the seeming coercion of their afflictions, that they also retain their free will; they need not succumb to their persecutors. Indeed, the opportunity to repent is eternal, even for those Jews who have already submitted to their Christian antagonists.

Albo's apparent contradictory remarks regarding whether or not one is blamed for acts committed involuntarily (*me-hekhrach ha-ones*), even though by choice and knowingly, (for example, an act done in order to avoid punishment), may have been intended for two different segments of his community: those who had not yet converted in submission to persecution, and those who had. Toward the conversos, Albo may have espoused the lenient position that one is not blamed for acts committed involuntarily (to avoid punishment) in order to preserve their hidden Jewish identity and aspiration to return to their heritage. Such a position is similar to the ruling of Rabbi Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet (1326-408), the distinguished legal decisor, who himself became a converso in 1391 in Valencia, but escaped to Muslim Algiers, where he resumed his Jewish identity: "One who converted out of coercion [*mi-tokh ha-ones*] is still an Israelite, even if he worshipped idols and desecrated Sabbaths in public, for he did not do so except out of coercion"; and "the court does not punish him, for 'the Merciful pardons the coerced' The Jew, threatened by Christian persecutors, may have been considered similar to the individual threatened by a tyrant in Albo's example: in some cases one might be excused for converting under coercion, but in other cases one might be required to choose death. Albo's assertion that evil acts of a high order, such as striking one's parent, rebelling against one's king, or rebelling against God, are considered voluntary, even if done out of fear of threats, since one is expected to endure great pain rather than do them, can explain his harsh attitude toward conversos in certain circumstances that required that they suffer instead of conversion. For those who had not yet submitted to Christian coercion, Albo may have preached the harsh ruling that such submission (rebellion against God) is considered voluntary and they must choose to

preserve their commitment to Judaism, even at great costs. Like Maimonides, Albo may have permitted conversion only in situations in which the stakes were not high. For instance, if a Christian attacked the Jew in the privacy of his home, the Jew could privately accept Christianity under coercion, and seek the first opportunity to flee to a non-Christian land to resume Jewish practice. However, if a Christian confronted a leader of the Jewish community and demanded he renounce the Torah in public, he may be required to die in order to sanctify God's name. Thus, Albo argues that even when one is coerced, one chooses to be coerced.

With regard to his interpretation of the Book of Job as well, Albo may have been influenced by his historical context, as he sought to strengthen and vitalize the faith and commitment of the persecuted Jews of Christian Spain in his time. Albo was not the first to use his biblical interpretation to convey a lesson to the Jews in a time of religious turmoil. As mentioned in chapter 5, there are strong hints that Job represents the Jewish people in Saadia's Commentary on Job; Job's endurance in his suffering teaches the Jews how to deal with their experience in exile. In his Introduction, Saadia articulates this ethical purpose of the Book of Job—namely, that Job inspires Jews to respond to their afflictions with patient acceptance.

Maimonides and Gersonides may have intended that their interpretations teach their generations about the nature of divine providence. Similarly, Albo may have also been using his interpretation of Job to motivate his coreligionists to exercise their choice to serve God out of love and not out of fear of punishment and anticipation of reward. He wanted his community members to maintain their beliefs and practices in times of turmoil, just as they would during periods of tranquility. Albo's correction of erroneous deterministic notions, his assertion of free choice and individual divine providence, and his encouragement of human effort may have been his attempt to encourage his generation to resist the religious persecution that they perceived to be their fate. Albo perhaps sought to restore the belief in divine providence and justice to those who felt abandoned by God in his generation by preaching that the Christians'

plans to harm the Jews would ultimately be overturned and the Jews saved. Albo may have been encouraging his afflicted generation to emulate Job, who, despite his suffering, chose to maintain his faith in God and develop his intellect in order to merit providence. Through his biblical interpretation, Albo wanted his readers to recognize that instead of grumbling against God, they should choose to retain their dedication to Judaism, reorient their values, and perfect themselves through prayer and repentance in order to merit God's protection.

However, Albo's encouragement of his coreligionists' commitment to God was not one-sided. His interpretation of God's free choice of Israel was perhaps a reassurance for Jews that, despite their hardships, they were still God's *segulah* and had not been abandoned, rejected by God, or replaced, as the Christians claimed. Albo's articulation of God's reasonless choice of Israel may have been intended to remind his disheartened generation that despite their small size, weak stature, and stiff-necked nature, God's providential relationship with them remained intact. The classification of love for the divine that precedes his discussion of *hesheq* may have been Albo's attempt to reinforce the nation's need to exercise free choice in order to achieve *imitatio Dei* and love of God, thus fulfilling their end of the divine covenant. Although they may have perceived the harsh realities of their environment as reason not to love God, their persistent reasonless love for the divine could be considered an emulation of God's reasonless love for humanity.

The assertion of free choice in his exegetical interpretations, as well as the acclaim for the *behira* of martyrs and the alleviation of their widows from the prohibition of remarriage in his halakhic responsum, may have been Albo's effort to encourage his generation to exercise their own free choice in resistance to religious persecution, and not to consider such afflictions to be due to their fate or deserts. In his halakhic responsum to his community's court, Albo similarly may have been trying to motivate his generation to assert their free will and refuse to submit to the religious coercion of their persecutors. Albo's ruling on the *qatlanit* case may have been his attempt to provide his community

and the larger Spanish Jewish population with an understanding of the fundamental nature of free will as a Jewish value, both philosophically and in halakhic practice, by demonstrating the impact of philosophy upon halakha. Thus, free choice emerges as a conceptual scheme throughout Albo's diverse and original writings, as he creatively incorporates the philosophical truth into his exegetic and rabbinic interpretations to benefit his struggling coreligionists. <>

[Empires and Exchanges in Eurasian Late Antiquity: Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppe, ca. 250-750](#)
edited by Nicola Di Cosmo and Michael Maas
[Cambridge University Press, 9781107094345]

[Empires and Exchanges in Eurasian Late Antiquity](#) offers an integrated picture of Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppes during a formative period of world history. In the half millennium between 250 and 750 CE, settled empires underwent deep structural changes, while various nomadic peoples of the steppes (Huns, Avars, Turks, and others) experienced significant interactions and movements that changed their societies, cultures, and economies. This was a transformational era, a time when Roman, Persian, and Chinese monarchs were mutually aware of court practices, and when Christians and Buddhists crisscrossed the Eurasian lands together with merchants and armies. It was a time of greater circulation of ideas as well as material goods. This volume provides a conceptual frame for locating these developments in the same space and time. Without arguing for uniformity, it illuminates the interconnections and networks that tied countless local cultural expressions to far-reaching inter-regional ones.

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Excerpt: [Empires and Exchanges in Eurasian Late Antiquity: Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppe, ca. 250-750](#) introduces, in an integrated way, the Eurasian world stretching from Rome to China in the half-millennium between 250 and 750 CE so that the interchanges among its different cultures and political realms, as well as the internal consequences of those contacts, can be seen as part of a unified picture. Collectively, the contributors have pushed beyond familiar borders to reveal a remarkable panorama of Eurasian history in an era of profound political and cultural change. Our first thanks go to the contributors to this volume for illuminating with new research the road opened more than a century ago by giants such as Aurel Stein, Paul Pelliot, Sven Hedin, Albert von Le Coq, and Otani Kōzui. These pioneers focused on large-scale history by tracing connections across far-flung regions, an approach still influential in world history and Silk Road studies today. Many scholars have followed their lead, and some of them have contributed to this volume.

Rarely if ever, though, has this vision been pushed back to the time that we call Eurasian Late Antiquity and cast as a distinct historical period

embracing Rome, Iran, China, and the Inner Asian steppes. By bringing regional histories and historiographies into a discussion with cross-regional issues and topics, this volume presents historical change as a function of material, religious, economic, and political contacts generated by greater connectivity.

The purpose of [Empires and Exchanges in Eurasian Late Antiquity](#) is to introduce readers to Eurasian Late Antiquity, a formative era in world history with a distinct profile of far-reaching cultural contact and change, though one that has not been studied in a synthetic, unitary fashion before and is not yet widely known. The period under discussion runs from roughly 250 CE to 750 CE across a very broad horizon from the eastern Mediterranean to China. Its human face embraces the nomadic communities of the central steppe lands and the inhabitants of the empires of Rome, Iran, and China that bordered them. During the roughly five centuries considered in this volume, these broad territories and their diverse populations witnessed the emergence of a new world order with cultural, religious, and political systems markedly different from the so-called Classical Antiquity of the Roman, Chinese, and Iranian worlds that preceded them. Steppe nomads, usually associated with timeless, unchanging forms of social organization, experienced equally profound transformations.

Late antique Eurasia was a space full of new actors, new beliefs, and new political structures with their own distinct histories and cultural traditions that became more closely knit together in networks unimaginable at the beginning of our period. The concept of Eurasian Late Antiquity that we, as editors, propose in this volume, is one that both delineates this period of change and crosses the historiographical divide between Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages (in East Asian periodization, "Middle Period") on a continental scale. Our goal is to provide a coherent frame for developments that have often been studied individually but rarely treated together as part of an integrated picture. Eurasian Late Antiquity was an age in which the continental regions of Eurasia were subject to forces that brought them closer together. When the hidden grid of linkages and the manifold consequences of mutual contacts among these

regions are brought to the surface, it will be possible to present such an interconnected history with new clarity and greater intellectual breadth.

We see this period as one that needs to be approached not in terms of a single grand and all-encompassing narrative, but rather at a more granular and local level of the diverse places, cultures, societies, and empires, whose piecemeal interaction led to large-scale, permanent change. Not unlike the thirteenth century, when, due to the Mongol conquest and increased circulation of people and knowledge, Asia suddenly acquired in the eyes of the Europeans concrete geographical and political features, the period from the third to the eighth centuries was one in which transformative events in various regions acquired a larger scope and made different parts of Eurasia more readily and mutually visible. The concept of a Eurasian Late Antiquity allows us to point a searchlight onto a wider expanse, still dark and inhospitable, and look for familiar things in unfamiliar places. This is what we refer to as the granularity of the period, when events are separate and yet connected; societies, courts, and rulers more readily recognize each other; texts are transmitted more widely; languages circulate more rapidly; and different clerics carry the message of their faiths to a variety of peoples. To appreciate the historical applications as well as the limitations of the concept of Eurasian Late Antiquity that we present in this volume, it is necessary to clarify its geographical and chronological frames.

Eurasian Late Antiquity in Terms of Chinese and Central Asian History

From a Chinese perspective, matters are considerably different. This book emphatically does not suggest that the post-Han and early Tang periods in Chinese history should be known as "Chinese Late Antiquity," but rather that a large part of what we today call China, and in particular its northern and northwestern regions, was strongly connected with the broader world of Eurasia and thus participated in Eurasian Late Antiquity. The postclassical world of China has been defined for a long time uniquely in the negative. The period between the end of the Han (220 CE) and the Sui-Tang period (ca. 581-907) has been most

commonly known as the period of disunion, which included the Three Kingdoms (220-280) and the so-called Northern and Southern Dynasties (ca. 386-580). More recently this period has been recast as the early medieval period, which responds to the need to frame it in terms that are not simply tied to a dynastic model. In Chinese historiography the whole medieval period (ca. 220-1300) is referred to as "Middle Period" or zhonggu, that is, Middle Antiquity. The term "middle" suggests of course an analogy with the European Middle Ages but is also a reflection of the Chinese notion of an antiquity that continues into the modern period. The concept of early medieval China already has been accepted in the scholarly community, and the *Journal of Early Medieval China* explicitly aims to address the period from the third to the sixth centuries. This period is followed by the traditional dynastic periodization (Sui, Tang, Five Dynasties and Song), which has not been supplanted by a clear definition of central or late Middle Ages. The concept of Eurasian Central Asian and Turco-Mongol peoples continued to play a preeminent role in China's relations with the Eurasian continent throughout the seventh and eighth centuries. The historical watershed constituted by the An Lushan rebellion (755-763), on the other hand, marks a new era in Chinese history. While such temporal boundaries remain open to discussion, they have sufficient heuristic value to be adopted for the purposes of the present work and may contribute to a broader discussion of the periodization of "Middle Antiquity" or "Middle Period" in Chinese history.

What we are suggesting, therefore, is that important long-term trends and transformations in Chinese history from the end of the Han dynasty onwards must be seen in the context of a Eurasian Late Antiquity, rather than in the context of a patently artificial notion of a self-enclosed or fully coherent "China," with the implicit understanding that no definition ought to cancel another, and that no periodization can fit every purpose.

On the Central and Inner Asian side, the dates 250 through 750 also make good explanatory sense. These dates are already accepted as a unit in the UNESCO publication of the *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, which is one measure by which the

field has acknowledged the specific characteristics of this period on a macrohistorical level. As Litvinsky and Zhang mention in their introduction, the period ca. AD 250-750 "witnessed the rise of mighty new empires (Sasanian, Gupta, Sui and Tang; and the Arab Caliphate) on the fringes of Central Asia. It also saw the successive movements of nomadic peoples ... that played a major and at times decisive role in the later ethnic and political history of the region." While this period is not given a name, we agree with this general definition and with its chronological boundaries.

We therefore muster the separate temporalities of a Mediterranean and Near Eastern "Late Antiquity," a Chinese "Early Middle Antiquity," and a Central Asian ca. 250-750 period into a Eurasian Late Antiquity that strives to expand and combine their relative concerns and regional applications into an altogether new concept.

The first section includes eight chapters that offer a historical overview of continental Eurasia between Rome and China. These chapters illustrate the main geographical-cultural blocs in play (Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppes) and some lines of their interconnection.

First, Michael Maas reviews Roman-steppe relations and suggests how Rome's engagement beyond its threshold to the north resulted in a recasting of the steppe lands and their peoples within a new Byzantine worldview that reformulated older patterns of diplomacy, geographical knowledge, and religious prophecy. Then, Nicola Di Cosmo sketches the long history of the nomadic frontier with China, concluding that by the time of the rise of the Türk hegemony in the sixth century, the steppes - and not China - had become the more forceful motor of change: "What was new in the Chinasteppe relationship is that the nomadic politics had become a decisive element in facilitating the evolution of commercial routes, and more specifically, in the economic relations between China and the West." Matthew Canepa highlights Iran's central role in Eurasian affairs. He emphasizes how much the Sasanian Persian realm contributed to a royal cosmology shared across the steppes and with Roman and Chinese rulers, as

monarchs participated in an international culture of competitive political display.

These first chapters suggest not just the depth and breadth of connectivity among regions but also a concurrent broadening of cultural horizons. Associated with the growth of awareness and interaction over great distances is the notion of "Silk Roads" that passed through these separate worlds and brought a heightened measure of integration. Richard Lim describes various routes of communication and trade reaching from Rome to China, primarily the economic ones. Rong Xinjiang, who bases his discussion on recent archaeological discoveries, illustrates the presence of Sogdian commercial colonies that were a multi-strand necklace of trading hubs across Central Asia to China. The urban-based Sogdian traders constituted a vital link not only between Chinese suppliers and Roman and Persian buyers of prized commodities but with Central Asian nomadic communities as well.

Cautioning that "silk ... was more than a commodity" and that "silk was as central to the flow of power and prestige in eastern Eurasia as is the movement of enriched uranium between modern states," Peter Brown alerts us to the symbolic, imaginative weight as well as the financial value of this desirable commodity in a world of constant diplomacy and warfare.

Through evaluation of China's Eurasian contacts, Valerie Hansen opens the door to understanding the many profound foreign influences that came to Chinese lands during our period: "People living in different regions of present-day China met neighboring peoples as enemies on the battlefield, missionaries propagating new religions, merchants selling goods, refugees from war-torn lands, and even as emperors ruling dynasties with Chinese names." The overland silk routes were a significant conduit for the passage of these people and ideas.

Where Brown notes that the perspective of Chinese geographers reached as far west as Constantinople, Giusto Teraina explores the limits of the Roman gaze eastward through examination of classical and postclassical sources, finding that the extent of Alexander the Great's expedition into Central Asia and the scientific legacy of the

Hellenistic Age created conceptual boundaries. Although much remained dangerous terra incognita, for missionaries, traders, and soldiers traveling from all directions, Eurasia increasingly became a place filled with known and attainable destinations.

Part II: Movements, Contacts, and Exchanges

The second section of our book considers mobility in a broad sense as well as various forms of interaction and exchange. All of the goods and ideas mentioned throughout the volume were carried by individuals or small groups of merchants, for example, or Christians, or Buddhists, who only over time may be understood in the aggregate. In contrast was the phenomenon of large-scale migration, in which substantial communities may have traversed great distances to find new homes. These extensive population movements, regardless of their causes, were often accompanied by violent transformations of local societies, although to this day we have very little idea of what happened to so many peoples who have left only faint traces of their passage in written and archaeological sources.

Several authors consider the phenomenon of migration from discrete critical angles. Patrick Geary introduces the historical challenges associated with genetic research. He notes that while properly structured study of ancient DNA can enhance our understanding of ancient migrations, it must be combined with equally careful analysis of cultural context. Michael Kulikowski discusses the idea of migration and invasion from the north as a trope in modern western historical writing and the opportunities and pitfalls that await researchers who employ the trope unquestioned, especially in Asian contexts. Luo Xin also offers a historiographical study in his examination of two conflicting approaches to the Northern Dynasties, one Chinese and the other Inner Asian. He urges care in accepting uncritically the more familiar Chinese perspectives on migration and foreign rule, and suggests that much needs to be done in articulating and analyzing the view from the steppes. Ursula Brosseder offers an archaeologist's critical perspective on migrations. In her chapter she discusses the well-known "Hunnic" cauldrons,

concluding that they are false friends if invoked as proof of Hunnic identity across Eurasia from the Altai Mountains to Hungary.

Ethnic attribution - so closely linked to the movement and peoples and cultural contacts - is a matter that has animated many debates in both archaeology and ancient and medieval history. Walter Pohl discusses differences between political and ethnic identity. He notes that a prestigious name of a past empire, like Xiongnu or Rouran, could be claimed by mixed groups to impart coherence and identity and serve as a base for political action. He contrasts the different fate of Avars and Huns: "Avar political identity outweighed ethnic identity. Whenever Avars left the khaganate to settle elsewhere, they dropped the ethnonym and came to be called Huns, Bulgars, or Slavs. After the end of Avar rule, their name disappeared. Huns, on the other hand, maintained their ethnic identity, whether in Roman service or after the fall of Attila's empire." In either event, we learn that both ethnic and political identities were flexible constructs and that there is no place for essentialized, permanent identities - except perhaps in the legends of a ruling elite.

Religious ideas traveled long distances along these routes, in slower migrations of ideas, texts, and forms of worship. Scott Johnson traces the progress of Christianity (a Mediterranean religion in its formative stages) from the Middle East to China, as its practitioners traversed different linguistic milieux in which their co-religionists spoke different languages and where the act of translation proved to be yet another sort of profitable exchange. The use of a lingua franca, in this case Syriac, in contexts of trade and Christian expression indicates the participation of speakers of different tongues who sought a common voice. Similarly, as Max Deeg shows, Buddhists found Central Asian communities a welcome home and a place from which many carried their beliefs and books to Chinese lands. The challenges of translating not just words but Buddhist ideas into alien idioms became a focused effort involving great numbers of individuals. Frantz Grenet traces another body of knowledge that circulated across religious and political boundaries. Astrological lore, the science of the movement of the stars, found ready

acceptance - and was put to political use - in the cultures considered in this study.

Merchants traded goods other than silk as they passed from city to city across the breadth of Eurasia. They carried other high-profile luxury goods such as pearls in their saddle bags. Joel Walker describes the widespread influence throughout Eurasia of the Sasanian use of pearls as markers of royal authority. These pearls were not simple objects of practical use but highly prized prestige items. Out of the steppes to surrounding lands came slaves and horses in exchange for grains and other commodities that were consumed domestically and not traded farther afield, as Michael Drompp notes in Chapter 20. Warrior horsemen had a long history of serving as mercenaries beyond the steppes, and they brought with them new military tactics and technology, including the use of stirrups, that entered the European realm among elite cavalrymen in the sixth century.

Part III: Empires, Diplomacy, and Frontiers

During the period of Eurasian Late Antiquity, all of the great cultural realms - Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppes themselves - experienced significant internal political and social restructuring, some of which at least was due to external causes. Rome lost its western European home provinces and revitalized itself as a Christian state based at Constantinople. Roman emperors became preoccupied with threats from Sasanian Iran to the east and from steppe nomads north of the Danube, notably the game-changing Huns in the mid-fifth century and the Avars of the sixth. Mark Whittow analyzes the development of a Roman/Byzantine "Eurasian policy" in which the Türk Empire played an important part. He argues that Constantinople's policy makers possessed a shrewd grasp of steppe cultures and politics bred of long experience as well as the wrenching events of the early seventh century.

The impact of the steppes was no less severe on Sasanian Persia. Daniel Potts discusses the enormous political and financial cost to the Sasanian state accrued by maintaining its ever-receding frontier with steppe kingdoms to the north.

Interaction with the steppes played a formative role in the shaping of the Sasanian state.

New models of imperial power developed among the continually shifting populations of the steppes. Michael Drompp explores how the early Türk Empire created a highly successful system of rule different from those of settled states. He speaks of the relations of the Türk Empire with both China and Byzantium. As he puts it, "The absence of large structures, impressive cities, and major literary accomplishments should not lead us to imagine the Türk empires were 'insubstantial' or 'empty.' They were eminently well-suited to the environment in which they occurred and to the technologies available to them." Peter Golden, on the other hand, shows that in some instances, especially on the western steppes, nomadic groups did not develop imperial structures and remained stateless. The existence of these nonimperial nomads is elusive but at the same time cannot be ignored. The extent of their integration in larger polities is key to understanding why or how steppe nomads developed their political culture.

Sören Stark demonstrates how the Türks deliberately appropriated "an astonishing variety of so-called Chinese, Iranian, and even Byzantine features of elite representation to create their own symbols of power, and thus express legitimate rule and princely status." We have seen this sort of phenomenon as well in the chapters of Canepa and Walker. Ekaterina Nechaeva additionally shows us that at least on the part of many steppe leaders there was a desire to participate in shared hierarchies of power, to play at the big table with Rome, Iran, and China. These relationships were spelled out in diplomatic exchanges and protocols.

During Eurasian Late Antiquity, China witnessed a hybridization of political systems due to interaction and conquest by non-Chinese polities, an increase of outside religious influences as shown by the influx of Buddhism, and more generally a greater cultural openness as a result of contact with steppe peoples. What the chapters on East Asia show with particular emphasis is the relevance of the connections between the steppes and China on the political plane.

Andrew Eisenberg discusses how the ruling elite of the Northern Wei introduced new forms of rulership and political ideas. The patrimonial conceptions of the state that characterized this foreign dynasty "provided a demarcated world for the work, political competition, and socialization of members of politically elite households and their associates." In addition, Eisenberg discusses the role played by ethnicity in the self-definition of foreign elites and their governments, finding in this a significant difference from Chinese courts because of the need to maintain ethnic boundaries and retain and notion of separateness between the ruling minority and the subjects.

Jonathan Skaff describes the entangled ideological systems shared and contested by Chinese and Inner Asian steppe rulers. From 580 to the outbreak of the An Lushan rebellion (755) Turco-Mongol and Chinese courts engaged not just in political conflict but also in an ideological battle over cultural symbols. The chapter shows the critical role played by bicultural local elites and by leaders who were familiar with, and could therefore manipulate, symbols of power from either the Inner Asian or the Chinese milieu. The Sui and Tang courts also adopted a combination of ideological means drawn from different traditions to appeal to the multicultural peoples under their rule.

Naomi Standen tackles the question of identity and group formation by discussing "followership" in steppe political organization. She locates a controlling source of power not primarily in the personal ambition of a leader but in the people who allowed him to rule. Resonating especially with Skiff's understanding of Inner Asian (or Turco-Mongol) politics, Standen's analysis deepens our understanding of the political aspects underlying power contests in medieval northeast Eurasia.

Conclusion: A New Field of Vision

When we (Di Cosmo and Maas) had our first conversation several years ago about a conference that would bring together scholars interested in Rome, China, and the steppe lands in between, we anticipated that the discussion would fruitfully cross disciplinary as well as geographical lines. The conference, "Worlds in Motion: Rome, China and the Eurasian Steppe in Late Antiquity," convened at

the Institute for the Advanced Study on 30 May-June 2013, and funded jointly by Rice University and the IAS, more than fulfilled our expectations. Most of the conference presentations were adapted for this volume, but other contributions have been added as well. The chapters in this volume demonstrate how the results of the discussion have matured since then. What has emerged is the existence of a historical era that we call Eurasian Late Antiquity. It was, so to speak, hiding in plain sight: the vectors of change and the ripple effects of events across the Eurasian steppes and the surrounding territories of settled empires have been studied from different perspective and for different purposes over the years, but this volume now offers unity in what had previously been seen as fragmentary and disassociated. This is quite far from saying that Eurasian Late Antiquity possessed a common, homogeneous culture or that its history can be told as one smoothly unrolling ribbon of causes and effects. The diversity of political communities from villages to empires, the variety of economies and world-views, and the sheer weight of local imperatives rightly prevent such oversimplification. The wide variety of interconnections and their reverberations illuminated by the chapters in this volume make it quite clear that Eurasian Late Antiquity exists as a coherent historical epoch in its own right. This period in Eurasian history witnessed manifold changes and distant contacts, the dissolution and invention of empires, the movements of ideas, religions, peoples, languages, and goods over vast distances, and the appearance of new peoples on the world stage. In the same breath we must say that historical discontinuities, dead ends, and isolated disasters abounded. To understand this panoply of experience, the essays gathered here encourage us to place Romans, Chinese, Iranians, Huns, and a host of others in the same frame. Eurasian Late Antiquity stretches our peripheral vision as well as our historical imagination. It invites new questions and answers. <>

[Japan on the Silk Road: Encounters and Perspectives of Politics and Culture in Eurasia](#)
edited by Selçuk Esenbel [Brill's Japanese Studies Library, Brill, 9789004274303]

Excerpt:

The Broad Reach of the Silk Road

This work looks at modern Japan's global history from the novel perspective of the Japanese gaze toward the "Silk Road": The Central Eurasian geo-cultural space which extends from the Mediterranean coastline of the Near East to the shores of East Asia. Already from the Meiji period and right up to this day, the Japanese have shown a keen interest in this geography—a geography that has been perceived as the historic site of cosmopolitan peaceful exchange and commerce of indigenous peoples that linked Europe and Asia. At the same time, and paradoxically, the Silk Road has also come to mean the geo-political strategic site for nationalisms and for conflicts between competing global powers and empires. During the nineteenth century the Japanese entered into the region in their imperial quest to replace the Qing Dynasty's historic legacy in the region and to form a series of alliances against the Russian and Chinese empires. Japanese interest in the Silk Roads of Central Eurasia gains significance because it is an important history of pre-war Japanese Pan-Asianism and imperial interest that in due course totally challenged the Western colonial empires in Asia. But Japan on the Silk Road at the same time produced a rich depository of scholarship on the region that is little known in the West and which is introduced for the first time in a comprehensive manner in this volume.

The Japanese expertise and strong interest in the Silk Road geography has, in recent years, come under the spotlight once again to play a significant role in the revival of interest on the Silk Road after the end of the Cold War, which has made the region accessible. The present volume is thus especially timely at this moment of history to understand the history of Japan's interest in the region. The famous Nxx documentary series of the 1980s that became very popular in Japan and globally, was a Japanese project with Chinese collaboration. Japanese scholarly expertise in Silk Road Studies that has been built up over the past century has also noticeably prompted the formation of the five major UNESCO expeditions between 1988–1997 in the region. Needless to say, the phrase "the Silk Road" is also back in use in the

terminology of current geo-politics after the end of Soviet hegemony in Central Asia and the establishment of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan as independent republics.

In recent years, the Chinese authorities are energetically pushing forth China's multi-billion dollar One Belt One Road project of building a high-speed train network along the Silk Roads in Eurasia as a major Chinese foreign policy line. Recently, the Chinese government has burst onto the global stage, making use of the Silk Road concept as a platform for peaceful interaction among the nations that inhabit the routes, but as the means to describe its mega-project willing to invest multi-billion dollars to construct a high speed train network across Central Eurasia that has "opened" the Pandora Box paradox on the Silk Road. The Silk Road: "One Belt-One Road" has been interpreted globally as signaling the rise of new Chinese geopolitical ambition in the region. The One Belt One Road project is also accompanied with a parallel, maritime Silk Road traversing the Indian Ocean and the China Sea.

Politics and economics are again on the agenda of the Silk Road discourse in Japan as well, to make sure that China does not dominate this critical region in competition with Japanese interests—a concern which reflects shades of the pre-war legacy. The Japanese counterpart to China's ambitious project for the Silk Road is also newly visible in Japan's strategy for Central Asia as a significant player in the region. According to the Japan Times, October 27, 2015, Prime Minister Abe's visit to five Central Asian countries of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan catapulted Japan again as a major player in the region. Japan has countered China's project with a proactive policy of promising more than three trillion Yen for infrastructural investment in the five Central Asian Republics. These projects and others from Russia, the EU, and the US have recharged the Silk Road as a geography and are a signifier of global geo-political and economic competition.

The papers in this book provide a comprehensive exposé of the Japanese involvement with the Silk

Road as a geography and as an imaginary during modern Japan's history between 1868 and 1945—an exposé of what is, to the global academy today, a little-known history of that legacy. The authors who constitute an international academic community from Britain, Germany, Japan, Mongolia, India, and Turkey with specializations in Japanese history, Central Asian History, Turkology, Linguistics and Literature represent a rich combination of global expertise on Japanese connections to Central Eurasia, South Asia, Inner Asia, and the Islamic world. Their papers provide a multidisciplinary exposé of Japanese transnational history along the Silk Road that is juxtaposed with the better known European one along the same paths. By opening up this discussion, the research in this volume helps globalize the standard narrative of modern Japan's history based on the familiar trajectories of Japanese relations with Europe, China, and the United States, by bringing into light the parallel history of the Japanese interaction with these less traversed regions.

Japan on the Silk Road represents Imperial Japan's noticeable shift to Central Asia-Inner Asia, and the world of Islam, a shift which was abruptly cut off with Japan's defeat in the Second World War. Studying Japanese activities along the Silk Road also fell into the taboo of Pan-Asianism for historians in the post-war era who ignored or dismissed topics associated with the pre-war Asianist-turn. The present work intends to remedy some of this gap by shedding light on the Japanese connection to the Silk Roads, tracing politics and culture throughout Eurasia.

From a global perspective, Japan on the Silk Road is embedded in the history of the geo-political and economic interests of empires in world history during modern times. Japan adapted the model of the European way to power of Germany, France, and Britain that entailed the development of an industrial economy, a parliamentary system of constitutional monarchy, and capitalism that linked Japan to global markets, politics and the acceleration of communication and transportation which quickened contacts, networking, diffuse mobility of cultural images and technology between inter-regional relations on West Asia and East Asia.

Readers need to be cautioned, however, that the Silk Road is a concept that we as authors have selected as a conscious choice to place the Japanese experience with this geography in a comparative framework of modern imperial trajectories that link to the history of Silk Road explorations. Even if the term was not used by all of the protagonists discussed in the papers, they took the same routes nonetheless. The concept of the Silk Road has meant many things to different people and polities depending on time and context. Since the nineteenth century, the Silk Road region that actually incorporates the geography of Central Eurasia, the Mediterranean and the Middle East has generated the scholarly investigation of cultural pluralism in that vast geography of travel routes between the Europe and Asia. Some of this scholarly interest was also entangled with the geo-political ambition of major outside powers (Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, today the United States) to gain access to the rich natural resources and or to gain a foothold in a region that was situated between the historical hegemony of Russian and Chinese empires in that geography. Thus, on the one hand the Silk Roads represent the cosmopolitan ancient and medieval encounter between the Occident and the Orient as the land of transmissions and exchanges between different peoples and ethnicities. On the other, since the nineteenth century and to this date the Silk Roads of Central Eurasia have become a zone that incited a political debate with forced cultural interpretations as to where it belongs.

The term Silk Road was a European invention of global geographic imagination that is connected to empire building. Ferdinand von Richthofen (1833–1905) the German geographer and traveler invented the term “Seidenstrasse” or “the Silk Road(s)” in his work on the geography of China in 1877, where he designated the routes of inter-continental trade in the precious commodity of silk, which he thought was much in demand in the Roman Mediterranean. This Central Eurasian world attracted the Europeans during the nineteenth century to search for the historic journey of Occidental civilization into the Orient in a combination of 19th century imperial interest and scholarship to discover the tracks of Alexander the

Great that brought Hellenism to Central Asia. European explorers proceeded to unearth the physical remains and manuscripts of ancient and medieval sites such as the documents of the Dunhuang Caves in West China's gateway to the Silk Road, which were taken back to European Museums. At the time, imperial governments enthusiastically supported the work of the European explorers of Central Eurasia who pioneered mapping this unknown region and published the detailed investigation of the natural resources and the ethnic-national communities in the region as this information was thought to be crucial for global geopolitical strategic interests. Their well-known biographies narrating extensive travels along the arduous routes attest to this merger of scholarship with imperial interest. By way of example, the British explorer of Hungarian origins, Aurel Stein (1862–1943), served the British Empire in India; the German archeologist Albert von le Coq (1860–1930) Imperial Germany; the French scholar Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) the French colonial government in Hanoi; and the Swedish explorer-geographer Sven Hedin (1865–1952), the student of von Richthofen, was supported by the Swedish and German governments.

Japan on the Silk Road

Between 1868 and 1945, just like their European counterparts, Japanese explorers and travelers—at times as lone riders or in teams—climbed through steep highlands and crossed arid deserts in arduous journeys as they took the traditional caravan routes to Persia and the Ili region of at the frontier of Russia and China. Others took advantage of the new Trans-Siberian railway and the Chinese Eastern Railway that quickened transportation across Eurasia. Much of this Japanese experience in modern history has been originally narrated in their investigation reports, memoirs and travel accounts with detailed information about the regions which are full of interesting insights and intriguing episodes. Japanese expeditions not only included scholars and Buddhist monks that traced the roots of Japanese Buddhism, but also military officers who conducted diligent surveys of military reconnaissance or performed adventuresome field operations of intelligence.

The Japanese interest in the Silk Road is generally explainable as part of the Japanese public's strong fascination with the outside world after the 1868 Meiji Restoration in their desire for “civilization and enlightenment.” The best known example was the Prince Iwakura mission between 1871 and 1873 to the major capitals of the West with a team of 48 including officials and scholars, that produced volumes of reports and brought back information about the contemporary world of Western civilization that was crucial for the reforms. As Meiji Japan came to be seen as the new “rising star of the East” toward the end of the nineteenth century, the Japanese turned their gaze towards Asia including the peoples and geography of the Silk Road that was part of Japan's quest to be among the great powers. The Japanese endeavor to acclimate to the West and find its foothold in the coming age as one of the major powers included imperial Japan's vision of Central and Inner Asia as a significant strategic and cultural arena of engagement because these areas were territorially close to Japan and constituted a kind of “buffer zone” between the Russian and Chinese empires. The indigenous native populations comprising mostly Turkic Muslims, Mongols and other non-Chinese and non-Russian peoples now became important for the Japanese as a potential friendly peoples, and for some Japanese even with “possible kindred affiliation,” with whom there could be future political engagements for autonomy or independence with Japanese help. In contrast, the Japanese perception of “Western Muslim regions” of the “Silk Road” that covered the Middle East and the East Mediterranean was not as a territory of direct engagement but rather an important geography to form friendly relations with in order to monitor the activities of the great powers and help extend Japan's global commercial ties.

The Meiji Japanese turn toward the “Silk Road” region, though we should again caution that this region was not described with this concept at the time, starts in 1880–1881, a decade after the 1871–1873 Iwakura Mission. At the time, the Meiji government organized a mission to visit the Qajar monarchy of Iran and the Ottoman Empire, which were the major Muslim polities of the Near East.

The Gaimushō (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) envoy Yoshida Masaharu headed the Japanese “kaikyō tanken” or “The expedition to the Islamic World” that constituted a small mission of seven Japanese that included mostly merchants who wanted to export Japanese goods like tea and silk and a young army officer representing the newly established General Staff who was ordered to prepare a detailed investigation of the region. Yoshida’s instructions were to extensively investigate the Muslim hemisphere and seek possible contacts for Japanese business. At the same time, he was also to investigate the activities of Russia and Britain in this vast geography that was the proxy stage for global rivalry between great powers. The Yoshida mission thus can be viewed as the beginning of Japanese informal diplomatic contacts with the Muslim polities of West Asia that represented the new interest of the Japanese leaders in the Islamic world at the gateway to the “Silk Road.” The participants of the Yoshida Mission first visited Shah Nasir al-Din (1831–1896), the ruler of the Qajar dynasty in Persia in 1880. The envoy conducted investigations there for close to four months between September and December as special guests of the Shah, to be followed by a journey of investigation through the Caucasus that ended with a short visit to the Ottoman government of Sultan Abdulhamid II for three weeks in March the following year. The itinerary reflected the importance of Iran and its geography as the gateway to Caucasus and Central Asia for the Japanese authorities at the time. The visit also marked the Meiji perception of the Islamic world as somewhat behind Meiji Japan in the quest for civilization but making some strides under the authoritarian regimes of the regional sovereigns. Yoshida observed with a jaundiced eye the fierce contest between the two Western imperial powers of Great Britain and the Russian empire in the Great Game over Central Asia in the 1890s, which he describes as the ferocious fight between tigers and dragons that verbalizes quite accurately the Japanese political perception of the region.

The Japanese entry was part of the global history of high imperialism’s “discovery and exploration” of hitherto less known regions of the large spatial

geography along Central Eurasia in the quest for overcoming the frontier of nomads and accelerate Great Power politics of imperial expansion. The “long nineteenth century” that extended into the early decades of the twentieth century was, in the words of a recent study, “the golden age” of European and now Japanese scientific, geographic, archeological, and ethno-cultural studies expeditions, along with military reconnaissance investigations. The recent work of Imre Galambos on Count Ōtani Kōzui’s Japanese archeological exploration of Central Asia constitutes one of the few studies of Japan’s expeditions on the “Silk Road”.

In European scholarship, the Silk Road signified the exciting discovery of cosmopolitan encounters and plurality of national identities of an indigenous demography that incorporated the historical interconnections between nomads, traders, and settled peoples, independent of the neighboring Russian and Chinese empires. The Russian empire that conquered Central Asia and took over the Khanates throughout the nineteenth century especially projected a dark shadow over the region that the British and the Japanese later considered to be a serious threat to their political interests. The Silk Road represented an extraordinary “international” history of the descendants of the Greeks, Nestorian Christians, Sogdian merchants, Turkic and Mongol nomads, Uyghur kingdoms, Chinese travelers, and Indian pilgrims. The Silk Road was the site for major transformations in world history such as the transmission of silk, paper, gunpowder technology, the Aramaic and Sanskrit scripts, the fusion of Hellenism with Buddhism and Indian culture. All of these together with the political unification under the Mongol world empire, the Turkish Khanate, and the influence of Chinese are themes that surfaced along the ancient routes of caravan travel that crisscrossed along the East-West and North-South axis between Europe and Asia.

Though Japan’s historical presence on the Silk Road is part of the global history of expeditions and empire building like that of the West, there are some features of the Japanese imaginary about the Silk Road that mark it as distinct from that of

the European/Western perception. The legacy of Buddhism particularly interested them: as the roots of Japanese medieval cosmopolitan connections to Asia, the Silk Road was seen as the site for the origins of Japanese Buddhism. Like the Western scholarship on the Silk Road, the Japanese investigators also put emphasis on the historical legacy of the Turkish Khanates, and the present-day local Turkic populations as an autochthonous phenomenon potentially independent of the neighboring empires. In addition, the Japanese perception of the Silk Road stretched to Istanbul, the center of the Ottoman Turkish polity in the West, as a buffer zone between the Russian, British, and Chinese imperial influence. Conversely, some Japanese scholarship on Turkology has also been inspired by the debate that there might have been historical connections between the ancient Japanese and the Altaic language-speaking peoples of North Asia. Not surprisingly, generations of Japanese scholars in the pre-war period have produced an accumulation of studies of the archaic medieval and modern linguistic and cultural aspects of Turkology that will be introduced in depth for the first time in this volume.

Revival of the Silk Road

Today's scholarship expands on the legacy of the early explorers. Recent scholarship on the Silk Roads projects it to actually be a complex web of many routes of travel over a large space across Eurasia as a contained geography that revises the older von Richthofen view of the Silk Road as a primary route of silk trade with the Roman Empire. Valerie Hansen's work on the Silk Road represents the new, enriched understanding of the region based on the study of indigenous historical documentation in many languages—Sogdian, Uyghur, Chinese, Arabic—that have been retrieved from many expeditions. The new research on the region cautions us that the peoples of this geography had their own understanding and terms for their environment and did not use the term "Silk Road."

A second distinctly politicized perspective focuses on the nomad Eurasian empires throughout history as fertile ground for empire formation that reasserts the present political character of this

important region with the emergence of independent republics in the post-Cold War era. Here, the Silk Road peoples of Central Eurasia emerge as primary agents of significant political formations in world history that counter the image of the region as the "playground" of major outside world powers. James A. Millward expands on the centrality of the region with the main idea that humanity thrived along the Silk Road before the steppes were closed in by the rise of the major empires of Russia and China that put an end to independent Inner Eurasian nomad states. Both empires inherited Mongol imperial heritage, though. He notes that today the historical resonances of the term Silk Road is potent again as a shorthand for bilateral and multilateral relations across Central Eurasia, citing Hillary Clinton in 2011 and other US spokesmen. Critical of Russian and Chinese hegemony in the region, in his new book on Central Asia, Frederick Starr places the central importance of Central Asia, the region of the Silk Roads, in world history for having created an authentic intellectual history of the age of enlightenment during the middle ages 800–1100 and that was lost to humanity with the rise of nomad empires (Mongol empire) and the stifling scholarly restrictions of mystical Sufism. Starr too makes references to the present relevance of the region that was once the center of the world, today though overlooked, remains as a vitally important geopolitical space.

The Silk Road is, however, embedded in our mind with the popular image of the Great Game as the stage for the exciting adventures of European explorers and charismatic spies like those in Peter Hopkirk's "Foreign Devils on the Silk Road", who are agents of the Great Game, primarily Great Britain and Russia, but also Germany and the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century and beyond. In the first half of the twentieth century the same "Silk Road" historical geography has also been targeted as the arena for determining the rivalry between the Soviet Union and China, an image that still carries present-day connotations. Owen Lattimore (1900–1989), the Inner Asia and Mongolia expert who served the American government during the Second World War and was the political advisor to Chiang Kai-shek—later

the victim of McCarthyism in the United States, conceptualized Xinjiang and Mongolia the frontier zone of dynamic interaction between pastoral nomads and settled societies, as the pivot of Asia—the center of gravity for global politics. This well-known perspective puts emphasis on Xinjiang with the Uyghur population who live across the border between Russia and China as politically and strategically significant.

The Silk Road regions' history of ethno-religious political upheaval obviously carries the potential for the destabilization of the Chinese and Russian empires that is integral to this geo-political vision. During the nineteenth century, from the time of the famous Yakub Beg Rebellion of 1865–1877 challenging Qing China and Romanov Russia that led to the brief Russian occupation of the region in 1871 later to be returned to China by Russia in 1881, the “Silk Road” became synonymous with ethno-religious political upheaval and conflict spots of diplomatic and military engagement between the European and regional powers. Today's routes of radical Islam also inhabit the same Silk Road regions and make use of the same routes of travel. The geo-political vision was strongly operative in the Japanese military perception of the Silk Road regions as a potential buffer zone against the Russian and possibly the Chinese empires.

In historiography, the subject of the Silk Roads is especially suitable for recent global history narratives searching for transnationality of multi-cultural encounters and transfers of knowledge in world history. Morris Rossabi advocates the use of the Silk Roads as a concept which is particularly conducive for teaching world history. He draws attention to the themes of cultural borrowing, interactions of civilization development of new economic institutions and technologies to facilitate commerce, and the sheer excitement of travel and adventure. Nicola Di Cosmo has explored the use of proxy data from climatology and other palaeosciences in the study of the history of China and Central Asia, with special reference to military relations among early Eurasian nomads, the Mongol Empire, and the Qing Dynasty. Many pre-war Japanese also constructed a world history narrative through the prism of a cultural Asianism, admiring the rich overlay of cosmopolitan cultural

and ethnic diversity of this grand space. The Silk Road appealed to the modern Japanese imagination by reminding them of the Tang aura during the early Japanese monarchy or even the rustic origins of their ancestral past on the continent.

Japan and the Revival of the Silk Road

The history of imperial Japan's accumulation of information and experiences in this vast region during the pre-war history of modern Japan has also come to play an important role in this recent revival of the Silk Roads concept in the post-Cold War era. The major turning point with the end of the Cold War was the UNESCO Project of the Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue that was first launched in 1988. Criticizing the Cold War that had made Central Eurasia inaccessible, the Director General of UNESCO, Frederico Mayor pointed out at the onset of the project in 1988 that the region of the Silk Roads should be investigated as the historical site of the harmonious co-existence of peoples. The five major UNESCO expeditions that took place between 1990 and 1995 followed the tracks of Desert, Maritime, Steppe, and Buddhist routes from Venice to Central Asia, Nepal, China, Mongolia, and concluded in Osaka. In all, 227 specialists from 47 countries took part, plus local scholars and more than 100 representatives of the world's media.

The conclusions of the UNESCO Project are noteworthy as they mark the main thematic points about the Silk Road's historic transformation. The influence of Hellenistic traditions made a strong impact on the artistic trends of settled peoples of southern Central Asia from Bactria to the peripheries of Sogdiana and Khorezm. A new concept of human personality was reflected in their arts; portraits appeared on coins, and clay sculpture, which was widespread in the Bactrian period, became rich in human images. The Turkic peoples' conquest of Central Asia gave them control over the export of Chinese silk to Europe. Through Turkic crafting, that artistic symbiosis spread to the arts of agricultural Sogdiana, enriched with new ideas, images and motifs. From Arabia, pious Muslim merchants carried both their trade goods and their faith across Central Asia, where it remains the predominant religion. Monks in

saffron robes travelled the Silk Road as missionaries, laying the foundation for the prevalence of Buddhism in East Asia. Zoroastrianism, the ancient pre-Islamic religion of Persia, spread to India along the Silk Road, while two other religions— Manichaeism, a blend of Judaism and Christianity, and Nestorianism, a Christian sect—also spread to China via this route. In sum, the UNESCO project reflects the optimistic cosmopolitan vision of Central Eurasia, independent of major outside imperial domination, as the site of peaceful exchange in the past between Europe and Asia that can serve today as the inspiration for the harmonious coexistence of peoples in the 21st century empowering the role of the indigenous republics independent of major power interests.

The 1988 UNESCO project also sheds light on this work's agenda of Japan on the Silk Road for it illuminates the strong legacy of the pre-war Japanese engagement along the Silk Roads geography. Only a few years after the end of the Second World War, Japan contributed to the UNESCO meeting with twenty scholars and a 750-book bibliography that attested to the accumulation of pre-war studies of the Silk Road in Japan. Vadime Elisseff explains that the 1956–1957 decisions of UNESCO to study the cultural heritage of the OrientOccident and the Silk Roads were undertaken with the major contribution of Japanese scholarship. The scientific appraisal of the Silk Roads was already prepared by the Japanese National Commission of UNESCO on the occasion of the International Symposium on the History of Eastern and Western Cultural Contacts (Oct–Nov. 1957). The Japanese scholars helped define the notion of three intercultural routes of the Steppe, Oasis, and Maritime Silk Roads and defined the topics which should be studied under each route. The Japanese conceptual frame was to help form, decades later, the foundation of the UNESCO 1988–1997 project.

In his article on the Silk Road and the Japanese, the eminent scholar of Turkology and Chinese dynastic records on the ancient Turks, Mori Masao (1921–1996), pointed to the main events that have led to the growth of the Japanese interest in the Silk Road that formed the basis of this relatively strong

scholarship legacy in 1957. The Ōtani expeditions formed the major event that made a strong impression among the Japanese public. The journalist and traveler who was interested in archeological sites, Mori Yutaka (1917–2001) explained that publications on the Ōtani expeditions were at the core of his continued fascination with the Silk Road. Mori Masao also notes the publication of Army major Hino Tsutomu's (1865–1920) experiences from his entrance to the Uyghur region about the same time as the Ōtani expeditions in 1906–1907, as the Ili Notes, which significant in representing the military strategic interest in the region. The second event, according to Mori Masao, that impacted Japanese Silk Road interest, was the Second World War when general interest on the Silk Road region was fertilized with wartime news on Inner Asia. The writer Matsuoka Yūzuru (1891–1969) wrote *Dunhuang Story* from 1937 on in the *Kaizō* journal, which was later published as a monograph in 1943 that became very popular. After the war, the novels of Inoue Yasushi (1907–1991) titled *Dunhuang* (1959), and *Loulan* (1958) created a “Western regions Seikimono-tales” genre in fiction that led to the rise in the interest in the Silk Road. According to Mori Masao, the third event that fertilized the Japanese vision of the Silk Road, was the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games that fostered the concept of the Silk Road when the Olympic torch was brought from Greece. The novelist writers Shiba Ryōtarō and Inoue Yasushi have traced back the origins of the Japanese admiration for their dream about the Silk Road to the amazement of the Japanese missions when they saw Chang'an during their visits to the Tang dynasty, explaining how Tang poetry still carries forth the magic and mystery of Western Regions even today. Mori Masao concludes that Japanese interest in the Silk Road can thus be categorized into two categories: military strategic interest in the region as the source of intelligence gathering which Mori thought was no longer important in the post-war era, and the land of cultural road that brought Buddhism or the cultural heritage of the imperial collection in the Shōsōin that exist at the core of Japanese culture.

In his recent article on the Japanese perspective of the Silk Road, Katayama Akio who is one of the authors in this volume explains that the Silk Road term was first used as *shiruku rōdo* in katakana in Japanese during the 1930s, but it was still not standard practice. During the 1940s, the characters

ト コ dai kinu kaidō (The Ancient Silk Road) were used with the pre-war hiragana reading of *shirukurodo* for the translation of the title of August Herrmann's book that used von Richthofen's term *Seidenstrasse* for the Silk Road, also the term *kinu no michi* was used for the translation of Sven Hedin. The term *shiruku rōdo* really came to be used during the 1960s to explain the journey of Chinese monks to India in the Middle Ages and during the 1970s for the Japanese and Chinese joint collaboration in archeological studies with the normalization of relations. The Japanese travel accounts of the Meiji period in the multi-volume Meiji Silk Road Expedition Series that have been published over the 1980s represents the generic use of the term to conceptualize Meiji Japanese interest along the large geography across Eurasia.

The 1988 Nara Silk Road Exhibition and the 1994 Silk Road Research Center, invented the term, *shirukurōdo-gaku*, that can be translated as "Silk Roadology" to be the generic term to define the research on the region, especially for the study of manuscripts. During the last twenty years Japanese and Chinese joint projects have continued in the forms of Loulan research trips (sponsored by Asahi newspaper), restoration projects for the Kizil Buddhist caves, Niya ruins, and Turfan archeological excavations, which have all been published. The latest trends in Japanese Silk Road studies focus on the history of the Sogdian people of Iranian origin who traded along the Silk Road routes from their base in Samarkand. The new research of Yoshida Yutaka and Moriyasu Takao and Arakawa Masaharu were incorporated into the volumes of the 1997 Iwanami Press World History series.

Japanese interest in the Silk Roads, has again suddenly reappeared with the relaxation of access to the region at the end of the twentieth century. This was witnessed with the extraordinary success

of the Nxx documentary on the Silk Road in the 1980s with its popular Kitarō background music that was broadcast in more than 30 countries, including Turkey. The documentary was the first of many Japanese-Chinese collaborations on the region after the normalization of diplomatic relations, which shows the importance of this historical theme of shared cultural memory. While the Chinese start the Silk Road from China, the Japanese have linked the Silk Road to Nara, the first historic capital of the Japanese monarchy 710–784 and which became a center for the flow of Buddhism and artifacts from the Silk Road trade during the middle ages. The Nara Symposium for Digital Silk Roads, December 10–12, 2003 also represents the Japanese interest that locates the starting point of the Silk Road in Japan. The famous Japanese style painter Hirayama Ikuo (1930–2009) the *nihon-ga* artist devoted his entire artistic career to spreading the Silk Roads message by painting scenes from his journeys along the silk road geography. In 1961, Hirayama was the first recipient of a UNESCO fellowship and from 1990 to 1999, he financed ten fellowships a year, through the Hirayama Silk Roads Fellowships program. Hirayama's activism indicates the continuation of a cultural cosmopolitan version of Asianism after the end to political Asianist interest in the region.

The Japanese perception of the Silk Road region and Central Asia in turn fosters Turkish interest in the geography of the Silk Roads, where that academic knowledge of the region has remained relatively diffuse and thereby benefits from Japanese expertise. Founded in 1923 after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of the First World War, the primary orientation of the Republic was toward the West and Anatolia. Part of the late Ottoman and early Republican debate on a new national identity to replace the historic, dynastic one, romanticized the Turkic peoples of Central Asia as the rustic uncorrupted roots of the *ur-nation*. The Turkist agenda actually derived from the Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism discourse of Imperial Russia's Muslim intelligentsia, which has had a strong influence in Turkey. But the existence of Soviet rule and the Cold War handicapped any real access to the region for scholarly or geo-

political investigations from Turkey. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the Turkish government and businesses have taken the initiative in entering the Central Asian markets and construction projects—a move which imbues a strongly commercial tone to the use of the Silk Roads as a concept. The government has constructed a highway in Ulan Bator to the historic site of ancient Turkish monuments in Mongolia. Japanese academic research teams who possess strong training in the archeology and languages of the Silk Road and have direct contacts with academics in Central Asia also collaborate on occasion with Turkish counterparts from Turkey in a way that disseminates knowledge on the Silk Road and at the same time attests to the present-day relations between Japan, Turkey, and the region. The few Turkish scholars who have been truly interested in the Silk Road regions beyond ideological agendas, usually collaborate with German or Japanese scholars in their pursuit of Silk Road studies. Others such as the Chinese and Inner Asian historian of Turkey Isenbike Togan have been active in the UNESCO Project.

The Papers

The authors of this collective study present a rich combination of global expertise on Japan, Central Asia, and the Islamic world, which provides a multidisciplinary exposé of the Japanese narrative along the Silk Road. The papers include a first time survey of Japan's earliest knowledge about Central and Inner Asia. The book exposes the Japanese interaction in a wide geography from the Ottoman empire and Qajar Iran to Russia, Afghanistan, India and Mongolia. Each paper discusses the Japanese perspectives and policies, and at the same time brings to light the role of individuals in this venture: men such as the intelligence officers of the General Staff, Colonel Fukushima Yasumasa and Tanaka Giichi, who were to be instrumental in imperial Japan's military strategy vis-à-vis Russia; diplomats such as Nishi Tokujirō; Pan-Asianists such as Uchida Ryōhei, the Chairman of the Kokuryūkai (Amur River Society also known as the Black Dragons); the Japanese explorer and investigator and abbot of Nishi-Honganji temple, Count Ōtani Kōzui; the architect

Itō Chūta who pioneered “national architecture”; the founder of Oriental History Tōyōshi and the study of the North Asian nomad peoples, the historian Shiratori Kurakichi; and the founders of Turkology in Japan such as Mori Masao, Tachibana Zuichō and Watanabe Tesshin, among others.

The studies in this volume show that the Japanese interest along the geographic territories of the Silk Road represent the multiple components of the Silk Road imagination. The papers that discuss the Japanese outreach to Central Eurasia and the Silk Road are well-placed within the grand global historical narrative of imperial expansion, conquest of the Eurasian nomad frontier, and acceleration of communication and transportation by railroad and steamship which ensured the mobility of travelers as well as images and technology that underline the transformation of the world during the nineteenth century. The thematic topics of the papers can be categorized into five distinct categories: studies that relate to: Imperial Japan's geopolitical strategic interest in the region, the search for a modern Japanese Asian civilizational identity, Japanese scholarship on the indigenous historical legacy of the Silk Road, tracing historic cultural transfer to Japan, and finally Japanese investment in the economy and modern mobility along the routes of the Silk Roads. All represent different aspects of nineteenth and early twentieth century global history through the Japanese experience.

Japanese imperial geopolitics and the search for a contemporary civilizational identity in Asia form the shared thematic component of the Nish, Szpilman, Saaler, Esenbel, Narangoa, Komatsu, Dündar, Tankha, and Girardelli papers. Narangoa, Esenbel, and Komatsu focus on the Japanese images of Central Eurasian peoples, Mongols, Turks, and Muslims as subjects of Japanese imperial geopolitics. Saaler, Szpilman, Narangoa, Esenbel, and Komatsu shed light on the Japanese Pan-Asian gaze toward the Silk Roads Central Eurasian geography of Turkic populations, Mongols, and Central Asian Muslims. The Japanese gaze toward the ethno-national peoples of Central Eurasia forced Japanese Pan-Asianism to go beyond the familiar arguments of the same race (the yellow

race) and the same culture (Chinese culture-Confucianism), which were the early arguments of Ajiashugi—Great Asianism—in the Meiji period. Inter-Asian connections of Pan-Islamism and nationality questions in Central Asia and South and South East Asia launched Imperial Japan's global vision of Islam policy that became a geo-political strategy. The research of Esenbel, Szpilman, Komatsu, Narangoa reveals that already in the late Meiji era, the Japanese authorities had started to form contacts along the Silk Roads geography from Russia and China to the Ottoman empire to serve as a friendly network for Imperial Japan. Some of that network would presumably aid the Japanese empire's imminent challenge against the Western empires during the twentieth century. On the other hand, the work of Tankha and Girardelli traces the search of the Meiji architect Itō Chūta for a cosmopolitan Asian architectural aesthetic in his journeys along the Silk Road that took him to the Ottoman Empire and India: The journeys served as a mobile geography for constructing the modern civilizational identity of Japan that oriented toward Asia.

The global processes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century age of empire accelerated the modern mobility of cultural images and transfer of technology over the Silk Roads geography. The paper of Dündar on the travel of Japan's image into Central Asia during the Russo-Japanese War, Baykara on modern Japanese literary imagination about the Silk Road, and Kaygusuz on the inter-regional mobility of modern photography technology from Istanbul to Yokohama are examples of the mobility of images and technology along the Silk Roads. Küçükyalçın outlines Ōtani's vision for a mega-scale Central Eurasian speedy bullet train railway connection that would unite Tokyo with Berlin via Istanbul, shades of the present Chinese ambition for One Belt One Road. Finally Satō brings light to the diffuse impact of Buddhist stories on ancient Shinto tales that exposes an example of the cultural mobility that took place in pre-modern times along the Silk Road. Küçükyalçın, Katayama, Röhrborn, and Ölmez chisel out the detailed bibliographic history of Japanese studies on the Silk Roads region as the scholarly foundation of this global narrative that forms the legacy in the

post-war period and highlights the recent revival of interest.

The volume follows a roughly chronological pattern, starting with Ian Nish's paper which provides an overview of the Japanese interest in the Great Game that began with the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the Central Asian plains during the Afghan Wars and continued throughout the nineteenth century in the Eurasian geography of the Silk Road. Beginning with the memoirs of Aoki Shūzō, minister to Berlin (1880–5), deputy foreign minister (1887–92) and minister to Berlin a second time (1892–7) Nish takes up the important Japanese journeys in the region and their perspectives on the world of the Silk Road. Nish shows that the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War was a significant threshold that heightened Japanese involvement along the Silk Road beyond reconnaissance. Japan began to recruit agents among Japanese migrants in Siberia and the Russian Far East and Nish introduces the career of Ishimitsu Makiyo, an officer acting sub rosa in Manchuria and Siberia in the run-up to the Russo-Japanese war. Another aspect of intelligence gathering at this time is illustrated by the journey of Captain Tanaka Giichi (1864–1929), later to become a prime minister of Japan.

Sven Saaler discusses in depth the reconnaissance journeys of Major Fukushima Yasumasa (1852–1919) who, as an officer in the Imperial Japanese Army, undertook extensive travel in virtually all parts of Asia, and has come to be recognized as another significant Japanese explorer and intelligence-gatherer of the late nineteenth century. In this role, Fukushima Yasumasa would have been keen to gain some first-hand insights into the situation in Russia and Siberia and his activities have also been linked in a number of ways to the exploration of the Silk Road. Saaler's paper places Fukushima Yasumasa's travels, particularly his famed lone ride across Eurasia in 1891–1892 between Berlin and Tokyo, in the context of the second global age of discovery and exploration, in order to determine whether the mystique of the Silk Road was one of the motivations for undertaking his adventurous journeys throughout Eurasia. Saaler also examines the influence of his various expeditions on Fukushima's later career in the

Imperial Japanese Army, as well as the image of Fukushima in Japanese society after his death in 1919. Saaler argues that the information Fukushima gathered on his expedition to the Ottoman empire especially ‘Turkish Arabia,’ meaning the Arab provinces of Iraq, Syria, and Palestine during his year-long journey covering the Near and Middle East, and Central Asia in 1895/1897 was part of a reconnaissance mission. Fukushima submitted a valuable report to the Japanese Army General Staff. The report of this expedition would be used during the Russo-Japanese War (1904/05), but also later, to counter British influence in the region, when Japan entered a collision course with the Anglo-American powers in the 1920s and began competing with Britain in Central and South Asia. During the Boxer Uprising in China in 1899/1900, Fukushima “gained fame as the commander of the Japanese contingent and staff officer of the allied troops in Peking.” (The New York Times, 21 February 1919) Fukushima was selected for this position because of his contacts with British officers and, once again, for his knowledge of China and his command of the Chinese language.

Selçuk Esenbel builds on the Fukushima story from where Saaler leaves off and looks at the lone ride through Inner Asia using his travel accounts in a discussion of the empathetic discourse of Fukushima and Japan, identifying with the Inner Asian peoples and the Altai mountain range as the site of Japan’s imperial destiny. Like other “intelligence-riders” from Japan, Fukushima stresses the importance of the Ili region between the Russian and Chinese frontiers in Inner Asia, along with the historic frontier in northern Russian Turkestan. Ili contains the Altai and Tien-hsia mountain ranges in the northern part of Xinjiang province between China and the Republic of Mongolia, the former Outer Mongolia. In the nineteenth century it was mostly Kazakh nomads and Uyghur Turkic peoples that inhabited the region. This was a politically volatile spot already in the nineteenth century-Lattimore’s Pivot of Asia. The Russia expert of the Gaimushō who was sent to St. Petersburg to study Russian, Nishi Tokujirō (1870–1873), later Baron and Minister of Foreign Affairs, had visited the region immediately after it had been conquered by Russia during the

Yakub Beg rebellion of 1871, when he travelled between 1870–1873 throughout the region including the Ili region. Komatsu notes that Nishi traveled extensively in Russian Turkistan for about four months in 1880 on his return to Japan after serving as the extraordinary chargé d’affaires in St. Petersburg. Nishi travelled to the Ili region in 1880 before Russia returned the Ili territory to China in 1881. From the Japanese historical perspective, Ili also had religious significance. It was the gateway to the “Western regions—Seiki” (sometimes pronounced as Saiiki) to the heart of Buddhism in Tibet and India from the Silk Road. And it could be considered a potential defense frontier against Russia. After Fukushima’s visit during his 1893 journey, Ili came to be considered to be a major territory for Japanese strategic calculations about forming a frontier against Russian advance to the East. That its population was mostly non-Russian and non-Chinese Muslims of various Turkic tribes sealed this territory in the north as part of the territories wherein Islam-based intelligence and propaganda would take place. Already one of the conflict-prone regions of the late nineteenth century, the Ili region has continued to be politically volatile to this day.

An important component of Fukushima’s trip and that of the other Meiji visitors in the highlands of Inner Asia is that one can detect the roots of the identification of some Japanese with the nomad world of the steppe Turkic tribes, the Uyghur of Xinjiang, and the Mongols. Fukushima’s narrative of his lone rider trip in 1892–93 was constructed later by a former Army officer in 1979, based on a collection of Fukushima’s notes, newspaper accounts, and the recollections of his sons. His original report remained classified in the General Staff. The narrative is embellished with romantic images of Central Asia as an especially meaningful territory for Japan. Esenbel’s article next looks at Fukushima’s investigation of the Ottoman and Persian worlds in his visit to the Ottoman Empire during his third scouting trip between October 1895 and March 1897, a trip that took him to Iran, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Ottoman Iraq and which became the subject of his travel account *Chūō Ajia yori Arabia e* (From Central Asia to Arabia).

The article also introduces the recently published multi-volume diary of General Utsunomiya, an immensely valuable primary source as it provides the “nuts and bolts” of evidence of the network of global intelligence that Utsunomiya—who became Vice-Chief of Staff and head of the Second Bureau of intelligence—built in Asia together with Fukushima. The article shows the foreshadowing of Japanese networks among Muslims of the Silk Road, particularly Russia Muslims and Indian Muslim Pan-Islamists which, in the words of Utsunomiya, would be of use one day to Imperial Japan in the event of a clash with Christian powers.

Komatsu Hisao’s paper discusses the Japanese involvement in Central Asia with the second trip of Nishi Tokujirō (1847–1912) to the Ili region during 1880 while still under Russian occupation after suppressing the Yakub Bey revolt in 1871. Nishi’s journey appears to have inspired Fukushima and the later “lone” riders from Japan on the Silk Road. Komatsu considers Nishi’s assessment of Inner Asian peoples to be a realistic account. Komatsu analyzes Nishi’s report and the work entitled *Chūō Ajia kyi* (The Description of Central Asia) based on his field survey and investigation of foreign publication and sources. Komatsu concludes that the work should be considered as the first work of Central Asian studies in Japan that looked at Central Asia from a typically Asian and Japanese perspective. Komatsu’s paper continues to discuss the life and career of the important personality from Central Asia, Abdurreshid Ibrahim (1857–1944), an ardent Pan-Islamist and one of the most aggressive political figures among Russian Muslims, who became the main interlocutor between the Japanese authorities and the Islamic world as a Central Asian Muslim intellectual and religious figure and as one who was originally from Russia. Already in 1908–1909 during his visit to Japan he had surfaced as the major interlocutor in Japan’s Islam policy thinking, as reflected in General Utsunomiya’s diary. Komatsu suggests that Ibrahim’s pro-Japanese attitude and declarations during his stay in Japan from February to June 1909 succeeded in forming close personal relations with Japanese statesmen, intellectuals (especially right-wing nationalists), and army officers. The paper narrates Ibrahim’s long career with Japanese Pan-

Asianists after his return to Japan for the last time in 1933 and his cooperation with the government in Islam-oriented propaganda activities as the first imam of Tokyo Mosque that was opened in 1938 and as the Muslim head of the Dai Nippon Kaikyō Kyōkai (Great Japan Islamic Society) that came into existence in 1938 under the presidency of General Hayashi Senjurō (ex-War Minister and Prime Minister). In the words of Komatsu, the creation of the Great Japan Islamic Society highlights the great achievement of Islamic policy that aimed to awaken Asian peoples and create an anti-communist bloc in Asia.

Komatsu provides interesting new information on the last days of Ibrahim, when in May 1944 the Society ordered the holding of a celebration for the long life of this man. This scene of celebration was to be used for a propaganda film “Muslims in Tokyo” for the Muslim populations in the South Seas under Japanese occupation. According to the memories of the director of this film, Aoyama Kōji, shooting on the film caused old Ibrahim’s exhaustion and finally his death in mid-summer. In those days a Marxist left-wing researcher Kozai Yoshishige (1901–1990) who worked in the research department of the Society, left in his diary critical comments on the creation of the sacred persona of Ibrahim by the Society. Following the funeral ceremony Kozai wrote an obituary notice on the demand of the General Staff, and in December he wrote a broadcast article regarding the intentions of the late Ibrahim.

Christopher Szpilman analyzes the Japanese intellectual discourse that formulated the Islam policy of the 1930s at the government level that originated after the First World War from the activities and works of the PanAsianist right wing and that developed a new and aggressive stance toward Japanese imperial interest in Asia and particularly toward the world of Islam. Szpilman takes up the views of the right-wing radicals after the Great War who agitated for a Japanese Asianist revolution, the Showa Restoration, under military leadership. Right-wing radicals infused Asianist agendas and particularly Japanese cooperation with the Islamic world into a global vision of an alternative geography whose

revolutionary energy should be aligned to Japan's Asianist internationalism in a way that ought to challenge the hegemony of Western powers. Unlike the Meiji interest in the Silk Road that Fukushima and the others had, which by and large envisioned being in step with Western activities, the Asianists of the thirties were radical challengers to the existing status quo and Turkey, Iran and Islam itself became settings for the expectation of revolutionary changes. Colonel Hashimoto Kingorō who was the perennial coup plotter of the dark road to the end of democracy in Japan during the 1930s justified some of his military-led revolutionary agenda from observation of the secular modernist radical reforms of President Kemal Atatürk in the newly founded Republic of Turkey.

Szpilman's paper looks specifically at the thoughts of two military men, Colonel Hashimoto Kingorō (1890–1957) and Lieutenant Fukunaga Ken (1899–1991), and three civilian leaders of the radical pan-Asianist association, the Yūzonsha, namely Ōkawa Shūmei (1886–1957), Mitsukawa Kametarō (1888–1936) and Kanokogi Kazunobu (1884–1949). The views of these individuals are representative of Japan's radical right in general, and by examining them, a fair summary of the views of Japan's radical right on the Middle East is given.

Li Narangoa provides an account of the late Meiji Japanese idealization of the Mongol empire and identification with Mongols after the assessment of visitors like Nishi Tokujirō and Fukushima Yasumasa. She observes that during the late 19th to the early 20th centuries, the Mongol Empire in the 13 and 14th centuries that covered the Eurasian continent and revived the Silk Road, served as an aspiration for Japanese adventurers and intellectuals. It gave them confidence as an Asian race when Japan was being belittled by the Western Powers. They were proud that an Asian race, even if it were not the Japanese, had conquered half of the continental landmass. In the early 20th century, when Japan gained its confidence as a sovereign and modern state, the image of the Mongol empire still lingered on in the mind of many Japanese, especially when Japan began to expand its interest on the

continent. In this context, the image of the Mongol empire served two purposes: first, as a model of a unified Mongol state under Japanese leadership and, second, as an example of a territory that had once been under the Mongol empire that should be ruled by Asians under Japan, implying that entire central Asia under the influence of the Soviets should be taken from Russian rule. Li Narangoa provides a detailed account of the Japanese attempt to set up a Mongol state. She also includes an interesting account of the cultural and educational institution-building undertaken by the Zenrinkyōkai society—the Japanese society for friendship with Mongols that was successful in Inner Mongolia. Narangoa concludes that though the policy to send Mongolian graduates of the new schools to the western regions and entering into Central Asia from Inner Mongolia via the North West and Outer Mongolia failed, still the idea of Central Asia along the Silk Road left romantic dreams to young Japanese of the time, especially to those who worked and studied in Inner Mongolia, as the school song of the Kōa Gijuku illustrated: “Brethren, look up the Urals, Altai and Pamir ... the conquest path of Chingis Khan, forward by horse, when will we drink the water of the Caspian Sea.”

Merthan Dündar brings forth the cultural and literary side of the impact of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 on the Turkish world. He notes that essentially the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War was a turning point in instigating the love that Turks have had for Japan as an admirable model for modernity and self-reliance. It is possible to find the traces of this sympathy in the works and memoirs of many intellectuals, statesmen, and opinion leaders regardless of political differences of left, right, center, including President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, General Kazım Karabekir, the religious leader Saidi Nursi, the Pan-Islamist intellectual and poet Mehmet Akif, and the leftist poet Nazım Hikmet. Dündar presents a fresh look at the Turkic peoples' literary imagination with regard to Japan and the Russo-Japanese War that strongly serves to bring a nuanced understanding to the established discourse about the admiration for Japan in the Turkish world. His translations of poetry from the Karachay-Malkar Turks and

Azerbaijanis of the Caucasus, the Crimean Tatars and the Idil Ural Tatar literature of Central Asia include a rich collection of poems of soldiers from Central Asia who fought in the Russian imperial army at the “Japanese front” in Port Arthur. The poems include those of the Tatar intellectual and poet Gabdulla Tukay who was critical of Abdurresid Ibrahim’s publicity in favor of Japan as the savior of Islam—topics discussed in detail in the Esenbel and Komatsu papers. Tukay, who was a Tatar nationalist, counters the propaganda of those Pan-Islamists like Ibrahim who spread the word that the Meiji Emperor was about to convert Japan. However, though an opponent of Ibrahim’s pro-Japanese propaganda, Tukay too expresses admiration towards Japan as the land of science and education that should be a model for all. Dündar’s research reveals that the debate in Russia and the Muslim world about Japan as a model for Islamic modernity, such as led by people like Ibrahim who looms large in this discourse, was not one sided, and that there was also a secular nationalist interpretation.

The papers of Brij Tankha, Erdal Küçükyalçın, Miyuki Aoki Girardelli exploring the religious and cultural turn in the late nineteenth century around the turn of the twentieth century reflect a Meiji era fin-de-siècle of questioning and searching for counter arguments to the established norms of Western modernity. The era is noted for the increasing desire of late Meiji Japanese cultural personalities to investigate again the outside world of foreign geographies and civilizations but this time as part of constructing Modern Japan through exploring Asia and rediscovering Japanese tradition.

Brij Tankha draws attention to the extensive Asian expeditions of Count Ōtani Kōzui (1876–1948) of the Nishi Honganji temple in the Jōdo shinshū (True Pure Land Teaching), the major sect of Tokugawa Buddhism, and his close friend and associate founder of modern architecture Itō Chūta. He examines their travels in India through their diaries and travel writing that reflect the search for a modern Japan that incorporates the cosmopolitan civilizations of Asia with the dominant Western orientation of the early decades of the Meiji

Restoration that had witnessed a destructive attack on Japanese traditions of Buddhism and its classic artistic heritage. Tankha notes that Meiji travel writing in general, and accounts of exploration of Asia in particular, offer a source to show the varied ways in which Japan’s heritage and the underlying principles of its culture and history and its relationship with the Asian region were being defined to reinforce the civilized and modern status of Japan. In this paper Tankha looks at Ōtani’s intellectual project in the context of the restructuring of both Buddhism and his own sect, the Nishi Honganji, and his explorations of Asia together with the work of the architectural historian Itō Chūta (1867–1954), who played a crucial role in defining “tradition” in architecture and in attempting to create an Asian architecture for modern Japan. The interests and objectives of these two very different individuals led them both to explore Asia and brought them together to build a new Japan. He notes that the art historian and cultural bureaucrat Okakura Tenshin was also a key figure in laying out the intellectual contours of this project and that this new discourse in the latter half of the Meiji period at the turn of the twentieth century was shaped by a cross fertilization of European, Asian and Japanese ideas and that a simple flow from the “West” ignores these complex interactions that point to a far richer history.

Ōtani Kōzui turned to the exploration of areas of Inner Asia particularly those such as Kucha that had hitherto been unexplored by Western scholars, such as the Swedish geographer and explorer Sven Hedin (1865–1952) or Aurel Stein (1862–1943), the Hungarian-born explorer who worked for the British colonial government in India. In 1902 however, Kōzui decided to make an independent effort to explore the region, a decision that was met with much criticism in Europe. The European explorations were part of colonial policy and so a Japanese person launching an expedition was seen as a challenge to their intellectual hegemony. Tankha gives examples of the late Meiji Japanese excitement for travel that is truly global and not just restricted to the geography of the dominant Western world such as Uehara Yoshitarō, a close companion of Ōtani Kōzui, who has been called the

Ibn Batuta of Japan, because he traveled extensively and wrote a vivid account of his travels although being little known today.

Erdal Küçükyalçın focuses on the person of Ōtani Kōzui and traces his later career. The ardent Asianist believed in an alternative modernity that would entail a peaceful construction of Asia, which, however, in his words, was left unheard by ears deafened by the war cries of his generation. Küçükyalçın deciphers in detail the genealogy and family ties of Kōzui that placed him in the midst of the power elite in pre-war Japan with family ties par alliance to Taishō emperor and Prince Konoe Fumimaro, the politically important scion of the Fujiwara clan of Kyoto who became Prime Minister in 1937–39 and again in 1940–1941 when he was the Prime Minister on the eve of Japan's entering the Second World War. His paper concentrates on Kōzui's life after the famed expeditions to Central and Inner Asia and his resignation from chief abbacy as a result of a financial crisis in the Nishi Honganji temple. The paper analyzes Ōtani's enactment of his Asianist ideals in the establishment of a secondary school for boys in the Nirakusō villa that Itō Chūta had constructed for him with an eclectic Asian architectural design. Küçükyalçın takes up the Asianist vision of Ōtani through the Kōa keikaku (The Rise of Asia Project) the 10-volume work that he published in 1939–1940. In this magnum opus of his writings on Asia, Ōtani discusses the geography, societies, and culture of the Asian continent with detailed proposals for its economic recovery outlining projects for economic development, particularly agricultural modernization, that he favored as well as mega-projects such as the Tokyo-Berlin railway through Eurasia to facilitate transcontinental communication.

Miyuki Aoki Girardelli concentrates on the analysis of Itō Chūta's (1867–1954), intellectual journey as the inventor of the term *kenchiku* for architecture in modern Japanese and the first Japanese architectural historian through his travels in the Ottoman Lands for eight and a half months during his world trip of 1902–05. Girardelli analyses Itō's struggle for constructing a critical

notion of “Eastern architecture” in Japanese architectural discourse. His search for the origins of the entasis and *karakusa* (honey suckle motifs) observed in the columns of the 7th century Japanese Buddhist temple, Hōryūji, was a part of the Meiji Japan's efforts to establish a certain status for Japanese architecture in a Euro-centric architectural discourse. Itō stressed that entasis, the slight swellings at 1/3 of the column of Greek architecture, has gradually expanded to the East via India, the heartland of Buddhism, where the traces of Hellenistic influence on the heritage of Gandhara had already been tracked to some extent by British scholars such as James Fergusson and Sir Banister Fletcher. Itō's work was a personal challenge to the treatment of Japanese architecture as marginal in the world history of architecture which was typically represented by the British historian of architecture James Fergusson's comment in his “History of Indian and Eastern Architecture” published in 1891 stating that Japan lacked permanent buildings, a sense of magnificence and a connection with the building race of mankind. Leaving Japan for China on 29th March in 1902, Itō Chūta traveled around the world via Burma, Malay, India, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Greece, Italy, Germany, France, Britain and the United States. Throughout his life, Chūta left 76 volumes of field notes now preserved at the Architectural Institute of Japan. The first 12 volumes of this collection are dedicated to his great trip around the globe between 1902–1905 and four of them in total register the accounts of his stay in the Ottoman Empire. Girardelli reveals for us also the advantage of the recently signed Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 that aided Chūta in his travels in Ottoman lands as there was no Japanese-Turkish treaty, as explained in the Esenbel paper. Most interesting is her discovery that Lt. General Fukushima Yasumasa whose career in intelligence has already been accounted for in the Nish, Saaler, Esenbel, and Komatsu papers introduced Itō Chūta to Yamada Torajirō, long resident in Istanbul, who helped arrange his travels in the Ottoman Empire. Yamada and Itō became good friends during the latter's experience in the Ottoman Empire. Girardelli has studied Itō Chūta's

voluminous notes and documents related to his Ottoman travels, showing that Itō valued Byzantine architecture as it was between East and West. During his journeys, Itō searched after entasis columns and honeysuckle forms in historical architecture. Itō argued that these forms travelled to Japan through the Hellenistic symbiosis in Central Asia. We are to be led to understand that Itō's travels instigated his critical interpretation of the current Western rigid categorization of the history of architecture which led to his perception that architectural forms had an interrelated fluid relationship of continuum rather than rigid branches of unrelated Western and Eastern architecture. The research shows that at Tokyo Imperial University Chūta started, for the first time in Japan, a course entitled "History of Eastern Architecture" tōyō kenchikushi . Chūta included Egypt in this course, as a result of his travels throughout the Ottoman Empire. His new vision of world architecture and of the shifting boundaries between East and West had been largely shaped by that experience, and he continued his career as an architectural historian contributing to the first discourse on Islamic architecture in Japan.

The articles of Katayama Akio and Klaus Röhrborn provide important contributions that introduce for the first time in English language scholarship the field of Japanese Turkology that developed out of the Japanese interest in the Silk Road throughout this period. Amongst the modern scholarly fields that emerged out of the Japanese interest, the field of Turkology stands out, as Japanese scholarship on Turkology soon became one of the major contributions to the field. Japanese scholars also had the advantage of expertise in classical Chinese sources that strengthened their investigation of ancient historical and literary sources of Sinology on the Turkic peoples as well as the other peoples of Inner Asia.

Katayama's article outlines for the first time the major bibliographic sources of Japanese history since the Nihonshoki, The Chronicles of Japan, which was written in 720 and that reveals the historic knowledge of the Japanese on the ancient Turks or the Tujue of the Tang dynasty who were the major nomad foe of the Chinese empire between the 6th

and 8th centuries. The Tujue gave their name to the Turks of history whose first linguistic texts which were written in old Turkic script on the Orkhon steles in Mongolia that were erected in the early 8th century. The inscriptions were first discovered by Nikolay Yadrintsev in 1889 and were deciphered by the Danish philologist Vilhelm Thomsen in 1893. Katayama has carefully traced the references to the Tujue in the classic Chinese works which were part of the scholarly repertoire of upper class Japanese nobles and scholars ever since the Nara age in the 8th century when the Japanese imperial court accepted the Chinese civilization of the Tang dynasty and sent students to study Buddhism and the classics. He provides the major classic works and maps that had information on the Tujue as the nomad power in the Inner Asian frontier of China, discussing the sources that were available into the Edo period. His research indicates that this historic familiarity facilitated the strong interest of the Meiji Japanese in Turkic studies that had recently emerged in Europe, resulting in the quick incorporation of Turkology as modern scholarship in Japan. Like the personal identification of some Japanese with the Mongolian empire and the Mongols as Li Narangoa has explained, Katayama's narrative explains the strong interest of early Meiji scholars of such as the founder of, tōyō-shi oriental history, Shiratori Kurakichi who developed an ardent interest in Turkic and Mongolian languages and the nomads of North Asia, which he thought explained the early history of the Japanese as a North Asian people. The nomads of North Asia, the Turkic peoples of the Silk Road who spoke Altaic languages hence constituted a global geography of identification in North Asia for some Japanese who concluded that there were historic links between the Japanese and the nomad world of North Asia. His paper also shows the direct role of Ōtani Kōzui's personal interest in the Tujue who inhabited the Inner Asian and Central Asian routes of Buddhism. The expeditions that collected precious manuscripts and ethnological material on the Turkic peoples as well as the major interest in Buddhism accelerated Japanese interest in the ancient Turks as well as the modern Turks. Katayama's in depth unearthing of the Japanese historic knowledge on the Tujue

explains why modern Japanese Turkology developed noticeably quickly with such eminent scholars as Mori Masao, who was also from a family of Nishi Honganji tradition of the Ōtani expeditions, and who became a globally important Japanese expert in the international academy of Turkology.

Klaus Röhrborn's paper extends Katayama's discussion by providing a comprehensive survey of modern Japanese scholarship on Turkology, or Turkish philology in Japan, that focuses on deciphering the Uyghur texts from Inner Asia, particularly from the Buddhist period of the middle ages and the early modern period. In the words of Professor Röhrborn, Japanese Turkology from the beginning developed in a "Buddhological" direction because of Japanese interest in the Tujue peoples and the Uyghur as border nations of China. Unlike the field of Turkish philology that emerged in Europe during the nineteenth century as the study of Altaic languages in order to develop comparative IndoGermanic linguistics, Japanese interest in philological grammar issues evolved much later. The rich collection that the Ōtani Kōzui expedition brought back included Uyghur Turkic language Buddhist texts from Inner Asia which gave the first impetus to the beginning of Turkology. For the Jōdoshinshū (True Pure Land sect) of the Honganji community, the Uyghur Turkic texts of Buddhism that were translated from Sanskrit carried great importance for understanding the history of Japanese Buddhism in the global context of East Asia. Tachibana Zuichō was an important member of the expeditions and can be considered the first scholar of Turkic languages with his publication of Uyghur Buddhist texts in the journal of Nirakusō villa that had been established by Ōtani. The paper reviews the significant publications of Japanese scholars from Ryūkyō University of Nishi-Honganji temple and Central Asian and Inner Asian studies in Kyoto and Tokyo Universities that became the major centers for the study of Turkish philology.

According to Röhrborn, Japanese scholarship is distinguished from the tradition of European studies of Turkish philology for giving special importance to the correlation of Uyghur Buddhist texts with the

Chinese Buddhist templates. This was not that significant in European scholarship, which had primarily focused on the study of the Turkic texts alone. Japanese scholars have also formed close collaborations with German Turkologists in the field such as Annemarie von Gabain and Klaus Röhrborn as well as Turkish scholars. Haneda Akira, Mori Masao, Yamada Nobuo were the major names of the first generation in the post-war period. The young generation is represented by the works of Oda Jūten and Kudara Kōgi, among others. It should be also noted that even though Turkology had already developed in Japan from the late Meiji period, the scholarship took place in Buddhist Studies or Central Asian Studies centers for a long time with no official program in Turkology in any university. Finally, in the early 1980s, the first Department of Turkish Studies was founded in Tokyo Foreign Studies University. Klaus Röhrborn's essay is a significant contribution to the English language academy on Central Asian and Inner Asian studies, especially for the study of Uyghur texts and early Turkish philology and linguistics as it provides for the first time a comprehensive appraisal and bibliography of the strong Japanese scholarship in this field that has been developing for almost a century.

Mehmet Ölmez, a former student of Professor Röhrborn, has completed this important study that introduces to the English reading academy the review and comprehensive list of Japanese scholarship by extending the review of Japanese studies of Turkology from the date Klaus Röhrborn left off in 1988 to 2009, bringing the discussion of Japanese scholarship up to date. He has followed Röhrborn's method in preparing an appendix that provides the recent important works by Japanese scholars on the study of Uyghur texts and other Turkic linguistic materials. His work is published as an appendix to Röhrborn's essay.

Banu Kaygusuz focuses on the transnational processes of cultural and technological interactions between the Middle East and East Asia in the long nineteenth century through the photographic careers that connected the Ottoman Empire with Dainippon, the empire of Japan. The paper traces the life story of Felice Beato (1834–1907)—or

Felix Beato as he was known in Japan—who is credited for having produced the first series of photographs about the early Meiji period that represent a popular aesthetic representation of traditional Japan. Kaygusuz has discovered Beato's links with the Ottoman world. Born as a Venetian in Corfu who became a British subject, he moved to Japan as the assistant of James Robertson, (1813–1888), his brother-in-law, to pursue a professional career as a photographer. Beato's life and works vividly represents inter-regional cultural interactions between the Ottoman Empire, India, China, and Japan—the sites of his photography—as a fluid dynamic process. Beato's interesting career began first as a documentary photographer of the Crimean War and he continued to record the major regional conflicts of the British Empire in Asia moving to the 1857 Indian Mutiny, the Second Opium War in 1860 in China, and finally to Japan where he developed the genre of commercial photography in creating nostalgic images of Japan for Western audiences. In Felix Beato's life and photography, Kaygusuz recognizes the importance of “transmigrant” experiences which showed the fluid boundaries between the “East and the West” that shaped modern history.

In a similar way to Pierre Loti (1850–1923) who also combined the Ottoman and Meiji worlds in his personal life in a way that was expressed in the romantic orientalism of his writings, Beato also combined both sites of the “Orient” in his professional life and photographic imagination that portrayed the Ottoman and Japanese worlds in photographic images that circulated around the globe nostalgic images of the “Near East” and the “Far East.” His studio in Yokohama produced the Views of Japan photograph albums, which became very popular particularly among the Westerners in Japan. The paper argues that Beato's photography as an observer, a flaneur, carried the ideological visual baggage as a cultural interpreter of inter-Asian regional circulation of knowledge and experience.

Oğuz Baykara discusses the Silk Road as the imagination of the exotic, pungent, timeless literature of others in the short story of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke titled Toshishun that was a creative

adaptation of an ancient tale from India and China by Du Zichun () that had arrived in Japan. Toshishun is a well-known tale of Chinese tradition about the illusion of reality and the failure to achieve immortality. Baykara compares the original Chinese tale from the Tang dynasty that Akutagawa used as an inspiration to create a tale that is based in the Silk Road setting of the Tang Period of China (618–907), which the Japanese public was familiar with as the age when Buddhism and the Chinese civilization arrived in the Japanese islands. As Akutagawa began his story:

One spring evening, at dusk, a young man stood gazing idly at the sky outside the west gate of the city of Luoyang the capital of Tang. His name was Toshishun. Although he was born into a wealthy family, he had squandered all his fortune and now he was in trouble without any money and a place to stay ...

Akutagawa narrates the test of young man Toshishun who fails to keep silent when devils start beating the two horses who are his parents in disguise until blood comes out of their body, and when he cries out “Mother, I love you!” the magic is broken. He comes back to real life, which means he did not keep his promise to the sage Tekkanshi and can never become a sage. He can only continue life as a mortal man.

Baykara starts his analysis with the theoretical frame of Even-Zohar that culture and literature are also items of import like silk, spice and perfumes. In the polysystem theory he suggests, a set of hypotheses for handling the cultural and literary imports and “the makings of culture repertoire.” Even-Zohar states that a culture repertoire is not biologically given but “made,” “learned” and “adopted” by members of the group. Baykara adapts the concept of cultural repertoire to Akutagawa's story about Toshishun by a contrastive analysis with the older, Chinese version.

Masako Satō picks up a similar theme of a cultural journey when Buddhism arrived in Japan from the Silk Road region and in time became part of the construction of syncretic religious culture that transformed the myth in the Japanese ancient written history, the Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters: 712) and the Nihonshoki (Chronicles of

Japan: 720), of the protagonist Ame-waka-hiko “Heavenly Young Prince,” and the offering of a girl to a snake deity into the medieval tale of the Star Festival (Tanabata) motif from China. The study is based on a copy of the medieval picture scroll in the Edo period and the text of “The Tale of Prince Ame-waka-hiko,” illustrated by the famous painter Tosa Hirochika (1439–1487) with calligraphy by Emperor Gohanazono (1419–1470, reg. 1428–1467), which is in the Museum of East Asian Art, Berlin.

Constructing the paper around Claude Lévi-Strauss’s concept of the structure of myth and “mytheme,” Satō’s paper looks at how these elements changed with a view toward how people felt after the ancient state system of the 8th century lost its power, and what influenced the cultural transformation as a result of Chinese civilization from the continent. The story is constructed from a range of elements and motifs, seen in various ancient myths and narrative tales; for example, the offering to a giant snake is seen as an element in the myths in the oldest written source in the Kojiki and the Nihonshoki or in the Fudoki (provincial gazetteers). The myth of the Heavenly Young Prince is based on “The Eight-Forked Serpent,” itself a well-known legend. A similar variation of this story has a woman who marries a snake who turns out to be a god (in human form). This story not only appears in the ancient chronicles but also in the ancient Greek myth of “Cupid and Psyche” which leads to the loss of a partner because of the breaking of a promise. While using the same protagonist Heavenly Young Prince, the Kojiki story transformed into the medieval tale ends by putting the whole plot in the frame of the star festival. The festival is called Tanabata, and traces its origins to an ancient Chinese ritual celebration called Kikkōden, with the legend that the Cowherd Star (Altair) and Weaver Star (Vega), separated by the Milky Way, are allowed to meet just once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month. Satō interprets the story as a mirror of a cultural phenomenon. The story is reflected in the socio-cultural structure: religious syncretism or fusion as cultural phenomenon, a progressive integration of the socio-cultural shift under the huge influence of China and a universal religious world.

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[Studies in Historical Documents from Nepal and India](#) edited by Simon Cubelic, Axel Michaels, Astrid Zotter [Documenta Nepalica, Heidelberg University Publishing, 9783946054719] [available for purchase and as free pdf download](#)

This volume is the outcome of the conference “Studying Documents in Premodern South Asia and Beyond: Problems and Perspective”, held in October 2015 in Heidelberg. In bringing together experts from different fields—including Indology, Tibetology, History, Anthropology, Religious Studies, and Digital Humanities—it aims at exploring and rethinking issues of diplomatics and typology, the place of documents in relation to other texts and literary genres, methods of archiving and editing documents, as well as their “social life”, i.e. the role they play in social, religious and political constellations, the agents and practices of their use, and the norms and institutions they embody and constitute.

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Excerpt:

The volume at hand is the outcome of the conference “Studying Documents in Pre-Modern South Asia and Beyond: Problems and Perspective”, held from 4 to 6 October 2015 in Heidelberg and organised by the research unit Documents on the History of Religion and Law of Premodern Nepal of

the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

Our aim was to bring together experts in the field of documentary cultures in South Asia and beyond in order to rethink the textual category of documents and to contemplate on its place in interdisciplinary research on South Asia. Despite their temporal and spatial differences, the contributions assembled in this volume are interconnected by a wide range of common themes and questions (see introduction).

In the book they have been arranged around major subjects, the first of which forms diplomatics and the formal features of documents and deeds.

The first piece is by T. Lubin, who presents a bird's eye view of the formation of an Indic diplomatic tradition. G. Vogeler chooses an even wider angle when he explores the possibilities of digital methods in developing a global framework for the discipline of diplomatics. In contrast, C. Ramble presents a local case study from 19th to 20th century Mustang, where a local diplomatic culture drew on Tibetan, Nepali and maybe even British idioms and practices.

The next three articles deal with questions of documentary practices and the formation of cultural memory. Y. Raj uses Newari Chātas to challenge the hegemony of Western narrativist historiography based on chronology, causal explanation and teleology. A. von Rospatt studies specimens of the same textual category, in his case relating to the Newar Buddhist communities at the Svayambhūcaitya, Kathmandu. He shows how records of past actions provide a framework for collective practice. C. Sibille's contribution leads from pre-modern Nepal to the present, discussing how digitalisation of archival records and the cross-linkage of their content is changing archival practice. The recording, preservation and transmission of legal titles has been a major concern of South Asian documentary cultures since antiquity.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that law represents the largest thematic unit in this volume. D. Acharya gives an insight into the law of debt in 17th century Mithila. R. O'Hanlon traces the

changing role of witnesses and written evidence in property disputes in the Maratha judicial system from the early modern to the colonial period. Three papers are devoted to Nepal's legal history during the Rāṇā period. R. Khatiwoda draws on documents to prove that Nepal's first legal code of 1854 was actually enforced. A. Michaels investigates a letter from Jaṅga Bahādura Rāṇā to a dharmasabhā in Benares of the same time, which shows that traditional centres of jurisprudence were still called upon. S. Cubelic enquires into local inflections of the legal regulations on revenue farming in early 20th century Kathmandu. Especially from the early modern period onwards, South Asia witnessed increasing administrative documentation, owing to the influence of Islamic polities and the European colonial presence. Emerging bureaucracies and the state building process in Nepal come to the fore in the three subsequent papers. M.P. Joshi and M.M. Joshi study the role of local elites in the consolidation of Gorkhali rule in Kumaon. G. Krauskopff uses the Tharu as a case study to show how the governmental strategies of the Nepalese and the colonial state affected the political and economic life of that group. M. Bajracharya's contribution on a Newar munshi highlights the opportunities which the professionalisation of bureaucracy offered scribal groups.

The growth of administrative documentation altered not only techniques of rule and the interaction of state and society, but also the relationship between the state and religious and ritual activity, as the last three articles of this volume demonstrate. M. Horstmann shows for Rajasthan and C. Zotter for Nepal that ascetic organisations adopted documentary and bureaucratic practices to negotiate with the state. Finally, A. Zotter's piece on the Dasāī festival in 19th-century Nepal demonstrates that bureaucracies were not only instrumental for centralizing political power, but also for ritual practices. <>

New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents

Editors: Bart D. Ehrman, Eldon J. Epp. New Testament Tools, Studies, and Documents (NTTsd) combines two series, New Testament Tools and Studies (NTTs) and Studies and Documents (sd). The

former was founded by Bruce M. Metzger in 1965 and edited by him until 1993, when Bart D. Ehrman joined him as co-editor. The latter series was founded by Kirsopp and Silva Lake in 1935, edited by them until the death of Kirsopp Lake in 1946, then briefly by Silva Lake and Carsten Høeg (1955), followed by Jacob Geerlings (until 1969), by Irving Alan Sparks (until 1993), and finally by Eldon Jay Epp (until 2007).

The new series will promote the publication of primary sources, reference tools, and critical studies that advance the understanding of the New Testament and other early Christian writings and writers into the fourth century. Emphases of the two predecessor series will be retained, including the textual history and transmission of the New Testament and related literature, relevant manuscripts in various languages, methodologies for research in early Christianity. The series will also publish a broader range of studies pertinent to early Christianity and its writings. <>

[The Early Textual Transmission of John: Stability and Fluidity in Its Second and Third Century Greek Manuscripts](#) by Bell Lonnie [New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents, Brill Academic, 9789004360754]

In [The Early Textual Transmission of John](#) Lonnie D. Bell utilizes a fresh approach for assessing the character of transmission reflected in the second and third century Greek manuscripts of the Gospel of John, our best attested New Testament book in the early period.

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Excerpt:

Introduction to the Study

It has been widely claimed or accepted among New Testament textual critics that the earliest centuries of textual transmission for the texts that now comprise the New Testament were characterized by "freedom," "fluidity," "instability," "laxity," "proneness to error," "carelessness," "wildness," "chaos," "lack of control," etc.¹ Although these claims have differed in regard to when the text was most unstable, most seem to agree that the period in question is that which roughly preceded the fourth century or the time of Constantine and the Council of Nicaea. This study is an inquiry into the validity of this general characterization of New Testament textual transmission up to the fourth century, in which a fresh approach is applied to one relevant body of evidence, namely, the second- and third-century Greek manuscript witnesses to the Gospel of John.

Major Approaches to the Early Papyri

Two of the most formidable textual critics of the twentieth century, Eldon Epp and Kurt Aland, have asserted the importance of the early New Testament papyri. Epp has remarked, "there is virtually unanimous agreement that the New Testament papyri not only are textual criticism's greatest treasure but also its best hope for 'cracking' the textual 'code' and breaking through to the original text" (with "original text" being

placed in inverted commas and its use critiqued and heavily nuanced in subsequent publications). He has more recently asserted, “the early periods are of greatest interest and importance in textual criticism, for manuscripts up to around 600 are primary in isolating the earliest attainable text.” He has pointed out that the early papyri were, however, under-utilized throughout the twentieth century because they were inconsistent with established theories, overshadowed by the later uncials, largely fragmentary, and perceived as only reflecting the text in Egypt. In his attempt to use the papyri to identify early “textual clusters,” Epp has convincingly shown through the “dynamic” movement of people, ideas, and correspondence in and around Middle Egypt that the text in Egypt can be taken as reflective of the forms and character of the New Testament text in the larger Mediterranean world. Kurt Aland, although opposed to Epp’s idea of early text-types, has given the papyri “automatic significance” because they bring us back as far as the second century.

Additionally, Larry Hurtado, in particular, has argued for the importance of the second- and third-century papyri as the “earliest Christian artifacts” and draws attention to certain physical features such as the use of the codex and the presence of nomina sacra, the staurogram, corrections, and readers’ aids as important evidence for the early transmission and use of Christian texts. The textual transmission evidenced in these earliest extant witnesses is the primary focus of a somewhat recent work edited by Charles Hill and Michael Kruger that is devoted to the early New Testament text, with contributions from a wide array of experts in early New Testament papyri and related text-critical and historical topics.

In light of their importance, there have been several major approaches to the study of the earliest New Testament papyri. First, Epp has emphasized their significance for establishing a theory and history of the early New Testament text. His purpose has been to argue for the quantitative comparison of these earliest witnesses, one with another and with later majuscules, in order to pinpoint the earliest recognizable text-types. Epp has called his approach a “trajectory method” in which he uses the papyri to identify “textual

clusters” or “textual groups” and then “streams” or “trajectories” running throughout the manuscript tradition. In 1989 he attempted to classify individual papyri into one of four textual groups (A, B, C and D), each based on one or two of the major majuscules.

Second, in a chapter-length study published in 2002, Barbara Aland expressed her desire to establish the methodological basis upon which the early fragmentary papyri can be assessed, valued, and thus used in New Testament textual criticism. In her judgment, the pressing questions include scribal habits, rate of error, and any textual affinities that maybe detected. Colwell’s method in which only singular readings are studied is deemed by Aland to be an insufficient approach to the smaller fragmentary papyri. She contends that by treating only singular readings, a number of other, useful readings are left out, which may have been introduced by the individual scribe, and there are, in comparison with the more extensive papyri studied by Colwell, too few singular readings in the smaller fragments. Her approach involves four features: 1) the inclusion of all variants—singulans and those shared with other witnesses; 2) a collation based on NA27 as the initial text (hypothetischer Ausgangstext) of the manuscript tradition and a comparison of readings with co-witnesses for the purpose of identifying possible textual groups (which she finds unlikely in most cases) and discerning whether variants were inherited or created; 3) a classification as “strict,” “normal,” “free” due to carelessness or “free” due to editorial interventions based on the tolerance of error reflected in the papyrus; and, 4) a consideration of the total number of variation-units in the section of text attested by the papyrus in her assessment and classification.

Aland uses her method in that study to assess fifteen recently published fragmentary papyri. She treats all variants from NA27 and then tries to determine which of these are likely to have originated with the individual scribe who copied the papyrus, so that she can discuss the manner of transmission. In this process, she notes relationships with other witnesses and any textual form or group to which the papyrus may have belonged. If no pattern of affinity is apparent, then many of the

readings with only slight support are said to derive from the scribe himself. In her attempt to classify each papyrus, she devotes some space to the nature and seriousness of variants, making observations on recurring errors and intentionality.

Aland later applied her method, although more loosely, to all second- and third-century fragmentary papyri of the Gospel of John, adding P6 from the fourth century and excluding the extensive P66 and P75. As in her previous article, she contends that the early fragmentary papyri, unlike the extensive “great papyri,” do not supply enough data to perform a full-scale study of scribal habits, to draw precise distinctions between inherited and created readings, and to trace already known textual forms present in the majuscules back to an earlier time (as can be accomplished with P75 and B). Thus, by utilizing her previously outlined method, she wants to answer the question, “wozu nützt die große Menge der kleinen Papyri?” [“Of what use is the great quantity of small papyri?”]. Before providing a brief evaluation of each papyrus, she explicitly states the objective of her study: “Ziel ist es, den Wert der frühen fragmentarischen Papyri im Rahmen der Gesamtüberlieferung des Johannesevangeliums zu bestimmen” [“The aim is to determine the value of the early fragmentary papyri within the framework of the overall tradition of the Gospel of John.”]

For each papyrus treated in this brief assessment, Aland lists variation-units for which the papyrus is extant and specifically addresses readings that deviate from NA27. If she cannot discern a pattern of agreement with co-witnesses in the variants of the papyrus, then she interprets them as having likely arisen from the individual copyist, or from the Vorlage but without connection to any kind of textual group. Accordingly, if no affinity can be determined, then it appears that the manuscript as a whole, in light of all its deviations, is judged on the basis of its nearness to NA27 without much further commentary or distinction regarding the origin of its variants. Where an otherwise careful papyrus contains a few careless mistakes, these mistakes are regarded, especially if there is moderate support from other witnesses, as inherited from the Vorlage. Aland, therefore, attempts to make observations about the probable origin of

variants appearing in each papyrus, while also recognizing the uncertainty inherent in this endeavor. Her assessment of variants includes brief discussion of their nature, significance, and intentionality. She concludes by noting the important variants covered and the overall closeness to NA27 exhibited.

Third, Barbara Aland’s former doctoral student, Kyong Shik Min, has utilized and extended her approach in his study of the early fragmentary papyri and one majuscule of the Gospel of Matthew up to the beginning of the fourth century.²⁰ He engages with each manuscript under three headings: 1) Text and Apparatus; 2) Analysis; and, 3) Conclusion. Under “Text and Apparatus,” he provides a transcription of the papyrus and an accompanying apparatus based on NA27. He presents the reading of the papyrus, or the lack thereof, for each variation-unit in NA27, and he adds singular, sub-singular, or narrowly attested readings from the papyrus that are not treated in that apparatus. Under “Analysis” he begins by supplying important palaeographical and bibliographical information. He then launches into his own text-critical analysis by statistically noting the extent to which the papyrus deviates from the text of NA27 in light of the total number of variation-units for that portion of text, and he notes the number of singular or sub-singular readings that he has added to his analysis. He then proceeds to list and discuss all deviations from NA27 by classifying them twice, into two separate categories. The first includes the four formal categories of variation, and each is given with its percentage of occurrence in the papyrus: additions, omissions, transpositions, and substitutions. The second category provides further text-critical detail about type and/or origin: corrections, orthography, nonsense readings, singular readings, and harmonizations. His “Analysis” section concludes with a discussion of textual character, where he reconstructs the Vorlage by distinguishing between inherited and created readings and comments on textual affinity, proximity to the initial text (Ausgangstext = NA27), and the overall nature of deviations in terms of carelessness, intentionality, etc. He excludes singular and sub-singular readings as well as those that are narrowly attested /nearly

sub-singular from his assessment of textual character, since he judges that these were likely creations of the scribe. He briefly classifies both the text and the individual scribe's activity as "strict," "normal," or "free" (or in one case "very free").

Under "Conclusion" Min numerically lists the major points that constitute the fruit of his previous analysis, and he elaborates on his classifications of the papyrus with respect to the accuracy of the scribe who copied it (Überlieferungsweise) and the textual quality of the Vorlage that underlies it (Textqualität). He also takes this opportunity, in response to the work of Bart Ehrman, to make note of the presence or absence of intentional, dogmatic alterations. At the end of Min's study, all fourteen manuscripts treated in his analysis are listed in a table with two classifications corresponding to his two categories of Überlieferungsweise and Textqualität.

Fourth, James Royse in his meticulously researched 2008 monograph, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*, builds upon Colwell's study of the scribal habits of P45, P66, and P75 by examining the singular readings of the six extensive early New Testament papyri in order to determine, as precisely as possible, the scribal habits behind each manuscript, and thus to refine our understanding of transcriptional probability. Much of the literature concerning scribal habits and transcriptional probability, according to Royse, has not evidenced sufficient objectivity and methodological rigor. Similar to Colwell, but going beyond his use of Tischendorf⁸ to verify singularity, Royse attempts to offer "a carefully formulated and implemented methodology." In his treatment of the singular readings in P45, P46, P47, P66, P72, and P75, covering a range of New Testament books, Royse sheds light on how variants arose and on scribal attitudes towards the text in the earliest period with extant manuscript evidence.

For each papyrus, Royse introduces the manuscript, treats corrections, and then lists orthographic and nonsense singulars before laying out "significant singulars." The latter are listed under the categories of Omissions (including Leaps), Additions, Transpositions (including Transpositions as Corrected Leaps), Substitutions (including Prefixes,

Proper Names, Pronouns, Cases of Nouns), and Conflations. Where applicable, singular readings are also listed under the categories of Harmonization to Parallels, Harmonization to Context, Harmonization to General Usage, and Theological Changes. He concludes his study of each papyrus with a brief summary of its characteristic transmission features. Royse also makes a strong case for abandoning the criterion of *lectio brevior potior*, at least for the period covered by the early papyri, by showing that these scribes were much more likely to omit than they were to add.

My Question and Approach

Moving from major approaches to the papyri, we now come to the specific issue that I intend to address with the method outlined in this introduction, namely, the level of fluidity and stability in New Testament textual transmission in the second and third centuries. It is helpful to begin this introductory discussion by looking at Hort's assessment of textual transmission in these earliest centuries, since many of the later arguments and descriptive terms find early expression here. At the center of Hort's view of early New Testament transmission character was his understanding of the antiquity and near ubiquity of the "Western" text, whose primary representative among Greek manuscripts at least for the Gospels and Acts is Codex Bezae, the characteristics of which he took to be typical of the early period. In Hort's judgment, this free text (markedly paraphrastic, unscrupulous, interpolated, harmonized, and intermingled with other traditions and sources) developed early and was widespread, and thus represented the attitudes and practices associated with the reproduction of New Testament documents that dominated the 'Ante-Nicene' period. This "early Western inundation" resulted in large-scale corruption during the second and third centuries, and its text enjoyed widespread (though not exclusive) acceptance and usage outside of Alexandria, where the "Neutral" text was more carefully preserved, albeit with "Alexandrian" changes less severe than their "Western" contemporaries. It is due to this historical reconstruction, one in which a heavily corrupted text typified the early period, that Hort spoke of "early

textual laxity” or “licence in transcription” when describing the character of pre-fourth-century textual transmission.

Reverberations of Hort’s portrayal and language used to characterize transmission in these earliest centuries can be seen from a sampling of comments and arguments that have since been made by a number of leading researchers in the discipline. According to Colwell, “in the early centuries of the New Testament period accurate copying was not a common concept,” and “The general nature of the text in the earliest period (to A.D. 300) has long been recognized as ‘wild,’ ‘uncontrolled,’ ‘unedited.’” Barbara Aland affirms the general assumption that “in the fourth/fifth century there was a higher degree of precision in copying than was characteristic of earlier periods” (but see quote from the Alands below). Ehrman identifies “the period of the wildest variation” as that “prior to the fourth century.” While his main comparison seems to be between the “high Middle Ages” and previous periods of textual transmission in general, he regards the period before the fourth century as particularly fluid and unstable. Royse expresses his general acceptance of this characterization as well, and in the course of his summary, he adduces a number of supporting quotes from leading figures in New Testament textual criticism. He concludes, “It is certainly plausible that scribal habits in the pre-300 period may have differed significantly from those of later times.” George D. Kilpatrick, with his emphasis on early Atticistic corruption, places the period of freedom before 200 C.E.

Some who support this general characterization of early fluidity, most notably Helmut Koester, William Petersen, and David Parker, have maintained that our earliest extant papyri are the product of late second-century Alexandrian recension and are thus too late to serve as indicators of previous transmission attitudes and practices. Koester and Petersen, then, underscore textual differences between citations in early patristic writers, particularly Justin Martyr, and the readings in current critical editions based on the Greek manuscript evidence as proof of the freedom characteristic of what they regard as this pre-recensional state of transmission. Parker explains that “the free-text form of Codex Bezae” is “as old

as the second-century” and that it, in conjunction with the Old Syriac, Old Latin, and early patristic sources, reflects more broadly the kind of loose and “living” transmission practiced in that period.

Other scholars have challenged these characterizations. Frederik Wisse has noted the lack of evidence for the view that “in the pre-canonical period scribes were less hesitant to take liberties with the text,” and instead contends, “there is no basis to assume that the early, poorly attested history of the transmission of the text was governed by factors different from those operative in the canonical period.” Kurt and Barbara Aland’s handbook of textual criticism, although often cited by those who point to or support this view of widespread carelessness, laxity, or freedom in the earliest centuries, appears actually to argue to the contrary:

P45, P46, P66, and a whole group of other manuscripts offer a “free” text, i.e., a text dealing with the original text in a relatively free manner with no suggestion of a program of standardization ... Some have gone so far as to interpret these “free” texts as typical of the early period. But this cannot be correct, as fresh collation of all the manuscripts of the early period by the Institute for New Testament Textual Research has shown. The “free” text represents only one of the varieties of the period. Beside it there is a substantial number of manuscripts representing a “normal” text, i.e., a relatively faithful tradition which departs from its exemplar only occasionally, as do New Testament manuscripts of every century. There is an equally substantial number of manuscripts representing a “strict” text, which transmit the text of an exemplar with meticulous care (e.g., P75) and depart from it only rarely. Finally, we also find a few manuscripts with a paraphrastic text, which belong in the neighborhood of the D text ... The text of the early period prior to the third/fourth century was, then, in effect, a text not yet channelled into types, because until the beginning of the fourth century the churches still lacked the institutional organization required to produce one.

It is in the context of the Alands' argument here that their references to a freely developing text should be taken, namely, in the context of their discussion of freedom from ecclesiastical recension and from the development of text types. Moreover, this diversity reflected in the papyri makes improbable the claim that these earliest manuscripts, even if they are all of an Egyptian provenance, are merely the product of an Alexandrian type of text deriving from a supposed late second-century recension.

More recently, scholars such as Larry Hurtado, Michael Holmes, Tommy Wasserman, Charles Hill, and Michael Kruger have drawn attention to aspects of stability and care in early textual transmission, and, in contrast to Koester, Petersen, and Parker, have emphasized the unlikelyhood of a late second-century recension, the evidentiary importance of the earliest papyri, and the inadequacy of early patristic citations in particular for determining the nature of textual transmission in the earliest centuries. In commenting on the data available for the earliest transmission of the Gospels and the resultant approach that ought to be taken, Holmes explains, "Evidence regarding what the text of the Gospels looked like in the first half of the second century that we might have expected the early Christian writers to provide is simply not forthcoming. This means that for the earliest stages of transmission, almost our only evidence will have to be whatever information we can tease out of our later manuscripts." He says, therefore, that with regard to "fluidity and stability" in the earliest period, we must "take what we know about trends, patterns and tendencies from a later period for which we have evidence, project them back into the earlier period for which we lack evidence, and see what they might suggest."

My study builds on this view that our earliest extant manuscripts, in spite of their own geographical and chronological limitations, are the most relevant and direct evidence for addressing the issue of transmission character in the earliest centuries, both for the period in which they were copied (i.e., mid/late second century to late third century) and for inferences about the preceding period for which we lack manuscript evidence (i.e., mid/late

first century to mid/late second century). I aim to make a contribution to this discussion by applying a fresh approach to the pre-fourth-century Greek manuscripts of the Gospel of John. There are several basic reasons why an analysis of the early manuscripts of John serves well as a case study. John is the most represented New Testament book among the early manuscripts (seventeen at or before third/fourth century); it is the best-attested Christian text in the second century (P52 and P90); it gives a fairly even spread of witnesses across the early period (two in the second century, most placed somewhere in the third, a few dated arguably around third/fourth), which allows us to observe any trends across time; it has a unique level of overlap among its early witnesses, which is due primarily but not exclusively to P66 and P75; and, since this Gospel was likely written towards the close of the first century, some of its many third-century manuscripts would be included in the first 150 years of transmission, which Parker puts forward as the timeframe within which the transmission of a document was supposedly at its freest.

However, in order to treat the transmission character reflected in the early manuscripts of John as in any way illustrative of broader attitudes and practices, it is necessary to consider whether or not it is likely that this Gospel's early reception history and transmission were particularly unique. What might its level of manuscript attestation in particular indicate with respect to the place, status, and readership of John's Gospel in the earliest centuries? Hill comments, "Such representation is particularly impressive for a Gospel which is said by the majority of Johannine scholars to have been so unpopular among the Great Churches in the second century." Hurtado similarly explains, "The numerous copies of John in the papyri from Egypt suggest a notable popularity of this text, and the copies of other texts from the same site and approximate time period as the manuscripts of John suggest that those among whom John was so popular also enjoyed a panoply of texts that reflect mainstream Christian tastes and preferences." In 1967 Kurt Aland, adhering to what Charles Hill has called the Johannophobia paradigm, had noted that the prevalence of early

papyri for John's Gospel found in Egypt supported Walter Bauer's identification of early Egyptian Christianity with Gnosticism. Stephen Llewelyn, however, has pointed out that there is roughly the same frequency of papyri for John in the early supposedly Gnostic period as in the later supposedly more orthodox period. Thus, he concludes, "may the data not show a simple but persistent preference for the Gospel of John among the speakers of Greek in Egypt?" without reference to theological affiliation. There is also an overall lack of representation, comparatively speaking, for Gnostic documents among the early papyri, a fact which decreases the likelihood that the frequency of John indicates some kind of Gnostic preference. Chapa points out that among the Egyptian papyri, there are nearly as many representing Matthew as John, which cautions against seeing anything peculiar in John's frequency and against drawing a special link between John and Egyptian Christianity. This collective body of evidence suggests that the early transmission of John would not have been particularly unique but would have arisen out of mainstream Christian attitudes and practices.

Here, I give an explanation of the approach taken in this study. The method outlined here is further clarified and substantiated as it is being carried out in my treatments of P52 and P90 (the first fragment and the first lengthy fragment respectively). My treatment of the manuscripts of John dated to the second or third century C.E. has as its main focus a fresh and full assessment of the level of fluidity and stability exhibited in each of the fourteen smaller fragmentary witnesses, which include thirteen papyri (P5, P22, P28, P39, P52, P90, P95, P106, P107, P108, P109, P119, P121) and one parchment (0162).⁵⁷ Where applicable, the following headings are employed for each manuscript: Introduction, VariationUnits Represented, Unique Readings, Commentary on Variants, Commentary on Unique Readings, Analysis of Manuscript based on Readings, Diachronic Comparison of Created Readings, and Conclusions on Stability and/or Fluidity (see below for further explanation). My treatment also includes the integration of data from the more extensive P66 and P75 where one or both of them share full

overlap with the smaller fragments (as is the case with P39, P95, P106, P119, and 0162) (see explanation of Diachronic Comparison section below).

As indicated by the headings mentioned above, my treatment of each fragmentary manuscript has two main components. First, I assess the level of fluidity and stability exhibited by analyzing variants and unique readings on the basis of internal evidence. This involves assessing and compiling what are judged to be the internally improbable readings of the manuscript. In contrast to the approach of Barbara Aland and Min described above, where readings are seen as "deviations" from a standard text, this method is interested in assessing fluidity via "improbable readings," that is, vis-à-vis the other variant(s) attested at variation-units. The variation-units considered are those given in NA28, with some being added from the respective papyrus (i.e., narrowly attested readings that have too much manuscript support to be considered subsingular). Readings are thus classified as internally probable or improbable, and the concluding analysis will pay particular attention to the quantity/proportion, dimension, intentionality, and effect of all improbable readings. Separate commentaries are given for variants and for unique readings, which will permit some distinction to be made (though tentative) between the underlying text, which reflects the character of transmission that preceded the papyrus, and the transmission character at the time in which the manuscript was copied (as in Min's approach discussed above). Throughout this study, orthographic readings are noted but not included in the main analysis.

Second, there is the Diachronic Comparison of Created Readings component, in which I compare the number and character of unique readings (i.e., singular and sub-singular readings) in each respective fragmentary manuscript with the same in all of the majuscules up through the seventh century that share complete overlap with it. The extensive early papyri, P66 and P75, are brought into this comparison in those cases where one or both of them are fully extant for the portion of text covered by the fragmentary papyrus under discussion (see Chapters 3 and 4 of this study). In each Diachronic Comparison, my analysis of the

later majuscules is done at those portions of text that are preserved (or confidently reconstructed) in the extant early fragment. In addition to the major fourth- and fifth-century majuscules (01, A, B, C, D, and W), this allows for the treatment of Ws and a couple of other manuscripts (e.g., Codex N) in a few instances. Since these singular/sub-singular readings are more likely (though not necessarily) to have been introduced into the tradition by each respective copyist, they permit a diachronic comparison by offering a glimpse into the level of care/stability or freedom/fluidity in the early vs. later period of textual transmission. This approach yields some direct evidence for answering the question: Do we see greater care and stability in copying in the later period (fourth through seventh centuries) than in the early period (second and third centuries)? Put differently, is it justifiable, based at least on this body of evidence, to claim that copying attitudes and practices were freer and more fluid in the earliest centuries than in subsequent centuries? Although certainty with regard to origination (i.e., whether a reading came from the Vorlage and thus a previous period of transmission or from the copyist himself/ herself and thus the period of the manuscript's production) cannot be achieved, these singular or sub-singular readings provide one of the best means for discerning when a reading arose in the tradition.

Rethinking Some "Free" Texts

The focus of this work is on the fourteen smaller fragments of the Gospel of John from the second and third centuries. The three remaining early papyri representing this Gospel, P45, Pss, and P75, are more extensive and thus go beyond the scope of the full-scale analysis that I apply to each manuscript in this study, although data from P66 and P75 are included. Since my study, however, is concerned with questioning the validity of the claim that early textual transmission was characteristically free and fluid, it is worthwhile also to consider how this discussion has been applied to these extensive papyri, especially the apparently quintessential "free" texts, P45 and P66. The aim of this section of my Introduction is to highlight how recent studies on P45 and P66 in particular have given reason for caution in assuming or too quickly adopting such a

characterization. As we approach the scholarly discussion surrounding the character of transmission reflected in these two papyri, it is beneficial to begin by tracing precisely how Colwell uses the language of "careless," "free," "controlled," "wild," as well as "intention" in his analysis of the scribal habits exhibited in all three of these extensive papyri of John's Gospel.

Structure of the Study

My study of the fourteen fragmentary manuscripts of John is divided into three chapters based on the level of integration of P66 and P75 for the Diachronic Comparison of Created Readings portion of the analysis. Chapter 2 covers the papyri for which neither P66 nor P75 completely overlaps. In each case, the Diachronic Comparison portion will involve only a comparison of the respective papyrus with the later majuscules that completely overlap for the portion of text covered. Chapter 3 includes the two papyri with which only P66 completely overlaps. This enables us in both cases to compare the quantity and character of created readings from two manuscripts of the early period with several manuscripts from subsequent centuries. In Chapter 4 the comparison will include both P66 and P75, since the three manuscripts covered in that section are fully overlapped by both of these extensive papyri. Within each chapter manuscripts are treated in chronological order from earliest to latest or, where dating is the same or unclear, successively by papyrus number. The study will conclude by bringing together the results of each individual manuscript analysis.

This study allows us to draw more precise and descriptive conclusions about copying attitudes and practices during the earliest period with extant evidence, and it supplies data for probing into the preceding period of transmission for which we lack evidence. While this study concerns only one book, the Gospel of John, that book is our best attested New Testament writing among the copies produced in the second and third centuries. Based on what can be observed in these early New Testament witnesses, should the earliest centuries of textual transmission be characterized as "unstable," "free," "fluid," "wild," or "chaotic"? <>

[The Comparable Body - Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman Medicine](#) edited by John Z. Wee [Studies in Ancient Medicine, Brill, 9789004356764]

[The Comparable Body - Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman Medicine](#) explores how analogy and metaphor illuminate and shape conceptions about the human body and disease, through 11 case studies from ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman medicine.

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To What May I Liken Metaphor? by John Z. Wee

On 1–3 May 2014, a modest group of historians working in the theory and practice of medicine in various regions of the ancient world gathered for a symposium at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. While its topic had been broadly conceived as 'The Body in Ancient Medicine' during the initial stages of planning, it had evolved naturally, through conversations with participants prior to the symposium, to become more precisely articulated as Body and Metaphor in Ancient Medicine. A selection of papers presented did end up relating to each other in surprisingly meaningful ways, and their contents have been reworked as chapters for this volume.

Introducing the notion of 'metaphor' with its complex nuances and inter-pretive baggage, as some might astutely point out, represented more an expansion of the topic rather than a narrowing of it. Neither the symposium nor this volume, however, was intended as a systematic exploration of metaphor theory, abundant resources for which are available elsewhere for interested readers. It was, in fact, deemed inimical to our purposes for limited space to be devoted to lengthy reiterations of modern theories in each new chapter, at the expense of detailed treatments of the ancient sources themselves. Furthermore, the diversity of expertise was not, for the most part, directed towards questions on the transmission of ideas across different ancient cultures. Instead, participants were encouraged to draw conclusions based on close readings of case studies in their own local and cultural contexts, with interdisciplinarity serving to illuminate typologies of issues and strategies for encountering common problems, drawing attention to perspectives that might otherwise be taken for granted.

Our Chapters in Conversation

While different thematic threads on analogy and metaphor are closely intertwined across individual chapters, the volume broadly addresses topics on the role of analogy and metaphor as features of medical culture and theory, while questioning their naturalness and inevitability, their limits, their situation between the descriptive and the prescriptive, and complexities in their portrayal as a mutually intelligible medium for communication and consensus among users. Discussion in this section is not comprised of summaries per se of the individual chapters, which are rich in new philological contributions and fresh theoretical insights on issues beyond analogy and metaphor. Considerations of the latter are our focus here, though recurring medical and biological subjects are acknowledged by grouping together chapters on pathological heat (Chs. 1 and 3), the head-to-foot ordering of anatomy (Chs. 2 and 3), the heart's structure (Chs. 4 and 5), fluids—air, phlegm, blood—in the body (Chs. 4–6), pregnancy and embryology (Chs. 9 and 10), and the vegetal soul (Chs. 10 and 11).

The volume begins with a discussion by Rune Nyord (Ch. 1: 'Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Medicine and the Ancient Egyptian Conceptualisation of Heat in the Body'), who builds upon his work on conceptual metaphor theory in *Breathing Flesh* (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009), and was asked to provide an overview of theoretical issues that will resurface regularly over the course of the volume. Propounded by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their influential book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), conceptual metaphor theory identifies metaphor and metonymy as structuring features of human thought, particularly as expressions of 'embodied' human experience from the inseparable perspective of one's own body. Adapting the theory for ancient medicine, Nyord proposes a nuanced understanding of metaphor as a range of categories in the intersection of two axes: (i) truth-functionality or ontological commitment and (ii) lexicality. On the one hand, emic definitions, which rely on our modern impression whether ancient authors in fact understood an expression metaphorically, are rejected in favor of etic linguistic analyses of the

relationship between terminology and the embodied prototype referred to, allowing for a range of responses whether metaphor (so defined) was regarded as true or false by its user. On the other hand, a degree of semantic stretch in lexical meaning is recognized, e.g., in the way 'blood vessel' is regarded, not as a metaphorical container, but as an ordinary denotative label for an object. Responding to tendencies by modern scholars to regard ancient medical terminology "as 'technical' and therefore necessarily specialized to the point of being unknowable," Nyord illustrates how his interpretive model yields fruitful conclusions about heat as a malady in Egyptian medicine.

Erica Couto-Ferreira (Ch. 2: 'From Head to Toe: Listing the Body in Cuneiform Texts') introduces us to the Mesopotamian vocabulary list Ugu-mu, whose arrangement of terms for body parts in head-to-foot order was taught in the scribal curriculum during Old Babylonian times (ca. 1st half of the 2nd millennium BCE), but which was supplanted by lexical lists based on acrographic and other principles in later periods. Certainly, the title Ugu-mu (lit. "my skull") and the list's repeated use of this first-person pronoun (e.g., "my eye," "my eyelid," "my eyeball") expresses the reflexive pull of embodiment (i.e., 'my body') even in the context of a scribal lesson more generically about 'a body.' The head-to-foot organization of Ugu-mu, moreover, continued to manifest itself in a great variety of compositions and genres, including anthropomorphic descriptions of deities, demons, divine weapons, and diseases, recitations of the patient's body in protective and healing incantations and rituals, and enumerations of bodily signs—human and animal—as ominous portents. Man was the measure of all things, and conceptions such as GOD IS JUDGED ascribed retributive agency to a deity, so that, e.g., in the Mesopotamian Diagnostic Handbook (SA.GIG), illicit sexual relations and unfulfilled oaths, among other violations, resulted in ailments described as "Hand of a god" or "Hand of Ištar," etc.

In contrast to this emphasis on supernatural causal agents in the diagnostic tradition (*āšipūtu*), Cale Johnson (Ch. 3: 'The Stuff of Causation: Etiological Metaphor and Pathogenic Channeling in

Babylonian Medicine') argues that Babylonian "medicine" (asûtu) took its metaphors from landscape or atmospheric features, whereby sickness arises due to a chain of largely physical causes. As a matter of fact, both the Diagnostic Handbook (belonging to āšipūtu) and the medical sub-corpora on CRANIUM, EYES, BRONCHIA, and STOMACH (belonging to asûtu) were heirs of the head-to-foot scheme of organization popularized earlier by the vocabulary list Ugu-mu (Ch. 2). As implied by Couto-Ferreira, however, the form of the Diagnostic Handbook (Table 2.5) likely expressed purposes aligned with those of the "magician / exorcist" (āšipu) when enumerating a patient's body parts during incantations and rituals, i.e., to ensure that no part of the body was neglected from protection or healing. Johnson, on the other hand, makes a case that the head-to-foot order in the medical sub-corpora was reflective of metaphors such as ALIMENTARY CANAL AS CHANNEL/WATERWAY, whereby the linear transformation of disease from one location to another farther down the body depicts the movement of disease along this CHANNEL/WATERWAY. Furthermore, in this model, gastrointestinal diseases result from the consumption of foods that wrangle (a- d a- m i n) with the sufferer or with each other all the way down the alimentary canal, scenarios depicted in medical incantations of the STOMACH sub-corpus and implied in the Sumerian debate between Ewe and Grain (both conceived as foodstuffs). It is possible that this perspective is implicit in the gastrointestinal ailment designated as U4.DA SÁ.SÁ ("(someone) struggling with šētu-fever").

In Johnson's view, while āšipūtu and asûtu were distinguished from each other, each discipline had its own profession (i.e., the āšipu and the asû) and subscribed to an etiology of disease modeled after the same kind of metaphor, involving either supernatural agents (āšipūtu) or the landscape and atmosphere (asûtu) (Table 3.1). It can be attractive to articulate medical theory by means of overarching metaphors, especially since 'structural metaphor' works in ways akin to the modus operandi of theory, by "[imposing] a consistent structure on the concept it structures" (Metaphors

We Live By, p. 219). The example LOVE IS JOURNEY by Lakoff and Johnson (cited by Nyord in Ch. 1) includes ideas of lovers as travelers, the love relationship as the vehicle, relationship goal(s) as the journey's destination, and so on, even if not every instance of metaphorical mapping from one domain (i.e., JOURNEY) to another (i.e., LOVE) is explicit. Perhaps closer to our medical theme is the well-worn modern metaphor of BODY AS MACHINE with corollaries such as HEART IS PUMP, LUNGS ARE BELLOWS, JOINTS AND BONES ARE HINGES AND LEVERS, etc., where the imposition of metaphor structure shapes the definition not only of what is 'body,' but also what is 'machine,' in order to accommodate organs and bodily systems whose workings are less mechanical and more biochemical or electro-chemical. Furthermore, the metaphor decides in advance what is most salient for comparison, emphasizing the affinities between heart and lungs as movers of fluids (i.e., blood and air respectively) above, say, the status of lungs and kidneys as organs excreting waste products (i.e., carbon dioxide and urine respectively).

Our dissatisfaction with the metaphor BODY AS MACHINE, however, relies on modern advances in the knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and—to frame the problem in terms of Nyord's category of ontological commitment—it can be questionable to what extent ancient users considered the literal formulation of their metaphors to be true or false. Moreover, in contrast to broad consensus on terminology and models in (western) medicine today, we often cannot take for granted that ancient authors worked from the same theoretical foundation, that they were uniform in their level of commitment to expressed views, or that they were agreed on the limits to particular metaphors. The practical response is to tread cautiously, sometimes even to resist the consistent imposition of metaphor structure, where there is suspicion one might be dealing with separate metaphors. Remarking on the description of a "nest (šš) of heat-penetration" (Bl 154) in Egyptian medicine, for instance, Nyord observes how "the imagery of the nests of birds or other animals [is] akin to the 'twine' metaphor in its portrayal of heat as a fixed and solid entity" (p. 30), but rightly hesitates to take the additional step of designating this "nest" (perhaps imagined as a

woven structure of intertwined grasses and twigs) as an instantiation of the metaphor of heat as a “robust assemblage” of intertwined fibers that is attested elsewhere. Similarly, as Johnson (Ch. 3) suggests with regards to gastrointestinal disease, the metaphors ALIMENTARY CANAL AS CHANNEL/WATERWAY and DISEASE-CAUSING FOOD AS DISPUTANT could be simultaneously operative, even while avoiding the mixed metaphor of a disputant being swept along a waterway.

Another perspective on the matter comes from Lesley Dean-Jones (Ch. 4: ‘Aristotle’s Heart and the Heartless Man’), who examines theories of the heart’s structure held by Syennesis and Polybus (or the author of *Nature of Man*) as well as Aristotle.⁷ It was noteworthy to ancient anatomists that the same type of blood vessel appeared to be attached to different sides of the heart, with the pulmonary artery on the right and the aorta (artery) on the left, and with the vena cava (vein) on the right and pulmonary vein on the left. Whereas arteries that carried oxygenated blood from the heart were thick and “sinewy” to withstand the higher blood pressure, veins that carried deoxygenated blood to the heart were thinner, “membranous and skinlike,” with valves to prevent the backflow of blood under low pressure. Anatomical accounts by Syennesis and Polybus have been viewed with skepticism, because they omit mention of the heart, but describe a crossing of blood vessels in the chest region. As Dean-Jones argues, however, these authors very likely perceived an actual continuity of blood flow within parts of the heart that emerged as the same type of vessel on right and left sides. The application of the idea to both artery and vein yielded the picture of blood vessels crossing each other. Despite Aristotle’s strong cardiocentrist views, he does not fault Syennesis and Polybus for omitting the heart, and seems to appreciate how such perceptions would have been aided by observations of the foramen ovale and ventricular septal defect in a fetal heart, which provided thoroughfare between the atria and between the ventricles.

Aristotle’s conception of the heart is complicated by statements elsewhere that blood vessels “do not go through” the heart (Part. an. III.4, 665b14–17),

which appear to repudiate the ‘crossing of vessels.’ Dean-Jones speaks of the ‘crossing of vessels’ as “antithetical to Aristotle’s understanding of the heart, but, when viewed purely as a metaphor, he found it so apt that it guided his anatomical description of the organ,” and “in his later biological works, however, when he came to discuss the functions of the heart, the description of the vessels ‘passing through’ the heart was a metaphor that he had to disavow roundly.” Since there are degrees of truth-functionality or ontological commitment, however, it follows that different parties can employ the same expression as different kinds of metaphor: “In a geocentric cosmology, ‘The sun rises’ could in fact have been used with full commitment. [But it also survives in a heliocentric worldview], where it still succeeds in capturing central experiential aspects of the phenomenon, without however constituting an accurate representation of the underlying scientific facts as understood by the speaker” (p. 22, n. 19). Aristotle’s disavowal of the ‘crossing of vessels,’ therefore, may not necessarily stem from a change of mind, but from an effort to express himself with heightened clarity, in contexts where the extent of his ontological commitment to the metaphor could be misunderstood or misrepresented. An analogous situation might involve a heliocentrist who would normally not think twice about saying ‘The sun rises,’ but who tells a geocentrist ‘The sun does not rise’ as part of a technical explanation on heliocentrism.

In other cases, as Keyser correctly recognizes (Ch. 6), separate metaphors undergo some degree of ‘conceptual blending,’ a mental operation described by cognitive scientists Fauconnier and Turner in their book *The Way We Think* (2002). Contrary to the common assumption that “notions like composition-ality are meaningless for figurative phenomena like metaphor,” they show that, “regardless of conceptual content,” the language forms of metaphorical expressions behave like those of literal statements, in so far as both are subjectable to the same kind of grammatical and syntactical manipulation that generates blended forms with predictable meanings. This way of thinking resonates well with etic approaches to metaphor involving analysis of

its linguistic forms, which are favored by Nyord (Ch. 1) and Johnson (Ch. 3).

Conceptual blending occurs in the study by John Wee (Ch. 5: 'Earthquake and Epilepsy: The Body Geologic in the Hippocratic Treatise On the Sacred Disease'), who observes how meteorological theories on earthquakes, similar to those by Aristotle and Seneca, account for the etiology of epilepsy and the body's inner topography in Sacred Disease. Earthquakes arise due to wind in a subterranean riverscape, in which water forces air through venous passages into "hollows" (i.e., caverns) downstream, where the trapped air moves agitatedly and is released violently with the buildup of pressure. Similarly, epilepsy ensues when fluxes of phlegm from the brain choke up the passages of veins extending into "hollows" deep within the body, so that confined wind "[gushes] upward and downward through the blood" and "causes spasms and pain". The metaphor's implication that air passages from the brain are interrupted during epileptic fits is, in addition, blended with the ancient notion that air imparts "sensibility" (φρόνησις) where it exists, explaining why sufferers lose conscious control over convulsing limbs that are cut off from the brain's air stream. The physical dimensions of bodily "hollows" and their ability to accommodate air, accordingly, become metaphors for psychological capacities. In the encephalocentric scheme of Sacred Disease, where the brain rather than the heart is the seat of cognition, the heart is defined as merely cardiac muscle that surrounds veins, and which therefore does not come into direct contact with air or "sensibility." The observation that most people are right-handed and right-footed, conversely, leads to the understanding that the right side of the body is more "sensible" and contains larger "hollows" capable of receiving more air and phlegm, so that children recover more readily if their flux of phlegm occurs on the right side.

In contrast to the natural pairing of earthquake and epilepsy, Paul Keyser (Ch. 6: 'The Lineage of "Bloodlines": Synecdoche, Metonymy, Medicine, and More') argues that "lifeblood" as a synecdoche for individual life, and "bloodline" as a metonym for lineage, are neither natural nor

obvious, and represent social and cultural constructs. The former may derive from the observation that bleeding causes death, but the inference that blood is a substance infused with vital power is not inevitable. As a synecdoche, "lifeblood" shapes perceptions of life as "a thing you can lose, rather than a process that ends" and as "embodied in an essential substance contained in the body, rather than being a dynamic state of existence." The metonym of "bloodline," on the other hand, likely stems from Mesopotamian myths on the creation of man from divine blood, and continues to depict the lineages of primarily gods and heroes in Greek and Roman contexts. Conceptual blending of the two figures results in a variety of logical conclusions, that male semen is derived from blood, that female blood represents the mother's contribution to the production of offspring, and that the fetus developing in the womb is nourished by menstrual blood. The notion that lineage can be healthy or diseased, pure or polluted, is already inherent in the concept of "bloodline," but comes to the fore in the blended figure, placing the onus on each new generation to preserve 'purities' in class, ethnicity, and temperament through selective marriages, and hence reinforcing perceived differences among people.

Keyser's repeated emphasis, that the figures of "lifeblood" and "bloodline" are not natural or obvious, aims to dismantle the veneer of inevitability associated with these ideas, particularly as they give fuel to modern discriminatory abuses. Metaphors not only describe what is, but frequently prescribe what ought to be, in accordance to the values of their users. Strahil Panayotov (Ch. 7: 'Eye Metaphors, Analogies and Similes within Mesopotamian Magico-Medical Texts') highlights this prescriptive role of imagery in magical incantations for diseased eyes. In contrast to the technical style of written recipes largely intended for the healer's own consultation, incantations interspersed among these recipes abound in the vivid language of speech addressed directly to the afflicted eye. In his chapter, Johnson already observes exchanges of the following nature: "(Patient:) O belly, belly! Where are you going?" "(Belly:) In order to inflict pain on the belly

of the young man!" (p. 100), in which the entity addressed as "O belly!" is simultaneously the patient's own body part as well as the sickness that has autonomy to inflict pain on whomever it wishes. Here, Panayotov records similar interactions between healer and sick eyes: "O you eyes are porous blood vessels! Why have you picked up chaff,...?" (p. 225), and "O cloudy eyes, O blurred eyes, O eyes intersected by blood vessels! ... I called to you, come here ... !" (p. 228). As if it were a reversal of Ugu-mu where the generic scribal lesson about 'a body' becomes a reflection on 'my body' (Ch. 2), the patient here is instead merely a passive and largely helpless listener, while the healer addresses the illness manifested in the (patient's own) diseased body part as a foreign entity that "comes" and "goes" as it pleases.

Power is starkly asymmetrical in the healer-patient relationship, and, through incantations, healers unilaterally prescribe metaphors that shape how patients are supposed to perceive the disease and its cure.

Similar issues are considered by Janet Downie (Ch. 8: 'The Experience and Description of Pain in Aelius Aristides' Hieroi Logoi'), who questions the curious absence of metaphor in the way Aelius Aristides depicts pain. Described by Helen King as a "professional patient," Aelius Aristides (117–181 CE) records in the Hieroi Logoi ("Sacred Tales") his first-person account of sickness, therapy, and intimacy with the healing god Asclepius. Adopting the dual perspective of patient and observer, Aristides shifts between scenes in which he experiences illness at firsthand, and retrospective narratives where he considers his sick self at a distance, and observes symptoms in the manner of an objective Hippocratic physician. In the ancient literary tradition, pain is most often articulated in metaphorical terms from the embodied perspective of the sufferer. A prominent concern, however, is the absence of an objective standard by which patient metaphors of pain become consistently intelligible to physicians. Archigenes attempts to solve the issue by standardizing vocabularies used for different qualities of pain, while Galen insists on the use of customary language that appeals to widespread sensory experiences, and whose referents are likely to be supported by broad

consensus among patients. Metaphors of pain are largely absent from the Hieroi Logoi, with a rare exception in a description on "pain, numbing (narkôdês) and impossible to bear" (Or. 48.63). Downie observes, however, that narkôdês belongs to Archigenes' repertoire of standardized terms, and that Aristides in fact employs it in alignment with Galen's definition of " 'numbness' as an effect produced by cold transmitted through the nerves to any number of areas of the body" (p. 269). The metaphor begins to resemble more a linguistic convention by an objective observer, rather an embodied expression of personal pain. For the most part, Aristides' refusal to engage in metaphor denies others access to his unvocalized experiences, guaranteeing his strong control over his own illness narrative and its interpretation. Whereas Mesopotamian healers hold the initiative in the use of incantatory metaphors as a medium of communication (Ch. 7), the prerogative of metaphor in this instance lies with the "professional patient."

Ulrike Steinert (Ch. 9: 'Concepts of the Female Body in Mesopotamian Gynecological Texts') surveys the rich variety of metaphors employed in cuneiform texts as models for the female reproductive system, conception, gestation, and birth. In Mesopotamian gynecology, female fertility and physiology are characterized by what Steinert calls "the body technologic," which derives its imagery from human interactions with the environment in craft production, agriculture and irrigation, and animal husbandry, and which perhaps also portrays pregnancy and childbirth as productive work at a time when the woman's condition may have required her to cut back on activities of employment. Straddling the divide between nature and culture, she suggests how basic conceptual metaphors rooted in universal human experience, such as THE BODY IS A CONTAINER, are manifested differently when shaped by conceptions unique to particular societies and cultures. The image of the womb as a bread oven in Greek medicine, therefore, reflects the prominence it accords to 'cooking' as a metaphor for transformative physiological processes, whereas the Mesopotamian counterpart of the womb as a pottery oven relates to mythological accounts of how humans are created from clay. While not

every metaphor lends itself to such analysis (many in the chapter, in fact, do not), it certainly opens the door to the possibility of homology as an alternative interpretation, as others have in fact proposed for Chinese medicine (e.g., Vivienne Lo, Elisabeth Hsu) and African medicine (e.g., Françoise Héritier). As a matter of fact, the shared identity connecting entities linked by homology, which extends beyond similarities of form and function posited by analogy and metaphor, becomes an important consideration in the final two chapters (10 and 11), which explore precisely in what sense the vegetal exists as a part of human life.

Brooke Holmes (Ch. 10: 'Pure Life: The Limits of the Vegetal Analogy in the Hippocratics and Galen') asks the question: "Are we simply like plants, or are we, in some critical way, plants ourselves?" Plants display their growth and nutrition in open view, promising to illuminate similar processes taking place in the human embryo deep inside the womb. In the Hippocratic treatises *On the Seed* and *On the Nature of Child*, the plant's capacity to attract nutriment and to self-perpetuate commends itself as an analogue for the embryo, with branching tree limbs mirroring the development of branching bones. Parturition occurs when the fetus is no longer sufficiently nourished by the mother, and so uproots itself and turns animal by initiating its own movement at the moment of birth. The Hippocratic account, however, gives a weak sense of different ontological stages taking place in utero, and the demarcation of different orders of soul—plant, animal, human—must wait until Plato and especially Aristotle. Galen, on his part, addresses the embryo as "this plant," referring to it as a minimal form of life comprised of the most basic nutritive or desiderative soul, and which is pure without any accretions of animal soul. Holmes suggests that, "instead of seeing these analogical and ontological uses of the plant as opposed, it may seem to make more sense to see them as different points on a continuum of increasing likeness between human beings and plants: similarities at the level of morphology become similarities in the processes producing these shared forms, which in turn become similarities in the very power responsible for these processes."

In the final chapter, Courtney Roby (Ch. 11: 'Animal, Vegetable, Metaphor: Plotinus's Liver and the Roots of Biological Identity') argues for a more nuanced structural model proposed by René Dirven, which involves both metaphor and metonymy in the expression of conceptual relationships. While metaphor maps attributes from a source domain to a non-contiguous target domain, metonymy deals with only a single contiguous domain, and substitutes an element for another based on their conceptual closeness. Applying the model to Plotinus' view of the ensouled body, Roby understands the body and soul of a given individual as two contiguous parts in a metonymic relationship, which are in turn situated within a much larger context of bodies and souls (e.g., of plants, animals, the world itself). The vegetal soul in each organism is responsible for its growth and nutrition and is what maintains its biological identity. In humans and animals, this vegetal faculty is headquartered in the liver. Roby remarks that "in his persistent comparisons between divergent types of bodies and souls, particularly those of humans and plants, Plotinus provokes us to reflect on the attributes we share with all other types of living individuals, even as he delineates those that are peculiar to rational creatures." <>

[Scanning the Pharaohs: CT Imaging of the New Kingdom Royal Mummies](#) by Zahi Hawass and Sahar N. Saleem [The American University in Cairo Press, 9789774166730]

The royal mummies in the Cairo Museum are an important source of information about the lives of the ancient Egyptians. The remains of these pharaohs and queens can inform us about their age at death and medical conditions from which they may have suffered, as well as the mummification process and objects placed within the wrappings.

Using the latest technology, including Multi-Detector Computed Tomography and DNA analysis, co-authors Zahi Hawass and Sahar Saleem present the results of the examination of royal mummies of the Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasties. New imaging techniques not only reveal a wealth of information about each mummy, but render amazingly lifelike and detailed images of the remains. In addition, utilizing 3D images, the anatomy of each face has

been discerned for a more accurate interpretation of a mummy's facial features. This latest research has uncovered some surprising results about the genealogy of, and familial relationships between, these ancient individuals, as well as some unexpected medical finds.

Historical information is provided to place the royal mummies in context, and the book with its many illustrations will appeal to Egyptologists, paleopathologists, and non-specialists alike, as the authors seek to uncover the secrets of these most fascinating members of the New Kingdom royal families.

Excerpt:

Radiographic Imaging of Royal Egyptian Mummies: Previous and Current Studies

Mummy research has focused on studying embalming techniques, possible anatomic abnormalities, diseases, or the cause of death of an individual. For the purpose of studies in the past, mummies that were found unwrapped and in poor condition were studied with anthropologic and paleopathologic methods, including dissection and tissue sampling; others have been unwrapped specifically for this purpose. Nevertheless, there are still many

well-preserved mummies in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (some of which have never been on public display) that can be examined with noninvasive methods. Finding an ideal compromise between investigating a mummy and not destroying it encouraged the use of noninvasive methods.

Radiology represents an accurate, noninvasive method of evaluation, and its application in mummies' studies has been used since the introduction of x-rays in the late 1800s. Soon after the discovery of x-rays by Wilhelm Roentgen in November 1895, x-ray study was used to evaluate mummies of both humans and animals without performing dissection. In 1896, a book was published containing fourteen x-rays of an Egyptian mummy.¹ Radiography using plain x-ray is used to make the contents of mummies visible, to distinguish authentic mummies from fakes, to evaluate bone age, to detect skeletal diseases, and to search for burial goods.

The royal mummies at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo are a unique and important resource for our knowledge of ancient Egyptian culture. As would be expected, the collection of royal mummies was subjected to several radiological investigations through the years. The first x-ray study of a royal Egyptian mummy was performed on Thutmose IV in 1903 by an Egyptian radiologist.¹ The mummy of Thutmose IV was brought by horse-drawn taxi to a hospital in Cairo, where the x-rays were then taken. No significant findings resulted from this study. In February of 1932, an x-ray examination of Amenhotep I was done at the Egyptian Museum after the removal of the mummy from its coffin and cartonnage mask. Douglas Derry, an anatomist and professor at the Faculty of Medicine (Kasr Al-Ainy) in Cairo, who worked with Howard Carter on the mummy of Tutankhamun, assessed the age of the mummy using the x-ray findings.

In 1965, extensive x-ray examination of the skulls of ancient Nubian populations was carried out by Alexandria University in Egypt in collaboration with a team from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry.¹ The study was mainly on teeth (etiology of malocclusion, or causes of misalignment of upper and lower teeth) and changes in human face through history. This encouraged the Egyptian Antiquities Organization (EAO) in December 1967 to invite James E. Harris from the University of Michigan to study the royal mummies. The study resulted in complete x-ray examination of all the royal mummies at the Egyptian Museum in the years between 1967 and 1971.

The mummy of Tutankhamun, which remains in his tomb, was x-rayed on site in 1968. At the beginning of the study, only the skulls of the mummies were x-rayed using an isotope source of x-ray (ytterbium). The mummies were x-rayed while they were still lying within their glass cases to prevent any damage. However, the glass contained lead, which caused severe degradation of the x-ray images. Later, permission was given to x-ray the mummies out of their glass cases, though still in their wooden coffins; this resulted in a better quality of the x-ray images. At this time, the ytterbium source was replaced with a conventional x-ray machine using 90 kV, and the whole mummy was imaged. The x-ray protocol included

examination of the entire body of the mummy as well as zoom (more localized) films on regions such as the skull (lateral and frontal), chest, pelvis, and lower limbs. In the following years, the Michigan project x-rayed not only the royal collection, but also other mummies in the museum from the Middle Kingdom through the Greco-Roman Period. Two publications originated from this study: X-aying the Pharaohs⁹ and An X-Ray Atlas of the Royal Mummies, which focused primarily on variations in the skull, face, and teeth.

During this project, scholars became concerned about the condition of the mummy of Ramesses II. In preparation for conserving this mummy, it was moved to France on September 26, 1976, becoming the subject of intensive research through May 10, 1977. The resulting x-rays showed Ramesses II to have reached the age of eighty, which corresponds with our historical knowledge."

The mummy of Tutankhamun was x-rayed again in 1978, and in 1988, twelve royal mummies were selected for x-ray studies for disease detection, a study that was published in a peer-reviewed journal.

In the plain x-ray method, the three-dimensional information about the mummy is projected onto a two-dimensional x-ray film. This makes the characterization of wrappings, contents, mummification techniques, and other findings less satisfactory. Mummy research

has benefited from the advancement in radiology technology and the development of modern medical imaging methods, namely computed tomography (CT).

CT scanning represents a significant advance from x-rays. Instead of producing one image at a time, the CT machine takes hundreds of images of individual thin sections of the body (slices). These slices can be taken at multiple angles, and then combined into a complete, three-dimensional image of the body. CT can provide much more detailed information than x-ray films, generating images of soft tissues as well as bones.

Multi-Detector Computed Tomography (MDCT) is a recent advancement in CT technology.¹⁶ The chief advantage of MDCT is its capability to perform a

large-volume examination in a short time during a single acquisition using thin scans (1.25 mm). As a result, a complete examination of the body of the mummy may be performed with great accuracy. The advent of graphics workstations and image-processing software packages, multiplanar projections, and three-dimensional (3D) reconstructions produced the research tools for analyzing volume data sets (data in three dimensions).

The volumetric reconstructions can render information about surface details that are not depicted on axial images (transverse plane). Surface CT imaging can show how the mummified humans looked in life and the degree of success of the art of embalming.

This chapter will discuss the technique of MDCT imaging for the mummies and CT image analysis. We will also include a scheme for CT image interpretation of the mummies.

MDCT Scanning Technique

All of the royal mummies in the study, except for two fetuses at the Faculty of Medicine of Cairo University (see below), were scanned using an MDCT unit⁸ installed on a truck at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. (The two mummified royal fetuses were examined using MDCT at the radiology department of Cairo University with a technique discussed in chapter 6, "The Two Fetuses Found in the Tomb of Tutankhamun.") The mummies were removed from their coffins for CT examination. The number of linen wrappings on the mummies varied significantly.

The typically used scanning parameters of mummies were: KV=130 effective MAS range from 23 to 63; pitch range from 0.83 to 1.8; FOV from 350 to 500; slice thickness from 0.6 to 1.25 mm; and reconstruction from 0.4 to 0.8 mm. The total number of images generated per mummy varied significantly, from 700 for the five-month-old fetal specimen (mummy numbered 317a by Howard Carter) to about 3,000 for a large adult male such as Ramesses III.

MDCT Image Analysis and Reconstruction

In addition to the workstations provided by the CT machine's manufacturer, we used other special reconstruction software programs.

Image analysis includes anatomical evaluation, and metric and attenuation (radiodensity) measurements. In the case of the presence of metal streaking artifacts, we used Metal Deletion Technique (MDT).

We first visualized the axial images in cineview to obtain a general idea of a mummy's preservation condition, anatomy of body parts, and presence of any foreign bodies.

The improvement of MDCT increases the overall amount of information in terms of raw data. The raw data can thus be reconstructed in two dimensions (multiplanar reconstruction, MPR) and three dimensions (3D reconstruction) (see below). The reconstructed images can reveal more information about the relationships between structures, shape, and orientation within the scan plane.

Multiplanar Reconstruction (MPR)

The raw data produced by thin CT images can be reformatted in coronal (a vertical plane that divides the body into ventral [front] and dorsal [rear] sections), sagittal (a vertical plane that passes from front to rear, dividing the body into right and left halves), or oblique (inclined in direction) planes. MPR images can offer varying perspectives on the anatomy, as well as the changes in the body created by mummification. For example, sagittal plane can show the skull-base defects created for brain removal better than axial imaging can do alone. Coronal plane can detect the location of the heart. Reformatting of images can also be done in curved planes, as in dental arcades to produce orthopantomographic-like images (panorama for teeth).

The superior contrast and spatial resolution inherent in MPR are helpful in anatomical evaluation of the mummy, as well as in accurate metric and attenuation measurements.

Measurements of CT densities in Hounsfield Units (HU) of various structures in the mummy aid in the

detection of residual or atrophied body organs and in revealing the nature of the embalming materials used and artifacts included within the wrappings. This knowledge improves our understanding of the mummification process.

Three-dimensional reconstruction

(3D reconstruction)

Three-dimensional reconstruction is accomplished by using established reconstruction algorithms for soft tissues and bones with varying window-width parameters. The volume can be rotated to obtain different projection views and to exclude overlapping structures

Post-processing 3D techniques include:

- **Volume MPR:** This is accomplished through using thick-slab MPR to produce pictures similar to conventional x-ray films.
- **Maximum Intensity Projection (MIP):** MIP is a 3D visualization technique that is achieved by evaluating each voxel value along an imaginary projection ray within a particular volume of interest and then representing only the highest value as the display value. Voxel intensities below the chosen threshold are eliminated. MIPs can be very useful in locating intrinsically high-density structures in the mummy, such as the skeleton and teeth, as well as dense foreign objects, such as amulets. A drawback in this type of image is that the low-density structures within an object are masked, because only dense points are shown. To control the objects seen, it is possible to adjust the value the ray follows as it penetrates the volume.
- **Three-dimensional Volume Rendering (VR):** Volume rendering refers to techniques that allow the visualization of 3D data by selective display of density of the grayscale level of the voxels. This means that only voxels with values that lie within a selected interval are seen, while those outside this interval are not. VR can provide accurate representation of the osseous anatomy of the mummy with minimal inclusion of soft tissue (or noise).

- Shaded Surface Display (SSD): This technique represents the surface of a structure. For example, facial features of a mummy can be studied by rotating the head around multiple axes. Location, length, and curvature of mummification incisions can be clearly displayed using SSD, as can external male genitalia.

Other Methods of CT Image Reconstruction

Virtual unwrapping of the mummy

Virtual unwrapping can be done by manual selection of the bandages on the circumference of the body on axial images, then excluding the layers from reconstruction. A similar effect can be achieved by using preset reconstruction algorithms for soft tissues with varying window-width parameters to obtain progressive elimination of external layers with a density less than that of the dried skin. However, presets established for clinical examinations often do a poor job on mummified tissues. Manual selection of a structure, to reconstruct it and exclude all other structures, is used for studying amulets and other foreign objects.

Virtual fly-through endoscopy

Virtual navigation through the inside of the body and hollow structures, for example the skull, trachea, or chest, can be done by using special software installed on the workstation. This technique eliminates the necessity for invasive techniques used in the past for exploring mummies.

Image Interpretation

We adopt the following scheme in the interpretation of CT study of royal ancient Egyptian mummies. The first five will be discussed here, and the remainder in subsequent chapters.

- Preservation status
- Determination of gender
- Estimation of age at death
- Anthropometrical data
- Body and arm position
- Mummification style (see "CT Findings on the Mummification Process")

- Presence of amulets and other foreign bodies (see chapter 12, "Amulets, Funerary Figures, and Other Objects Found on the Mummies")
- Royal faces (see "Faces of the Royal Mummies")
- Examination of individual regions of the body for findings, diseases, and possible cause of death (see chapters on individual mummies)

Preservation status

Although the royal mummies presumably received the most advanced level of treatment with the aim of preserving their bodies, some are currently in poor physical condition. This could be due to mutilation by tomb robbers in antiquity, physical damage by underground water in the tomb, careless handling or intentional invasion by early archaeologists or investigators, or poor environmental conditions of storage at the archaeological or early display sites.

CT can show accurately and noninvasively the current preservation status of the mummy through determining any missing anatomical part, as well as recording skeletal and soft-tissue alterations. The preservation status of the mummy is assigned subjectively as well, fairly, or poorly preserved. Assignment of the preservation status of a mummy can be achieved at a glance in the scout (preliminary) full-body images, as well as by inspecting the 2D and 3D reconstructed images.

Determination of gender

The gender of the mummy can be determined from the morphology of the external genitalia (if preserved), as well as from its skeleton. In general, the female bones are smaller with less prominent ridges; however, secondary sex characteristics are most evident in the pelvis and the skull. MDCT is capable of obtaining 2D and 3D images of the skeleton of the mummy (virtual skeleton). A feasibility study by Silke Grabherr and colleagues in 2008 demonstrated that MDCT is capable of facilitating the estimation of skeletal sex and age of a deceased person. The study proved that the different parts of the virtual skeleton can be visualized by MDCT in a quality that allows examinations as they are performed on real

skeletons. However, sex-related differences between skeletons have such a large overlap between the sexes that in the middle of the range no sexual distinction can be made.

Estimation of age at death

In each mummy, determination of age is based on assessment of features of the body and skeletal system. These include a combination of the following attributes: teeth eruption, epiphyseal union, closure of skull sutures, pubic symphyseal face morphology, changes in the sternal rib end, age-related degenerative changes, and occlusal wear.

The age of subadult individuals can be accurately estimated, as it depends primarily upon observed developmental changes such as teeth eruption and epiphyseal union. In adult individuals, where age estimates are more often accomplished via the observation of degenerative changes, age estimation has a larger margin of error of about a decade.

Determination of age using these morphological methods relies on the assessment of the physiological age of the skeleton, as opposed to the chronological age of the individual. The physiological age depends on environment, nutrition, and diseases; these stresses can cause changes in the skeleton that may mask the true age of the individual. In MDCT studies of the mummies, the absence of degenerative changes, osteophytes, and advanced ossification of epiphyses, sutures, and cartilages is usually indicative of a younger age, while their presence points toward a mature age.

Teeth eruption

Dental age is a major indicator of maturity in the juvenile, especially in ancient remains, as the teeth may be the least damaged of any body part. Dental age is more reliable than skeletal, as it is less affected than bone formation by nutrition or endocrine disturbances. Deciduous (baby) teeth begin to form at about six weeks in utero, and the last permanent tooth completes in early adult life. The third molar (wisdom tooth) is so variable in age of eruption, if it erupts at all, that it is not a reliable age indicator.¹⁵ Dental age can be estimated in

children and juveniles according to developmental traits of the teeth: eruption, and mineralization of the crowns and roots.

MDCT can detect dental eruption well through study of 2D MPR (orthopantomographic-like) as well as 3D images of the maxilla and mandible. There are several charts and figures that can be used for dental age estimation in child and juvenile subjects, including that of Schour and Massler and others.

Epiphyseal unions

The ends of the long bones (epiphyses) are separated from their main bones by layers of cartilage that gradually ossify along a growth algorithm that can be used to estimate age. For example, the distal ulnar epiphysis appears at 5-7 years, and fusion occurs at 15-17 years in females and 17-20 in males. Epiphyseal union is considered the most important characteristic for age determination of adolescents. Union or non-union of the epiphyses can be detected on coronal and sagittal MDCT images. Based on the degree of fusion of the epiphyses, for example, MDCT indicated that Tutankhamun died at the age of nineteen.

Cranial suture closure

This method bases age upon the degree of closure, union, or ossification of the cranial sutures; progressive fusion of sutures occurs with advancing age. Studies have indicated that parietal ectocranial sutures are reliable indicators of age over forty years. The cranial sutures can be examined using a 3D model of the skull in different views.

Pubic symphyseal face morphology

The pubic symphyseal face in the young is characterized by an undulating surface; this surface becomes smoother with age. The pubic bones can be examined on 3D MDCT images. By the use of the virtual cut tool, the symphysis can be cut in the midline and the symphyseal surface of each pubic bone can be shown.

Age-related degenerative changes

There are conditions that become more pronounced in old age and can provide evidence of advanced age, such as degenerative joint diseases,

presence of osteophytes (bone spurs), ossification of the rib and laryngeal cartilage, and degeneration of the spine.

MDCT images in multiple planes can detect accurately the degenerative changes, such as the presence of osteophytes, that may help in estimation of age at death.

Occlusal wear

Occlusal wear has been proposed as an indicator of age.⁶ However, it has been shown to be highly inaccurate in archaeological contexts where high-grit-content diets can wear down the occlusal surface of the tooth at an early age, especially in ancient Egypt.

Anthropometric data

Anthropometry is the science of measurement of the size, weight, and proportions of the human body. MDCT studies can establish accurate measurements of the mummified bodies by providing images in multiple planes.

The stature of a complete mummy (or skeletonized mummy) can be measured directly using an MIP midsagittal reconstructed image from vertex (top of skull) to tarsus (heel). For an incomplete or severed mummy, height cannot be measured directly, but estimation of stature can be inferred from a single extremity bone (the femur, for example), using simple regression equations. Such equations can be more specific when the gender and ethnicity are considered.

Stature estimation equations for ancient Egyptians based on long-bone lengths:

- Females: $(2.340 \times \text{femur length}) + 56.99 = \text{stature} \pm 2.517 \text{ cm}$
- Males: $(2.257 \times \text{femur length}) + 63.93 = \text{stature} \pm 2.517 \text{ cm}$

Anthropometry also includes measurements of the skull and face (craniofacial), which will be discussed later with evaluation of the faces of the royal mummies.

Body and arm position

The position of the arms of ancient Egyptian mummies varied according to the fashion of the time (dynasty), gender, and royal status.

Predynastic mummies had flexed arms with their hands in front of their faces, while Old Kingdom and many Middle Kingdom mummies tended to have their arms beside their bodies. From the Seventeenth into the Eighteenth Dynasty, the arms were laid along the sides, with the hands often placed on the front of the thighs for women, and over the genitals for men. As the New Kingdom progressed, both men's and women's arms lay along their sides, with their hands over their genitalia. In the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, the 'royal' crossed-arm position over the chest was the norm for the royal mummies. In the Twenty-first Dynasty, the arms of both royal and non-royal mummies returned to their sides, with hands over or near the pubic area.

Conclusion

This chapter highlights the importance of studying ancient mummies and the role of CT as a noninvasive tool. The optimum technique of CT imaging and systematic image analysis facilitates assessment of forensic, anthropological, and radiological aspects of royal ancient Egyptian mummies. We applied this knowledge in our studies of the mummies, and it aided in solving several mysteries, which will be presented for the first time in this book. <>

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