

It resists the mindset that all biblical scholars should use the same methodology, mainly the historical-critical method, and calls for a dialogue with mainstream interpreters of Scripture.

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BENJAMIN W. PORTER and ALEXIS T. BOUTIN (eds.), *Remembering the Dead in the Ancient Near East: Recent Contributions from Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Archaeology* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2014). Pp. xv + 261. \$70.

Most archaeological studies of the dead in the ancient Near East over the last century have employed one of the following typical approaches: analyzing the bones themselves, undertaking archaeological studies of tombs and burial goods, or studying texts that concern death or the deceased. The present volume highlights interdisciplinary approaches that bring these various methods together under the aegis of anthropology, providing a window on new integrative study that holds great promise for our increased understanding of death and the dead in the ancient Near East.

Benjamin W. Porter and Alexis T. Boutin provide a theoretical introduction to the book, which is followed by six case studies. This review will highlight five of these studies that will be of most interest to readers of *CBQ* (the remaining essay is “Burying Things: Practice of Cultural Disposal at Late Neolithic Domuztepe, Southeast Turkey,” by Stuart Campbell, Sarah Whitcher Kansa, Rachel Bichener, and Hannah Lau).

Porter and Boutin (“Introduction: Bringing Out the Dead in the Ancient Near East”) survey past studies of the dead in ancient Near Eastern archaeology. The main approach for the past two centuries has been the study of mortuary assemblages, beginning with the extensive work on cemeteries at Ur, Emar, Diyala, Mari, and Gezer. Archaeologists have used grave goods to determine religious identity, religious practice, and sociopolitical complexity. Osteology has increasingly become another important way of examining burials, beginning with simple profiles of ages and genders and now with more complex studies cross-referencing pathological information with gender, nutrition with genetic descent, and so forth. Finally, written sources, including ritual texts, myths, funerary inscriptions, and inheritance documents, have long been studied as sources of information on the dead. The studies featured in the present volume in each case bring at least two of these methods together. Moreover, they all engage current theory on collective memory, especially phenomenological approaches to describing collective experiences of emotion.

In “Strange People and Exotic Things: Constructing Akkadian Identity at Kish, Iraq,” William J. Pestle, Christina Torres-Rouff, and Blair Daverman deal with an Early Dynastic III cemetery at Kish. This cemetery functioned for two or three generations, immediately after Lugal-Zage-Si had conquered and destroyed Kish and Sargon had then defeated him and refounded the city, presumably as an “Akkadian” community. This study examines both grave goods and bones, using genetic analysis. Although grave goods show a remarkable homogeneity within the cemetery and in comparison with earlier tombs, the male population of the cemetery presents a different genetic profile from that of the females, who are genetically the same as Kish’s earlier cemeteries and the surrounding territory. This means that

the men buried in this cemetery were newcomers to Kish, logically identified as Akkadians moving into a Sumerian population, and yet there was no expression of a new “Akkadian” identity in the mortuary goods. The authors conclude that either “ethnic distinction did not carry sufficient (or the appropriate type of) social meaning for the living community . . . to commemorate in death” (p. 86), or there was a deliberate attempt to hide Akkadian identity (pp. 61, 86). In terms of collective memory, the “emic” element of ethnic identity is missing, even though the “etic,” or genetic, is present. This study and its methods could hold promise for biblical scholars and Syro-Palestinian archaeologists thinking about ethnic diversity in, for example, Iron I Palestine or Persian-period Yehud.

Boutin and Porter, in “Commemorating Disability at Dilmun: Ancient and Contemporary Tales from the Peter B. Cornwall Collection,” look at the commemoration of identity in second-millennium Bahrain, focusing on the remains of one young woman from Early Dilmun (2050–1800) with remarkable deformities. This woman suffered from *Genu valgum* (knock-knee), was very short, and had other physical malformations. Multiple childhood or prenatal traumas left her disfigured and clumsy, but functional in society. Nevertheless, she was buried with a remarkable number of luxury grave goods, including alabaster. This unexpected connection between deformity and high status in society the authors compare with textual accounts of the care of the disabled in Egypt, as well as in the Mesopotamian story of “Enki and Ninmah.” Boutin and Porter also note throughout how the original excavation of the bones was done by the deaf archaeologist Peter Cornwall, and how the status of disability in the 1940s provides a foil for 2000 B.C.E. Biblical scholars will find this essay an important contribution to disability studies and the work pioneered by Jeremy Schipper, Candida Moss, and Saul Olyan in that area.

“Bioarchaeological Reconstruction of Group Identity at Early Bronze Age Bab edh-Dhra‘, Jordan,” by Susan Guise Sheridan, Jaime Ullinger, Lesley Gregoricka, and Meredith S. Chesson, moves to a region closer to the biblical heartland—Bab edh-Dhra‘ on the southeast edge of the Dead Sea in the Early Bronze I–III period. In EB IA, Bab edh-Dhra‘ was a semipermanent settlement supporting a seminomadic population, while in EB II–III, a fixed settlement was established, exploiting cultivated orchards. This essay examines changes in burials between EBIA and EB II–III.

EB IA burials were in shaft tombs with chambers, while EB II–III burials were in charnel houses. The first observation from the study of the bones is the comparative abundance of young children in EB IA over against EB II–III. This is odd given the history of the site, since the EB IA population would have had to bring their dead to the cemetery from some distance, while the later inhabitants could bury on-site. Three possible solutions are proposed. Children could have been buried elsewhere in EB II–III; child bones could have been discarded, a practice known ethnographically; or fragile child bones could have been lost in the poor collection and preservation methods of the 1960s excavations of Bab edh-Dhra‘.

The second observation is that while EB IA and II–III show much the same genetic population, EB II–III did not show the genetic diversity one would expect of a settled town engaged in a broader regional economy; the more diverse EB IA dead ought to have been the more isolated community. The investigators suggest either that there were cultural constraints in EB II–III against marrying outside the community, or that the charnel house represented the burial place for only a single extended family. As Israel Finkelstein and

others have often drawn comparisons between Early Bronze Age Palestine and the Early Iron Age, this study will be of interest to scholars of early Israel.

"Identity, Commemoration, and Remembrance in Colonial Encounters: Burials at Tombos during the Egyptian New Kingdom Nubian Empire and Its Aftermath," by Stuart Tyson Smith and Michele R. Buzon, looks at Egyptian colonial Nubia. Egypt colonized Nubia beginning in the fifteenth century B.C.E. In 1079, Nubia gained independence, and in 727 conquered Egypt. This study examines a Nubian cemetery over a long term during Egyptian colonial influence and after its collapse, using the anthropological distinction of "Inscribed" deliberate discursive identity markers that would appear in monuments and "Incorporated" habitual practices that would appear in grave goods. Biological archaeology shows the cemetery to have contained a mixed population, with individuals of both Nubian and Egyptian origin. In the colonial period, large tombs in Egyptian style signaled inscribed ties to Egypt, confirmed by mummification practices. The smaller grave goods, however, confirm on the incorporated level the site's hybrid nature suggested by the bioarchaeology. Following the collapse of the Egyptian colonial administration, a new Nubian style of tumuli tombs appeared. The inscribed identity was therefore now Nubian. Nevertheless, grave goods continued to be heterogeneous, including Egyptian scarabs and amulets, and bioarchaeological data show no change in the makeup of the population. Thus, incorporated identity continued to confirm the hybrid nature of the community. Like the earlier study on Kish, this kind of work, and in particular its exploration of inscribed vs. incorporated identity, will be useful to biblical scholars of various periods.

Finally, Gretchen R. Dubbs and Melissa Zubecki's "Abandoned Memories: A Cemetery of Forgotten Souls?" looks at the dead of Tell el-Amarna. Amarna's South Tomb Cemetery housed all social groups of the short-lived city. Rich and poor were buried side by side, with no effort to highlight status. No mummification was practiced. Almost no grave goods accompanied the bodies apart from clothing, a single amulet, and some food and drink. Moreover, there seem to have been a very large number of deaths at one time. The bones show significant evidence of lesions, stress, harsh conditions, and want, without exception—this despite illustrations at Amarna of a life full of promise and plenty. The reality of Akhenaton's dream city seems to have been an immense building project under extremely harsh working conditions, a taxing life for an entire society, and perhaps an epidemic of massive proportions. The dead of all classes at Amarna look like any other period's refugees. This study will no doubt interest biblical scholars on the subjects of the city's relationship to the theology of Akhenaton, Jan Assmann's work on monotheism, and related questions—perhaps titillated by the fact that there is not a single representation of the Aten anywhere in the cemetery.

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STEPHEN K. BLACK (ed.), *To Set at Liberty: Essays on Early Christianity and Its Social World in Honor of John H. Elliott* (Social World of Biblical Antiquity 2/11; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2014). Pp. xii + 397. \$60.

John H. Elliott is well known as a pioneer in the field of social-scientific biblical criticism, chiefly on account of his *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of*