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Book review:

Callender, Dexter E. Jr. *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human*. Harvard Semitic Studies, 48. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000.

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through its lengthy editorial process, one can discern a very strong force emerging that sought to unify the prophetic proclamations into a coherent composition", we are unhelpfully informed (106). Who assigned a function to intertextuality? Childs may mean the redactor or the scribes who composed the oracle, but if so then he ought to have said "repeated vocabulary", since "intertextuality" properly refers not to shared terminology or a compositional technique but to a type of reading or to an utterance's use of anonymous codes making signification of meaning possible. If Childs does mean "repeated vocabulary" here, and if that vocabulary's function was assigned by the passage's traditions, then the pericope's appearance of unity amounts to little; it merely results from someone throwing a few recurring words into it (or carefully incorporating them, if you prefer). Or does Childs mean that the reader assigns some function to intertextuality? If so, then the unity of the passage is the product of the reader, not of its authors, which I suspect is not what Childs means, though post-modern critics who reject diachronic analysis altogether would argue that he should mean that. In other cases Childs seems to intend the term "intertextuality" to refer to literary allusion; elsewhere, to shared vocabulary stemming from a common literary form or social setting. The differences among these phenomena are very significant for interpretation. Childs' failure to distinguish among them is unfortunate. He does not elaborate on these features in enough detail to produce a textured exegesis, whether diachronic or synchronic in orientation.

These cases reflect a problem discussed above. Childs' method points in one direction, but his attachment to older modes of scholarship whose relevance he successfully questions prevents him from moving decisively in that direction. Nonetheless, this commentary provides students of all prophetic books with a highly useful roadmap. Although Childs does not always depart the exegetical desert found in most twentieth century scholarship on the prophets, his voice prepares a way out from it. We are in Childs' debt for putting us on this wise path even if we, too, sometimes stumble before fully renewing our strength.

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Dexter E. CALLENDER, Jr., *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human* (Harvard Semitic Studies 48). Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 2000. xviii-244 p. \$29.95.

This monograph, a revised version of the author's 1995 Harvard Ph.D. Dissertation, seeks to establish and examine the thematic and semantic parameters of ancient Near Eastern "primal human" traditions, i.e., traditions whose focus is a primordial human connected with the "creation, the beginning of the cosmos" and therefore belonging "to the period of the first or foundational things" (3). Thus, the book's title is a bit misleading, for it is

not only myths about Adam, per se, that the author investigates, but biblical and other Near Eastern traditions about a primal human, of which the biblical story of Adam is just one reflection.

Comprising the bulk of the study are a number of biblical texts, which Callender argues, either directly or indirectly reflect such traditions. These texts are organized into the first three major sections of the book as follows: Gen 1-3 (Part I: Direct Attestations: Narratives about the Primal Human); Ezek 28,11-19 and Job 15,7-16 (Part II: Indirect Attestations: The Primal Human as Analogy); and Ezek 28,1-10, Prov 8,22-31, and a brief discussion of primal human imagery in the stories of Cain and Noah (Part III: Vestigial Allusions: The Sublimation of Primal Human Imagery). Evidence from the Psalms (8,82) also is considered briefly, especially in the first two chapters. Each of these texts are mined for philological insights relevant to the topic and examined in the light of extra-biblical materials including, *inter alia*, the Adapa myth and other Mesopotamian *apkallu*-traditions, the Gilgamesh Epic, a number of Ugaritic texts, and several apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works.

Of particular focus in the book's first three sections are three characteristic *topoi*, which Callender sees as shared among the various primal human traditions: location, wisdom, and conflict. The first of these, Callender suggests, can be best seen in Gen 2-3, Ezek 28, and Job 15 which place the locus of the primal human's activity in the Garden of Eden, "the garden of God", and "the council of God", respectively. The *topos* of wisdom also appears to be a concern in these chapters, as the tree of knowledge in Gen 2-3 makes most apparent. The conflict *topos* is evident in the expulsion of the primal human from the garden in both Gen 3 and Ezek 28, and perhaps also in the somewhat ambiguous act of hubris expressed in Job 15,8 and 15,15. Combined, these *topoi* present a rather unique intermediary status of the primal human in Israelite mythology. According to Callender, "The primal human alone is not 'born of woman'. He is the only one whose natural state was face to face with God. He is the only one who lived in the 'actual' (mythical) divine dwelling. Others can perform the function of intermediary, but in doing so they but mimetically follow the primal human. In this sense the primal human is the significant ancestor who established the paradigm for contact with the divine" (206-207).

The paradigmatic and intermediary character of the primal human, Callender suggests, can be seen in the language used to describe him which casts him as a royal figure (Gen 1,26-28), a priest (Ezek 28,11-19), and a prophet (Job 15,7-8). As a royal figure, the primal human is the gardener of the divine garden (seen here also as an archetype for the temple [50-54]) and the shepherd of his people. As a priest, he is endowed with "divine and sacral attributes at his creation. He is distinguished by his possessing the stones of the high priest breastpiece, an instrument of divination" (210). The primal human as prophet attends the assembly of God and tends to his word. He might even be "numbered among the 'sons of God'" (213). As such, the primal human also acts as a "culture-bearer, a figure who brings divine knowledge to humanity" (200).

Many of the aforementioned attributes of the primal human have been noted before by others, albeit in disparate publications, and in very different contexts. Where Callender breaks new ground, however, is in his

understanding of how these *topoi* functioned. As he argues, they served to communicate a “coherent set of ideas, which constituted a symbol that was recognized by the ancients”, a “symbol (that) functioned in each of its literary contexts, to forge an understanding of its various manifestations and permutations” (15). Thus, Callender is less interested in how the biblical writers employed primal human traditions for literary or rhetorical effect (though this is discussed periodically), and more interested in how such traditions constituted “just a part of the system of symbols that comprised ancient Israel’s ever-evolving cultural system” (17). As such, the primal human *topoi* may be seen as tools for exploring and defining the boundaries between mortals and God in ancient Israel.

According to Callender, we may ascertain how this exploration and definition took place by recognizing the paradigmatic nature of primal human traditions as “the basis for the ‘mythical mode’ behind the rituals of intermediaries” (213). “As such — he states — the primal human conception emerges as a paradigm for intermediary figures in ancient Israelite society. It provided at least one stream of tradition in the construction and regulation of ideas concerning kingship and other offices of intermediation” (206). Given that biblical texts portray the primal human in both positive and negative terms, Callender opines that these traditions probably served to legitimate, while placing in check, the authoritative activities of Israel’s intermediary kings, priests, and prophets.

This is an interesting and useful study, and certainly the first to make sense of Israelite primal human traditions by drawing on the methodologies of scholars working in the comparative study of religions, especially those of M. Eliade, A. van Gennep, and V. Turner. Some might disagree with Callender’s interpretation of particular biblical verses, especially of difficult lines that have mystified exegetes for centuries (e.g., Callender’s treatment of *hōtem toknīt* [Ezek 28,12] in the light of Gen 1,26 as a reference to God as the “model” for creating Adam). Others might question whether Callender, at times, is reading primal human traditions *into* the evidence (e.g., he suggests that Prov 8,22-31 offers a “greatly sublimated” reflection of the tradition [193]). One might even question to what degree the primal human traditions discussed in the book can be seen to represent comparable variations of a shared Near Eastern mythology, rather than completely unrelated traditions with shared features. Indeed, Callender nowhere clarifies or justifies his methodological position in this regard. Such criticisms notwithstanding, Callender’s study offers a number of insights precisely because it moves boldly beyond the purely descriptive mode that characterizes much of biblical scholarship.

Thus the book also provides a useful model for future comparative and expanded treatments of the topic. One could envision, for example, an investigation of primal human traditions in ancient Egypt that includes visual and textual references to the god Khnum creating kings on a potter’s wheels. In Egypt too we find references to pharaoh as gardener of the divine garden and shepherd of his people (comparative material notably absent in Callender’s discussion of these *topoi* [207-209]). One also could imagine a comparative treatment of later Talmudic and midrashic, as well as Islamic traditions concerning Adam. Such studies would shed light on the pervasiveness and longevity of primal human traditions and would help to

establish even more broadly the historical and thematic parameters of Near Eastern primal human mythologies. Future comparative studies such as these will doubtless find Callender's book a useful point of departure.

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Novum Testamentum

Barbara SHELLARD, *New Light on Luke. Its Purpose, Sources and Literary Content* (JSNTSS 215). London – New York, Sheffield Academic Press Ltd, 2002. 340 p. 16 × 24. £60.00

Barbara Shellard's monograph revives interest in source criticism by presenting a new interpretation of the relation of Luke to the other three canonical Gospels. She concludes that Luke is the "fourth evangelist" (chronologically; cf. 276) and used Mark, Matthew, and John as sources. These sources are used in different ways by the author of Luke. "Mark's was the Gospel he knew best and valued most; his reaction to Matthew and John was much more critical and his use of them accordingly more sparing and hence less immediately apparent" (288). From her discussion of Lukan sources, Shellard draws conclusions about the purpose of this Gospel. It is a "corrective Gospel" (261) and to some extent it also wishes "to reconcile differing streams" (289). The conclusions about purpose are less innovative than the discussion of sources.

Shellard believes that Mark is the earliest Gospel and was used by both Matthew and Luke. She rejects the Q hypothesis, since she believes that the so-called Q material in Luke is derived directly from Matthew. In Chap. 1 Shellard discusses the date of Luke-Acts, which she puts at about 100 CE (cf. 23-34). She advances one unusual argument for this date; she asserts that Luke knew the writings of Josephus, including *Jewish Antiquities* (cf. 31-34).

Chap. 2 is entitled "The Nature of Luke's Intended Audience". I find this title to be inappropriate, for the actual content of the chapter is a discussion of the ways that Luke-Acts presents various groups in the narrative: Romans, Jews and God-fearers, and Christians. One should not assume that one can move easily and effortlessly from descriptions of groups in a narrative about the past to conclusions about the intended audience of a narrative at the time it was written. Some arguments in this chapter show, in my opinion, a limited understanding of Luke's perspective and concerns. She believes that Luke "plays down the kingship motif" (39, n. 10), ignoring the central place of the proclamation of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah in prominent scenes and statements by authoritative interpreters (persons that I have elsewhere called