

and Zechariah's oracles concerning the high priest Joshua, and that "Malachi provided the catalyst for further speculation about prophetic figures who would precede the great day of Yahweh's coming judgment" (pp. 388–89).

The final essays, in the section "Interpreting Prophecy," consider aspects of prophecy in Christian Scripture (pp. 393–418). "Historical-Critical Method, Theology, and Contemporary Exegesis" (1995) defends that method against the charge that it is "a dead end that, if not responsible for all the current problems in the field of biblical exegesis, must be transcended if one hopes to achieve theologically relevant and compelling exegetical results for the contemporary community of faith" (p. 395). "A Christian Perspective on Prophetic Prediction" (1979) considers predictions that have already come to pass (for example, Amos 7: 9), those that have not and never will (because "the biblical god, unlike the static, eternally unchanging god of Greek philosophy, can change his mind" [p. 409]), and those yet to be fulfilled (for example, Isa. 11: 6–9); it gives particular attention to specially the slippery category of predictions "whose fulfillment, whether already past or yet to be expected, must be regarded as taking place in a way that is less—or more than—literal" (p. 411). Both of these essays caution scholars and laymen alike against simplistic, superficial exegesis and the mechanical decoding of biblical prophecy in the interest of contemporary theological satisfaction.

The most recent and longest essay, "The Mari Prophetic Texts in Transliteration and English Translation" (pp. 157–253) deserves special notice. It supersedes the partial collection published by W. L. Moran in "New Evidence from Mari on the History of Prophecy," in *Biblica* 50 (1969): 15–56, and Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3d ed. (Princeton, 1969), pp. 623–26, 629–32, and forms an apt *inclusio* with one of Roberts's first publications ("Antecedents to Biblical Prophecy from the Mari Archives," *Restoration Quarterly* 10/3 [1967]: 121–33, uncited here). Passages in those Mari documents are featured in many of the other essays, and having the entire document at hand for cross-checking is a special bonus.

Miller reminds us that "no development in biblical studies over the last century has been

more important than the study of the many texts and artifacts from the ancient world that have been unearthed to shed light on the past and provoke new thinking about the Bible. . . . Among the scholars who have spent their lifetime in the study of the ancient texts to see what light they shed on Scripture, few have been as productive and successful as . . . Roberts" (p. vii). The essays collected here, each drawing upon the written riches of the ANE with sensitivity and nuance, demonstrate that this estimation is not misplaced. The many essays that deal in whole or in part with material in the book of Isaiah whet the reader's appetite for the banquet to be served up in Roberts's promised Isaiah commentary in the Hermeneia series.

W. BOYD BARRICK

Montana State University-Billings

---

*Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society.* By NADIA ABU EL-HAJ. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001. Pp. xiii + 352 + 24 figs. \$20.

Few Middle Eastern societies have had the dubious fortune of enduring the full gaze of Euro-American social science. Israel has been analyzed like few societies globally, in no small part by indigenous social scientists, and it was only a matter of time until the subject of archaeology was scrutinized. Nadia Abu El-Haj's new volume brings both a deceptive style of erudition and high level of tendentiousness to the subject, so much so that the book is in fact more revealing of academic trends than it is of Israeli archaeology and society. What it reveals is not good.

Her book, a revision of her 1995 Duke University dissertation, purports to analyze the role of archaeology in creating modern Israel's "origin myth" (p. 3), a formulation that tips her hand immediately. In the tradition of Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, nationalism for Abu El-Haj is a purely modernist, artificial, and invented phenomenon, which is intimately related to the Zionist colonial project. She is equally dependent on analyses of "settler-colonial" phenomena by Nicholas Dirks, Partha Chatterjee,

and others. In her view, Israeli archaeology is an instrument in the “formation and enactment of the colonial-historical imagination and the substantiation of its territorial claims” (p. 2).

Abu El-Haj argues that the role of Israeli archaeology was to “efface Zionism’s colonial dimension” by assuming the archaeological record contained “remnants of nations and ethnic groups” (pp. 4–5). To understand how archaeology became and functioned as a “cardinal institutional location of the ongoing practice of colonial nationhood, producing facts through which historical-national claims, territorial transformations, heritage objects, and historicities ‘happen’” (p. 6), she adopts an approach from the history of science. Derived from the work of David Bloor, Ian Hacking, and others, she seeks to “explicate the processes through which science and society were and are actually reconfigured. I do so by focusing on the interlocking institutions and communities of practice out of which artifacts, maps, names, landscapes, architectures, exhibitions, historical visions, and political realities, as well as arguments, have all been constructed” (p. 7).

Her approach may therefore be characterized as broadly construed social constructivism, with her apparent goal the unraveling of what she obviously regards as a collection of interlocking fictions. At the heart of her critique is an undisguised political agenda that regards modern and ancient Israel, and perhaps Jews as a whole, as fictions. Her work should therefore be seen in the context of recent deconstructive analyses of biblical archaeology, and the Bible itself, with which she shares a remarkable vehemence.<sup>1</sup> The comments below critique what is a deeply disturbing and badly flawed book.

The author does not present a history of Israeli archaeology as such, but rather an anthropology of the relationship between an archaeology and its society. A considerable portion of the book (roughly chaps. 2 through 6) does present a sort of history of archaeology, from the founding of

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Keith W. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (London, 1996); Thomas L. Thompson, *The Mythic Past: Biblical Archaeology and the Myth of Israel* (New York, 1999).

the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1865 through the Six-Day War of 1967. In doing so she is at pains to demonstrate how the settler-colonial-national archaeology of Israel emerged seamlessly from the colonial archaeology of the West. She has admirably assembled a mass of material, and to employ her tortured metalanguage, shows how the “staging” of geography, cartography, linguistics, archaeology, and allied fields were “entangled” in the colonial project.

Much in the same fashion that Claude Lévi-Strauss and his Victorian counterparts referred to the Bible for authoritative accounts and legitimation, Abu El-Haj cites Jean and John Comaroff, Gyan Prakash, Thomas Kuhn, and, of course, Edward Said and other like-minded luminaries of postmodern and postcolonial anthropology. Such persistent appeals to academic authority (rather than historical evidence) are typical of both postcolonial and graduate-student rhetoric. But these appeals are strangely constrained; Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of cultural production is mentioned, but Antonio Gramsci and hegemony are not.

Taken a few paragraphs or even a few pages at a time, her historical analysis is useful and convincing, if not entirely original. Her focus, however, is far too narrow. She ignores most dimensions of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century worlds. Imperial politics are virtually unmentioned, along with finer-grained developments with a bearing on her “settler-colonial” thesis, such as the image of the “Holy Land” in the West, central intellectual debates in the development of archaeology such as the problem of race in early Assyriology and the “Babel und Bibel Krieg,” early archaeological institutions, and the emergence of Middle Eastern travel and tourism.<sup>2</sup> In this respect she displays her debt to

<sup>2</sup> For Western perceptions of the “Holy Land,” see the series *With Eyes toward Zion*, edited by M. Davis and Y. Beit-Arieh. For tourism, see Kobi Cohen-Hattab and Yossi Katz, “The Attraction of Palestine: Tourism in the Years 1850–1948,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 27 (2001): 166–77. For “Babel und Bibel,” see H. Huffman, “Babel und Bibel: The Encounter between Babylon and the Bible,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 22 (1983): 309–20. For the racial politics of early Assyriology, see Jerrold S. Cooper, “Sumerian and Aryan: Racial Theory, Academic Politics and

Said: a narrow selectivity and dramatic disregard for material that does not fit the thesis.

The theoretical key to her argument lies in the nature of science and reality. Abu El-Haj largely follows the "Strong Programme" and proposes that "science" should be regarded as an enterprise that reproduces and reinforces the values of the dominant social group and that science itself is regarded as a "progressive" value in itself. Beyond this instrumental character, the very epistemology of "science" creates "facts" that are then placed into preexisting categories. This is to say that archaeological data are not discovered but invented. It is from this foundational assumption that the remainder of her argument flows. There are many weaknesses to this, not least of which is that it assumes archaeology is a science. While many inside and outside the profession fervently wish this to be true, it is not.

Latour has pointed out that the types of analyses that have explored the social operation of laboratory sciences simply do not apply to the social sciences.<sup>3</sup> Abu El-Haj's science-studies

approach is a means to put a new and more scientific gloss on standard postcolonialist tropes. This is precisely the sort of appeal to authority that she accuses Israeli archaeology of, only in her case it is a kind of antisience. It is unconvincing, and one wonders whether she believes it herself. But it is not surprising that the bulk of this is relegated to a long series of footnotes (pp. 285–88) that do not "conjoin" with the bulk of her narrative. Overall, the constructivist stance undermines the entire exercise. The choice of worlds appears to be between Wittgenstein and Popper, worlds of our own making and one that we more or less all share.<sup>4</sup>

The central issue is obviously the relationship of archaeology to society. Archaeologists themselves have begun exploring the impact of their discipline on high culture, albeit with mixed success.<sup>5</sup> Where they have largely failed thus far is grasping archaeology as a low-culture concept, which it surely also is. Abu El-Haj would retort that settler-colonial archaeology utterly and profoundly reshaped the entire physical and cognitive landscape, making its results (or inventions) implicit in all surroundings. But like studies of archaeology and nationalism as a whole, this observation verges on becoming a truism. Charting and naming space as a means of exerting a claim are hardly unknown in the world, nor are expressions of complex ideological blends of the past and future through the architecture and planning of the present, but one would not know it to read her account. Surely a trip to see the obelisks and temples of Washington, D.C., perhaps via the

---

Parisian Assyriology," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 210 (1993): 169–205.

For archaeological institutions and policy in Mandatory Palestine, see A. Sussman and R. Reich, "To the History of the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem," in *Zeev Vilnay Festschrift 2* (Jerusalem, 1987), pp. 83–91 [Hebrew]; Eliot Braun, "Objectivity and Salvage Excavation Policy in Mandate Palestine and the State of Israel: An Appraisal of Its Effects on Understanding the Archaeological Record," in T. Shay and J. Clottes, eds., *The Limitations of Archaeological Knowledge* (Liège, 1992); Jeffrey Abt, "Toward a Historian's Laboratory: The Breasted-Rockefeller Museum Projects in Egypt, Palestine, and America," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 33 (1996): 173–94; Shimon Gibson, "British Archaeological Institutions in Mandatory Palestine 1917–1948," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 131 (1999): 115–43.

<sup>3</sup> B. Latour, "When Things Strike Back: A Possible Contribution of 'Science Studies' to the Social Sciences," *British Journal of Sociology* 51 (2000): 107–23. Strangely enough, the ways in which archaeology does actually function as a science go unmentioned by Abu El-Haj. These include social networks and social climbing, but another is that archaeology is self-correcting. This is seen in the constant revision of observations and interpretations stretching out over decades. For a view inside the analytical process that distorted archaeological results from Yadin's exca-

---

vations at Masada to conform to a 1950s national-cultural agenda, see now Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *Sacrificing Truth: Archaeology and the Myth of Masada* (New York, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> I owe this stark formulation to Jonathan Imber, to whom I am grateful. Compare John Bintliff, "Archaeology and the Philosophy of Wittgenstein," in C. Holtorf and H. Karlsson, eds., *Philosophy and Archaeological Practice: Perspectives for the 21st Century* (Göteborg, 2000), pp. 153–72.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, the essays in A. C. Gunter, ed., *The Construction of the Ancient Near East, Culture and History 11* (Copenhagen, 1992). See also Frederick N. Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture: Imagining Mesopotamia in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, 2003).

healing waters of Bethesda (John 5:24), or the port of Alexandria, might prove this point.

Furthermore, the cartographic and linguistic aspects of Western imperialism and Zionism have been most extensively discussed by scholars such as Dov Gavish, Haim Goren, and Ruth Kark, whose work Abu El-Haj ignores.<sup>6</sup> Similarly the attitudes of individual imperial age archaeologists, most notably W. F. Albright but also lesser lights such as R. W. Hamilton, are overlooked, along with unique “multi-cultural” institutions such as the Palestine Oriental Society. She even neglects key Palestinian figures such as the physician-ethnographer Tewfik Canaan and the Department of Antiquities member and later American University of Beirut faculty member Dimitri Baramki.<sup>7</sup> These omissions, the

very fabric of “interlocking institutions and communities of practice,” do not inspire confidence. Once Zionism becomes the primary subject, her approach becomes even more selective and focused.

But any discussion of how high culture connects to low culture must include a review of the locations where this really happens in an active sense, not least of all school curricula, pamphlets, and newspapers. On these Abu El-Haj is largely silent, choosing instead to retread the familiar ground of Zionist nature walks. Her omission may be contrasted with the work of Amatzia Baram on Ba’athist Iraq or Asher Kaufman on “Phoenicianism” in Maronite Lebanon, not to mention Nachman Ben-Yehuda’s on Masada in Israeli culture.<sup>8</sup> Her determination to focus on high culture

<sup>6</sup> For a sampling of their work, see Dov Gavish, *Land the Map: The Survey of Palestine, 1920–1948* (Jerusalem, 1991) [Hebrew]; Dov Gavish, “French Cartography in the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 126 (1994): 24–31; Dov Gavish and R. Adler, *50 Years of Mapping Israel, 1948–1999* (Tel-Aviv, 1999) [Hebrew]; Ruth Kark, *Jaffa, a City in Evolution, 1799–1917* (Jerusalem, 1990); R. Kark and M. Oren-Nordheim, “Colonial Cities in Palestine? Jerusalem under the British Mandate,” *Israel Affairs* 3 (1996): 50–94; Ruth Kark, “Mamluk and Ottoman Cadastral Surveys and Early Mapping of Landed Properties in Palestine,” *Agricultural History* 71 (1997): 46–70; Ruth Kark, “Land Purchase and Mapping in a Mid-nineteenth Century Palestinian Village,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 130 (1997): 150–61. See also J. J. Moscoop, *Measuring Jerusalem, The PEF and British Interests in the Holy Land* (Leicester, 2000); Haim Goren, “Scientific Organizations as Agents of Change: The Palestine Exploration Fund, the Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas and Nineteenth-century Palestine,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 27 (2001): 153–65; and Maoz Azaryahu and Arnon Golan, “(Re)Naming the Landscape: The Formation of the Hebrew Map of Israel 1949–1960,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 27 (2001): 178–95.

<sup>7</sup> Burke O. Long, *Planting and Reaping Albright, Politics, Ideology, and Interpreting the Bible* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 1997); R. W. Hamilton, *Letters from the Middle East by an Occasional Archaeologist* (Edinburgh, 1992). Canaan published over two dozen articles and reviews on ethnography and folklore in the *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*, most famously the series “Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine” (4 [1924]: 1–84; 5 [1925]:

163–203; 6 [1926]: 1–69, 117–58; 7 [1927]: 1–88), and “The Palestinian Arab House: Its Architecture and Folklore” (12 [1932]: 223–47; 13 [1933]: 1–83), as well additional papers in *ZDPV* and *LA*. Baramki authored one of the first Palestinian “versions” in *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Palestine: A Survey of the Archaeology of Palestine from the Earliest Times to the Ottoman Conquest* (Beirut, 1969). This was published in the series *Silsilat “Kutub Filastiniyah”* by the Research Center of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Similarly astonishing omissions mar Abu El-Haj’s recent paper “Producing (Arti) Facts: Archaeology and Power during the British Mandate of Palestine,” *Israel Studies* 7 (2002): 33–61, in which she somehow manages to discuss archaeology during the Mandatory period without mentioning either John Garstang, the first director of the Department of Antiquities, or William F. Albright.

<sup>8</sup> Amatzia Baram, “A Case of Imported Identity, The Modernizing Secular Ruling Elites of Iraq and the Concept of Mesopotamian-Inspired Territorial Nationalism, 1922–1992,” *Poetics Today* 15 (1994): 297–319; *Culture, History, and Ideology in the Formation of Ba’thist Iraq, 1968–89* (New York, 1991); Asher Kaufman, “Phoenicianism: The Formation of an Identity in Lebanon in 1920,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 37 (2001): 173–94; Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth, Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel* (Madison, 1995). See also the work on Israeli historical memory by scholars such as Anita Shapira (for example, “Hirbet Hizah: Between Remembrance and Forgetting,” *Jewish Social Studies* 7 [2000]: 1–62), which addresses a variety of sources from school curricula to television programming. A vast literature on these subjects exists in Hebrew. Overlooked literature on Israeli museums include Tali Tamir, “The Israel

products such as museums and “space” is again in the tradition of Said. Not coincidentally, these are precisely the subjects explored most cogently by leftist Israeli academics, whom she cites approvingly and repeatedly. They, like the revisionist Israeli “New Historians,” are at least familiar with their subjects.

Whatever might have been said or created by archaeology is received differently by pluralist society. People heard, and hear, what they want to hear; as Yaacov Shavit notes, in a critically important English-language paper not cited by Abu El-Haj, Israeli archaeology was many different things to different people.<sup>9</sup> Historical memory, a concept she invokes without mentioning Pierre Nora or Maurice Halbwachs, is produced throughout every society and not merely among intellectuals. As if to compensate for her elevated focus, she tries to grasp the “meaning” of the “facts” she has gathered by a kind of crypto-ethnography, overheard snippets of tourist chatter, conversations with unnamed informant archaeologists, and commentary from ever reliable tour guides. Does this chart public opinion or public policy in any meaningful way? It is a flimsy and unconvincing method for entering into the gestalt of Israeli society. If nothing else it is undone by her pretending to straddle the impossible boundary between observer-independent and observer-dependent relations. Her understanding of Israeli politics is simplistic and falls back on convenient dichotomies; religious versus non-religious, Mizrahi versus Ashkenazi, and of course,

---

Museum: From Dream to Fulfillment,” *Israel Museum Journal* 9 (1990): 7–16; A. Azoulay, “With Open Doors: Museums and Historical Narratives in Israel’s Public Space,” in D. J. Sherman and I. Rogoff, *Museum Culture, Histories, Discourses, Spectacles* (Minneapolis, 1994), pp. 85–109; Alex Weingrod, “Changing Israeli Landscapes: Buildings and the Uses of the Past,” *Cultural Anthropology* 8 (1993): 370–87; Alex Weingrod, “Dry Bones, Nationalism and Symbolism in Contemporary Israel,” *Anthropology Today* 11 (1995): 7–12; Jason S. Greenberg, “Representing the State: Class, Race and Nationhood in an Israeli Museum,” *Visual Anthropology Review* 13 (1997): 14–27.

<sup>9</sup> Yaacov Shavit, “Archaeology, Political Culture, and Culture in Israel,” in N. A. Silberman and D. Small, eds., *The Archaeology of Israel, Constructing the Past, Interpreting the Future* (Sheffield, 1997), pp. 48–61.

religious-nationalist “settlers” versus everyone.<sup>10</sup> Ultimately, Abu El-Haj’s anthropology is undone by her epistemology and ill-informed narrative, intrusive counterpolitics, and by her unwillingness either to enter or observe Israeli society with a modicum of sympathy or generosity.

Her approach is schizophrenic. On the one hand, there is reductionism, as she extracts issues out of context, such as 1950s debates over early Israelite settlement and collar-rim storage jars, and makes them proxy for fundamental debates over Israeli identity and nationhood. On the other, is the kitchen-sink approach, as in her chapters on Jerusalem, the navel of all complexities, which bounce almost incoherently between issues of archaeology, urban planning, architecture, heritage, and the like and are, in any case, a repetition of her 1995 journal article. And in the middle things are strangely skewed. L. A. Mayer, for example, is mentioned only in connection to somewhat obscure excavations he undertook in Jerusalem and at a synagogue site rather than his monumental work on Islamic art and archaeology. The effect is a representation of Israeli archaeology that is simply bizarre.

These are among the reasons that the book, like most postcolonialist work, operates in a closed world, addressed only to the intellectually and politically like-minded. The inaccessibility of her language and baroque form of argument seem deliberate. Her engagement in debating the narrow doctrines of the day, and its impossibly recondite rhetoric, makes a clerical analogy unavoidable.

In an offhand manner Abu El-Haj cites colonial America, the British Raj, and “Palestine/Israel” as examples of colonial-settler archaeology, but

<sup>10</sup> The literature on Israeli politics and society is immense, but see conveniently Asher Arian, *The Second Republic: Politics in Israel* (Chatham, New Jersey, 1998). For a study of the social status of Israeli archaeology today, see R. Hallote and A. H. Joffe, “The Politics of Israeli Archaeology: Nationalism and Science in the Second Republic,” *Israel Studies* 7/3 (2002): 84–116. Compare the highly abstract formulation of Sandra A. Scham, “The Archaeology of the Disenfranchised,” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 8 (2001): 183–213.

this is not explored.<sup>11</sup> One difference is of course that the colonial project in Israel was played out in one-fifth the time it was for North America, so it was measured in “real time.” But despite the ponderous intellectual apparatus and meta-language of anthropology, conspicuously absent is any trace of the comparative method. True, as noted above, no modern Middle Eastern society has received the same level of attention as Israel, nor has any other Middle Eastern archaeology. But studies of depth and sophistication are appearing on archaeology and nation-building in “invented” countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, and Iran, which make the case of Israeli archaeology rather less special.<sup>12</sup> The denial of comparison has the deliberate effect of making Israeli archaeology appear almost singularly alien, placed, like Israeli society at large, into a condition of “alterity.”

The lack of comparison is the final, and fatal, flaw, since it means the reader must rely on the total immersion experience of the author, and her observer-dependent conclusions, including her political agenda. Her quest is not comparison with other examples of real archaeology but with ideal types and still broader quarry. A real comparison would necessitate in-depth knowledge of local history and global archaeology that would muddy the broad strokes that she so ob-

viously wishes to paint. Fortunately others have begun to fill in the gaps, and these inevitably complicate the story. But like postcolonial theory generally, her approach in effect declares everything that “existed” before the coming of the West (and its intellectual habits) as somehow more real and more genuine. This essentialism, driven by an epistemology that sees reality as merely emanations of the mind of the will, is the basis of the new exceptionalisms, baroque victimographies, and solipsistic explorations that are the foundations of so much modern social science.

Given that her counterpolitics is explicitly Palestinian, what then of her understanding of archaeology in that society? Once again she both gets the story wrong and her method backfires on her. The most glaring omission from the scholarly point of view is her failure to mention Albert Glock, the father of Palestinian archaeology.<sup>13</sup> A transplanted American Lutheran with an Assyriology degree, Glock worked with Paul Lapp at Taanach, was director of the Albright Institute, and eventually set up the archaeology department at Bir Zeit University. He trained the first cadre of Palestinian students, but was pushed out in a power struggle and then was finally murdered, allegedly by Hamas. About Glock, a tragic and somewhat bizarre figure, who for all intents and purposes wrote the manifesto and blueprint for Palestinian archaeology,<sup>14</sup> Abu El-Haj has not a word. Possibly this is because his story simply does not fit her painfully circumscribed narrative, nor does it have a particularly nice ending. Obviously she was not writing an overt manifesto about Palestinian archaeology, but any meaningful discussion of *Israeli* archaeology must mention Glock, since he was unique in his approach and his devotion. Unlike Abu El-Haj he was neither coy nor clever, he did not conjure a fantasy

<sup>11</sup> The settler-colonial “type” in archaeology derives in some measure from an unfortunate categorization by Bruce Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist,” *Man* 19 (1984): 355–70. Altogether too pat, it ignores the fact that at a fundamental level, the archaeology of everyone and everything since the advent of *Homo sapiens sapiens* is that of settlers and colonialists. As in most things, timing is everything.

<sup>12</sup> See Baram, “A Case of Imported Identity,” and Kaufman, “Phoenicianism.” For Egypt, see Michael Wood, “The Use of the Pharaonic Past in Modern Egyptian Nationalism,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 35 (1998): 179–96, and Fekri A. Hassan, “Memorabilia: Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt,” in L. Meskell, ed., *Archaeology under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London, 1998), pp. 200–216. For Iran, see Kamyar Abdi, “Nationalism, Politics, and the Development of Archaeology in Iran,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 105 (2001): 51–76.

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion of Glock’s life and death by Edward Fox, *Palestine Twilight: The Murder of Dr. Edward Glock and the Archeology of the Holy Land* (London, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> Albert Glock, Jr., “Archaeology as Cultural Survival: The Future of the Palestinian Past,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23 (1994): 70–85; idem, “Cultural Bias in the Archaeology of Palestine,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 24 (1995): 48–59.

world in order to tear it down, and his intellectual and political programs did not have a zero-sum mentality. And, it must be added, when he did archaeology instead of polemics he was a fine scholar, one who maintained collegial relations with everyone including Israelis.

Filling in what is missing from her text becomes fatiguing. In the end there is no reason to take her picture of Israeli archaeology seriously, since her selection bias is so glaring. Beyond that, like all postmodernism, the very tenets of her philosophy undermine her conclusions. As Zagorin notes: "What is commonly not understood or is overlooked, however, is that the skepticism and relativism endemic to postmodernist philosophy cuts the ground from any moral or political stand its adherents might take; for if historical facts are pure constructions and objectivity and truth have no place in history, the humanities, or the social sciences, then there is no particular reason to give any credence to the intellectual claims and moral or political arguments that postmodernists themselves may advance."<sup>15</sup>

But Abu El-Haj concludes on a truly shocking note, suggesting that with the destruction of the archaeological site called "Joseph's Tomb," an attack during which a real person, a no doubt hybridized Israeli Druze named Yusuf Mahdat, was killed, "Palestinian demonstrators eradicated one of Israel's 'facts on the ground'" (p. 281). Are scholars now in the business of advocating the eradication of "facts" rather than their explanation? If that is the case, what are we to make of the waqf's evisceration of the Temple Mount? In a footnote she approvingly cites Rashid Khalidi's vulgar suggestion that the Western Wall only emerged in Jewish religious consciousness and praxis in the last few centuries. Is this merely another "invented tradition" that may be wiped clean?<sup>16</sup> Are scholars then to remake the present as well as the past? We seem unworthy of being entrusted with either.

Archaeology and politics, though forever joined, are fundamentally incompatible.<sup>17</sup> That said, if the effort is not made to separate them, politics overwhelm and ultimately invalidate scholarship, poisoning high and low culture alike. In declaring this no one is trying to silence debate or suggest scholars should neither feel passionate nor be involved in affairs of the day; in fact, those sorts of accusations are more typical of attempts to silence. It only suggests that scholars should not act as politicians or propagandists or make reference to their scholarship when they do so. Furthermore, politics that are liberatory, that are virtuous, are by definition immune from criticism, which makes them neither politics, nor scholarship, but articles of faith, the most dangerous thing of all.

What then are the responsibilities of the intellectual? Are intellectuals to follow the corrosive Marcuse-Foucault-Said tradition and act as celebrity provocateurs or, worse, cultural berserkers? Perhaps after 9/11, Afghanistan, and the Iraq war intellectuals are in the same place as some scholars were in 1968, having first to make choices about civility and reason, or in 1955 (to take the date of Aron's publication challenging the communists and existentialists), or in 1848, and so on. These are pivotal moments when we have to decide whether scholarship and universities are engines of narrowly defined progress, based on slavish adherence to romantic doctrines that promote good feeling equality but that demand in turn absolute obedience and ultimately violence or something else, something much harder to define and to hold. If this demands a split in our lives, then so be it. As Abu El-Haj has once again demonstrated, without that split, without that even quavering aspiration to self-regulation, objectivity, and truth, however vague and elusive these may be, the results may be dark indeed. Abu El-Haj, however, is hardly unique.

<sup>15</sup> Perez Zagorin, "History, The Referent, and Narrative: Reflections on Postmodernism Now," *History and Theory* 38 (1999): 1-24.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. M. N. Adler, ed., *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: Critical Text, Translation and Commentary* (London, 1907), p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Compare Yannis Hamilakis, "La trahison des archéologues? Archaeological Practice as Intellectual Activity in Postmodernity," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 12 (1999): 60-79, and the responses to his paper. See also my article "Identity/Crisis," *Archaeological Dialogues* 10/1 (2003): 77-95.

Speaking of the Red Queen, Alice observes that in the end “she had suddenly dwindled down to the size of a little doll, and was now on the table merrily running round and round after her own shawl, which was trailing behind her.” Abu El-Haj has written a flimsy and supercilious book that does no justice to either her putative subject or the political agenda she wishes to advance. It should be avoided.

ALEXANDER H. JOFFE

*Purchase College, State University of New York*

*Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebir-nâri für Manfred Weippert zum 65. Geburtstag.* Edited by ULRICH HÜBNER and ERNST AXEL KNAUF. *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 186. Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002. Pp. viii + 331. \$68.75.

This festschrift honoring M. Weippert consists of nineteen studies expanding on the scholarship of the honoree using ancient Near Eastern archaeology and extrabiblical documents to enrich the understanding of the Bible and the ancient Near Eastern world in which it was created. The contributions, nine in German, eight in English, and two in French, provide a survey of Judah's and Israel's relations with their surrounding cultures, in addition to demonstrating varieties of means by which data may be utilized in biblical research. The breadth of Weippert's influence can be seen not only in the topics proffered, but also in the diversity of conclusions to which these studies lead. All of the articles demonstrate the usefulness of careful investigations of ancient Near Eastern materials in reconstructing ancient history, understanding texts from what is to the modern world a foreign civilization, and for placing the Bible in a world to which its origins belong. Scholarship, imagination, use of detail and a bit of playfulness provide enlightening and entertaining readings—a proper homage to Weippert, whose work has consistently involved all these aspects.

The contributors and their theses are as follows. M. Nissinen surveys Mesopotamian re-

ligious sources, finding prophetic participation in divine councils a normal and celebrated occurrence, one that included drinking beer. Z. Kafafi provides a short survey of Egyptian-like buildings in Bronze Age Palestine and Jordan, deciding that they represent intermediaries between rulers and ruled. U. Hübner sets out the use of “Jebusites” in pre-Israelite Jerusalem historiography as a literary construct. A. Lemaire surveys studies of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon, concluding that it is reasonable to assume an ancient record behind the biblical narrative. C. Ehrlich elaborates on the Philistine identification of eṣ-Šāfi with biblical Gath. H. Niemann presents an essay on the biblical presentation of the Philistines as representatives of “enemy” and “object of anger.” C. Uehlinger sets forth his argument for identifying Tiglath-pileser III reliefs of deity images as spoils of war with the taking of Gaza. S. Timm presents a considered reply to Hayes and Kuan regarding the possibility of Assyrian references to a temple in Samaria. F. Fales investigates twelve letters from the eighteenth century B.C.E. in order to demonstrate Assyrian administration practices and structures in central Syria. B. Becking reviews Vanderhooft's posit of four Israelite names found at Tell Šēḥ Ḥamad, concluding that we cannot determine how they came to be there or exactly who they were. L. Massmann surveys Assyrian and archaeological sources to assess the collapse of Judah as a political event when the nation was caught between Assyria and Egypt. E. Knauf proposes that perhaps Bersheba II may have been destroyed by the Arab Asuhili. A. Berlejung considers the Assyrian symbolism of temples with regard to military victory and then reflects on possible parallels to the temple in Jerusalem. F. Israel places Ezekiel 16:3, 45 in its West-Semitic context. P.-E. Dion looks at the religion of the Elephantine colony and sees it as of a piece with the religion reflected in biblical texts and therefore not a postexilic development. B. Halpern analyzes the references to astronomy in Job as an attempt to maintain traditional astrology in the face of changing beliefs in the first half of the fifth century B.C.E. K. van der Toorn (whose name is misspelled on the headers for his article) compares the notion of revelation in the biblical book of Job and in Mesopotamian texts. H. P. Mathys provides an argument for