

Prof. Scott B. Noegel  
Chair, Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization  
University of Washington

**“Dreams and Dream Interpreters in Mesopotamia  
and in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament).”**

First Published in:

Kelly Bulkeley, ed.

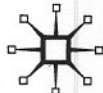
*Dreams and Dreaming: A Reader in Religion, Anthropology, History, and Psychology*  
Hampshire, U.K.: Palgrave-St. Martin's Press (2001), 45-71.

# Dreams

A Reader on Religious,  
Cultural, and Psychological  
Dimensions of Dreaming

*Edited by*  
*Kelly Bulkeley*

palgrave



DREAMS

Copyright © Kelly Bulkeley, 2001.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

First published 2001 by PALGRAVE™  
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010 and  
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England RG21 6XS.  
Companies and representatives throughout the world.

PALGRAVE is the new global publishing imprint of St. Martin's Press LLC Scholarly and Reference Division and Palgrave Publishers Ltd. (formerly Macmillan Press Ltd.).

ISBN 0-312-29333-X (cloth)  
ISBN 0-312-29334-8 (pbk.)

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Dreams: a reader on religious, cultural & psychological dimensions of dreaming / Kelly Bulkeley, editor.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-312-29333-X—ISBN 0-312-29334-8 (pbk.)

1. Dreams. I. Bulkeley, Kelly, 1962-  
BF 1078.D7295 2001  
154.6-dc21

2001032755

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Design by Letra Libre, Inc.

First edition: December 2001

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

*Acknowledgments*  
*Permissions*

Introduction

1. Buddha
- The
- Se
2. Thro
- K
3. Drea
- and
- S
4. Drea
- M
5. Senc
- Visio
- L
6. The
- anc
- I
7. Cor
8. Mal
- Cor
- an

# 3

## Dreams and Dream Interpreters in Mesopotamia and in the Hebrew Bible [Old Testament]

Scott Noegel

*The dream comes with much implication.*

—Qohelet 5:2

**A**lthough the subject of ancient Near Eastern dreams has received scholarly attention for some time,<sup>1</sup> recent years have seen a resurgence of interest in the topic. In part this is due to the appearance of several previously unpublished texts,<sup>2</sup> a scholarly desire to update the available resources on the subject,<sup>3</sup> and the currently prevailing academic preference for comparative interdisciplinary inquiry, which has moved the study of the ancient Near Eastern dreams beyond its hitherto nearly entirely descriptive mode.<sup>4</sup> What has emerged from this renewed interest is a new appreciation for the subtleties of dreams, the divinatory, ontological, and ideological contexts of their interpretations, and the variety of methodological frameworks that can be used to understand them. While not every framework has proven useful for elucidating the topic beyond what we already know,<sup>5</sup> the cumulative impact provides new directions for research.

I divide the topic of dreams and their interpretations into two sections: the Mesopotamian evidence and that found in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>6</sup> Throughout I shall adopt A. Leo Oppenheim's typology<sup>7</sup> and distinguish "message" dreams, in which a god or important figure appears in a dream and delivers an auditory missive to the dreamer (often to legitimate, support, or ease the political, national, or military concerns of the dreamer), from "symbolic" dreams, in which the dreamer witnesses enigmatic visual images that require an interpreter upon awakening. Oppenheim also classified separately those dreams that involve prognostication as "mantic" or "prophetic."



Although Oppenheim's work offers a useful starting point, it is important to stress the limits of his typology and of others based on it. Not only does his work make no distinction between literary and historical texts, but, as we shall see, not every dream account fits neatly into one of the two (or three) categories, and there is considerable overlap between them. For example, there are symbolic dreams that require no interpreter, and message dreams that do. There are prophetic message dreams and also prophetic symbolic dreams. Oppenheim's typology also presupposes that the peoples of the ancient Near East, like we do today, conceptually distinguished symbolic modes of discourse from nonsymbolic modes, but the religio-mantic conception of the written word throughout the ancient Near East argues against this.<sup>8</sup> Mesopotamians use the same word, for example, for "visual portent or sign" and "cuneiform sign,"<sup>9</sup> and for diviners, both animal viscera and the stars constituted the "writing of the gods."

I begin by surveying the Mesopotamian evidence, since it is attested much earlier and is much greater than the biblical evidence, in terms of the number and type of relevant textual materials available to us. Unlike the Bible, which preserves only literary accounts of dreams and their interpretations, Mesopotamian dream accounts appear in a variety of textual genres including ritual, oracular, epistolary, historical, dedicatory, and literary texts. We cannot use our abundant evidence, however, to gauge the popularity of oneiromancy in Mesopotamia, for in the scholarly academies dream interpretation never achieved the status of other forms of divination such as extispicy (divining from animal viscera) and later astrology, which were viewed more reliable and less subjective and, therefore, were used to authenticate a dream's interpretation. This is especially evident in the neo-Assyrian period (744–539 B.C.E.) in which kings preferred other divinatory experts in their courts.<sup>10</sup>

Our earliest evidence for dreams in Mesopotamia is a Sumerian<sup>11</sup> relief known as the Stele of Vultures.<sup>12</sup> This now-fragmentary monument was erected by King Eannatum I (ca. 2454–2425 B.C.E.) of Lagash (or possibly his nephew Enmetena)<sup>13</sup> to laud his military success over neighboring Umma. The text recounts how, after appearing beside Eannatum's head (a widespread literary topos in message dream accounts),<sup>14</sup> the god Ningirsu<sup>15</sup> guaranteed the king's victory. Since the stele was carved after the campaign and describes the king as over nine feet tall and created by the god himself, we must see it as tendentious fiction. However, we would be mistaken if we thought of it only as royal propaganda. The stele was discovered in the temple precinct and not on the border of Lagash,<sup>16</sup> suggesting that the cult of Ningirsu had considerable interest in preserving the dream account. The Ningirsu priesthood probably stood to benefit as much from sanctioning the king with Ningirsu's promise as from the campaign itself.

Another Sumerian dream account appears in the mythological text known as "Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave."<sup>17</sup> In this story, the hero Lugalbanda falls ill while on a military campaign and is left behind in a cave. After surviving the sickness by fervent prayer, Lugalbanda undergoes a series of tribulations that mark his transformation into a savior-holy man. At one point, Lugalbanda lies down to induce dreaming, and the dream god Anzaqar<sup>18</sup> promptly appears issuing a rather vague command.

The reddish brown bull—who [*will bind*] it for me?  
Who will pour me the sheep's fat?  
He must possess my own axe, whose fine metal is metal of the skies;  
He must possess my side-arm, made of iron!<sup>19</sup>

Anzaqar then commands Lugalbanda to wrestle and kill the bull and present its innards "before the rising sun." In all respects, the dream is puzzling. Lying somewhere between a message dream and a symbolic dream, the text legitimizes the hero by representing, in H. Vanstiphout's words, "a first test of Lugalbanda's suitability for holiness, and at the same time his calling to the same."<sup>20</sup>

The verses leading to the dream offer insight into Sumerian conceptions of dreams.

Dream—a door cannot hold it back, nor can a doorpost;  
To the liar it speaks lies; to the truthful the truth.  
It can make one happy or make one lament;  
It is a closed archive basket of the gods . . .

Of particular note is the comparison to a sealed basket of cuneiform tablets, a well-known practice in juridical contexts, which classifies dreams as secret legal texts<sup>21</sup>—a point to which we will return.

The Sumerian Legend of Sargon, king of Akkad (ca. 2334–2279 B.C.E.), reports how the young Sargon, while serving as a cupbearer for King Urzababa in Kish, had a disturbing message dream, which he promptly reported to the king upon awakening.

There was a single young woman, she was high as the heaven,  
she was broad as the earth  
She was firmly set as the [bas]e of a wall.  
For me she drowned you in a great [river], a river of blood.<sup>22</sup>

As soon as the king heard this, he realized that Sargon would replace him as king, which, of course, he eventually did.<sup>23</sup> According to J. Sweek, "The text strongly identifies Sargon as the chosen one, becoming king without design or impious rebellion of his own."<sup>24</sup>

In the following centuries, one finds a number of individualized message dream narratives in Mesopotamian royal inscriptions of varying types (e.g., votive steles, clay nails, prisms, and dedicatory bricks). Most date to the reigns of the neo-Assyrian king Assurbanipal (668–627 B.C.E.)<sup>25</sup> and the neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus (555–539 B.C.E.). Since some of these inscriptions were deposited out of human view for the gods, they must have had more of a religious function than a political one. On the other hand, even genuine acts of piety can constitute propaganda, since witnesses were present during the rituals that accompanied the deposition of such texts.

A dream report relating to the neo-Assyrian king Assurbanipal reads as follows. One night, before a battle, the king prayed to the goddess Ishtar for guidance. That same night, a priest dreamed he saw the goddess Ishtar holding a bow and sword and promising victory, which he then related to the king. Although not stated explicitly, the inscription appears to record an incubation practice, that is, a provoked dream omen.<sup>26</sup> The text's political aspects are apparent, but again, we must be careful not to sever it entirely from its religious context.

It is easier to identify the propagandistic function of another dream dating to this king's reign. This unique account tells us that the night before crossing the torrential Tigris River, Assurbanipal's troops all experienced the same dream in which Ishtar offered comforting words: "I shall go in front of Assurbanipal, the king whom I myself have created!" The next morning, we are told, they crossed bravely and safely.<sup>27</sup>

Propagandistic concerns also are clear in dream narratives dating to Nabonidus. In addition to one report in which the king is encouraged to build the sanctuary of the moon god Sîn at Harran, one stele reports how the deceased king Nebuchadnezzar II appeared to Nabonidus in a dream and deciphered another (presumably) symbolic dream.<sup>28</sup> (The dream itself is lost.) The account aims to set Nabonidus up as Nebuchadnezzar II's legitimate successor. The dream is fascinating not only because it preserves one of two cases in which someone deceased appears in a dream but because the dream depicts an astronomical omen involving the moon, Jupiter, and "the Great Star." It is thus an omen within an omen. It also is a rare example of a dream being interpreted within a dream, an occurrence that signaled prophetic significance throughout the Near East.<sup>29</sup>

Several Mesopotamian literary texts contain what have been described as message dreams, but upon closer look they defy easy classification. *Ludlul bel nemeqi* (lit. "Let Me Praise the Lord of Wisdom") is a case in point.<sup>30</sup> This Babylonian poem describes the experience of a righteous sufferer who has three dreams, each of which suggests that his health will be restored.<sup>31</sup> Although the dreams require no interpreter, they depict mysterious images, including a young man of remarkable stature, an incantation priest sent to cleanse the dreamer, a young woman of shining visage, and an exorcist carrying a tablet—the very tablet upon which the poem is written.<sup>32</sup>

The 750-line Epic of Erra<sup>33</sup> similarly underscores our inability to classify literary message dreams according to the accepted typology. After extolling the attributes of the god Erra, the poet concludes by stating that Erra revealed the entire text to him in a dream, which he recorded faithfully—a statement that constitutes a claim of divinatory privilege. The reference, like the tablet in *Ludlul bel nemeqi*, also helps to contextualize Mesopotamian literary dreams by reminding us that mantic professionals were responsible also for the production of literary texts. As I shall show below, this information is especially useful for contextualizing literary symbolic dreams and for conceptualizing Mesopotamian literature generally.

The site of Mari, on the mid-Euphrates, has produced a number of message dreams dating to the eighteenth century B.C.E. Sometimes labeled "prophetic" dreams, these texts are in actuality missives sent by officials that report the message dreams of seers that have import for the royal house. Since the dream accounts appear in epistolary contexts, a propagandistic function can be ruled out. Nevertheless, the political import of the texts remains. One dream, in which a deceased priest appears, will demonstrate.

He [the seer] saw the following: "You will not rebuild this deserted house. If the house is rebuilt, I will make it collapse into the river." The day he saw the dream, he said nothing to anyone. The next day he again saw the following dream: "It was a god. You will not rebuild this house. If you rebuild it, I will make it collapse into the river." I now hereby dispatch to my lord the fringe of his garment and a lock from his head . . . from that day, this man has been ill. (Sasson (1983), pp. 283–293)<sup>34</sup>

This dream illustrates three patterns found frequently in message dream accounts. The first is the twice-experienced dream, which signaled divine communication throughout the Near East. The second is that of the seer's commitment to a social, if not legal, contract that forces him to report all potentially significant divinatory observations to the king. The letter implies, in fact, that the seer's illness was due to his not reporting the first dream.<sup>35</sup> The third pattern is the reference to the seer's fringe



and hair lock, known especially at Mari, which is meant as proof that the said seer, in fact, did experience the dream. This illustrates the potential political power invested in mantics of good reputation and suggests that such "proof" would not be necessary if attempts to falsify dreams were unknown.

The political import of message dreams for the royal house is also obvious in Assurbanipal's annals, which record the king's experiences during a political revolt provoked by his brother, then king of Babylon. In the dream the god *Sîn* warns: "Upon all those who plot evil against Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, and resort to [actual] hostilities, I shall bestow a miserable death, I shall put an end to their lives through the quick dagger of [war], conflagration, hunger, pestilence."<sup>36</sup>

Two other literary accounts of message dreams appear in the famous Epic of Gilgamesh, but they are problematic.<sup>37</sup> The first is the dream of Gilgamesh's friend Enkidu, presumed present (on the basis of the Hittite version)<sup>38</sup> in the broken sections of the Assyrian version. It describes Enkidu's appearance before the divine council where he learns of his imminent death. The second is the god Ea's disclaimer that he did not explicitly "leak" news of the impending deluge: "It was not I who disclosed the secret of the great gods. I caused Atrahasis to examine a dream, and he perceived the secret of the gods" (XI:186-187). The former dream's appearance in the Assyrian version is too fragmentary to be useful, and the latter dream poses difficulties because the description of dreams as divine secrets and the so-called message of the dream itself classify it more as a symbolic dream.<sup>39</sup>

Symbolic dreams are more widely attested in Mesopotamia than message dreams and appear more often in epic literature than in historical texts. The earliest, a Sumerian cylinder inscription known as Gudea A,<sup>40</sup> reports how Gudea, ruler of the city of Lagash (ca. 2130 B.C.E.), experienced two enigmatic dreams, the first in which a colossal man spoke words of indistinct meaning. Puzzled by the experience, he boarded a boat to Nin, the dwelling of the goddess Nanshe. It is she, or perhaps a priestess through whom the goddess speaks, who interprets his dream as meaning that he will build the god Ningirsu's temple. Afterward, Gudea gets a "second opinion" by having an extispicy (inspection of the entrails of sacrificial victims for divinatory meaning) performed.

In the Sumerian poem "Dumuzi's Dream," the god Dumuzi experiences a bewildering dream influenced by the South wind.<sup>41</sup>

An owl had caught  
a lamb in the shepcote,  
A falcon had caught  
a sparrow in the reed of the fence . . .  
The churns lay on their sides,  
poured out no milk,  
The cups lay on their sides,  
Dumuzi lived there no more,  
The winds only swept the fold.<sup>42</sup>

Upon awakening, his sister Geshtininna affirms his (worst) nightmare by interpreting the dream as portending his death. After several attempts to escape this fate, including a transformation into a gazelle, Dumuzi is eventually captured and killed.

The epistolary texts of Mari preserve at least one symbolic dream, although again the current typology is not helpful.<sup>43</sup> The letter in question reports a dream of the

female seer Addu-duri as reported to King Zimri-Lim (ca. 1775 B.C.E.). No interpretation follows, but the symbolic nature of the dream and its ambiguity suggest that we include it here.

Tell my lord: Addu-duri, your maidservant, says: Since the *shulmum* of your father's house, I have never had a dream [such as] this. Previous portents of mine [were as] this pair. In my dream, I entered Belet-ekallim's chapel; but Belet-ekallim was not in residence. Moreover, the statues before her were not there. Upon seeing this, I broke into uncontrollable weeping. This dream of mine occurred during the night's first phase [lit. during the evening watch]. I resumed [dreaming], and Dada, the priest of Ishtar-pishra, was standing at the door of Belet-ekallim's chapel, but a hostile voice kept on uttering: "*tura dagan, tura dagan*." This is what it kept on uttering . . .<sup>44</sup>

Of interest is the word *shulmum*, a pun that means both "restoration" and "destruction" of a royal line. The dream's concluding words, *tura dagan, tura dagan*, also are ambiguous and suggest both "O Dagan return (here)/come back/reconsider" and a proper name connected with a Mari king who ruled over a century before Zimri-Lim.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the entire letter<sup>46</sup> teems with ambiguity, which, J. Sasson notes, "may have drained him [Zimri-Lim] of any will to act purposefully."<sup>47</sup> Since the omen was of considerable political import, ambiguity probably served to safeguard the diviner. Ambiguous omens from the practice of extispicy offer analogies. U. Jeyes notes: "By couching his words in a subtle, not to say ambiguous manner, he could avoid committing himself and his profession in a disastrous way."<sup>48</sup>

In the Epic of Gilgamesh,<sup>49</sup> the hero experiences two symbolic dreams in close succession, which his mother, the goddess Ninsu, interprets.

The stars of heaven gathered [?] to me, and a meteorite [*kitsru*] from [the god] Anum fell on top [*tseri*] of me I tried to lift it, but it was too heavy for me. I tried to budge it, but I could not budge it. The land of Uruk gathered around it, the young men kissed its feet, I took responsibility [?] for it, they loaded it on to me, I lifted it and brought it to you. . . .

Of spacious Uruk an axe [*hatssina*] was thrown down, and they gathered around it. The axe looked somehow strange. I saw it and I was glad. I loved it as a wife, and I doted on it. I took it and placed it at my side [*ahiya*].<sup>50</sup>

The Mari letter above illustrated how the ambiguity inherent in symbolic dreams can safeguard diviners when not interpreted or when rendered equivocally. The interpretation of Gilgamesh's dreams shows us yet another side to the interpreter's use of ambiguity. It reveals how words that possess multiple meanings can provide clues to a dream's interpretation. The interpretation of Gilgamesh's mother, for example, hinges on the polysemy inherent in the words used to convey the dream. Gilgamesh stated that the *kitsru* landed "on top" (*tseri*) of me, which his mother interprets as representing a man "born of the steppeland (*tseri*)," a figure whom we learn to be Enkidu. In effect, she has heard in the preposition *tseri* on top the homophonous noun *tseri* "steppeland."<sup>51</sup> Additional puns connect the objects in his second dream and its interpretation,<sup>52</sup> and they are more than literary whimsy or sophisticated intertextuality. They are accurate depictions of a divinatory hermeneutic at work.

Two more examples will demonstrate, taken from later in the epic when Ea warns Utnapishtim in a dream: "spurn property (*makkura zerma*), keep living beings alive"

(XI:26). Two puns occur here: “spurn” (*zerma*), which also can be read as “construct” (*sérma*); and “property” (*makkura*), which suggests “boat” (i.e., *makura*).<sup>53</sup> In essence, Ea issued two polysemous secrets with one breath: “forsake property and build an ark!”

Later, when Ea tells Utnapishtim that the chief god Enlil promises to “provide” (*zananu*) the people with an “abundance” (*nuhshu*) of “wheat cakes” (*kukki*) and “wheat” (*kibāti*), Utnapishtim divines other meanings in these words: an “excessive” (*nuhshu*) “storm” (*zananu*) of “darkness” (*kukkú*) and “heaviness” (*kibittu*) XI:45–47.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the flood survivor’s great wisdom, which earns him the epithet Atrahasis “exceedingly wise” (XI:188), springs from his ability to “hear” between the lines.

We obtain further insight into the socio-religious context of divinatory ambiguity from Babylonian and Assyrian scholarly commentaries,<sup>55</sup> wherein one finds esoteric meanings hermeneutically extracted from texts via wordplay. Many of the text’s colophons label the hermeneutics, and the texts to which they are applied, as “secret words” (*amat nitsirti*) and “secrets” (*pirishtu*) of the gods,<sup>56</sup> the same expressions that appear in Utnapishtim’s statement to Gilgamesh and Ea’s words to Utnapishtim.<sup>56</sup> In a technical sense then, the dream secrets of Ea, which Utnapishtim relates to Gilgamesh, accurately portray the privileged divinatory ambiguity of diviners.

Such a realistic rendering of the punning techniques of dream interpreters in literary texts underscores the close connection between divinatory experts and the production of literary texts<sup>57</sup> and raises serious questions concerning what constitutes “literature” (and “literary patterns”) in these cultures. Not only does the epic realistically characterize Utnapishtim as a dream interpreter,<sup>58</sup> performing his rituals at night,<sup>59</sup> but the redactor of the epic, Šin-leqqi-uninni, was an exorcist. We should not be surprised, therefore, that this “literature” accurately reflects mantic hermeneutics.

In addition to literary, epistolary, and historical texts, we possess a collection of dream oracles known as the Babylonian *Dream Book*,<sup>60</sup> of which roughly one hundred oracles have survived out of an estimated five hundred. The series opens by invoking the god of dreams Zaḳīqu (also called MA.MÚ)<sup>61</sup> and, much like the Egyptian *Dream Book*,<sup>62</sup> organizes dreams into thematic categories along with their interpretations. Just a few of the themes include: urinating, having sex, flying, visiting certain temples and towns, seeing the dead and the divine, ascending to the heavens, descending to the underworld, carrying objects, standing or sitting in a particular place, turning into various animals, eating and drinking particular items, making objects, performing a particular occupation, seeing animals, being given objects, seeing astronomical bodies, and felling trees and plants.

The *Dream Book*, however, is more than a collection of dreams, for they represent an attempt on behalf of the divinatory establishment to standardize and control dreams. Indeed, the very format and organization of the compendium, like that of lexical lists, demonstrate a desire “to present a systematic and ordered picture of the world.”<sup>63</sup> The *Dream Book* also tells us much about the interpreter’s hermeneutical options, as it does about the loves, fantasies, and fears of the average Mesopotamian (unlike message dreams, which are associated typically with kings).<sup>64</sup> Some of the compendium’s interpretive strategies include the use of contemporary associations; the pairings of similars or of opposites; learned readings of cuneiform signs; a consideration of the dreamer’s occupation, state of mind, status, and personal situation; and a polarity between dreams and their meanings, that is, if one dreams a bad thing, it means a good thing (hence, “If the god utters a curse against the man; his prayers will be accepted”).<sup>65</sup> In some cases, the basis for interpretation remains bewildering.

E.). No inter-  
ty suggest that

ther’s house,  
this pair. In  
1 residence.  
nto uncon-  
: [lit. during  
-pishra, was  
tering: “tura

on” and “de-  
’agan, also are  
nsider” and a  
efore Zimri-  
es, “may have  
omen was of  
diviner. Am-  
s notes: “By  
avoid com-

in close

Anum fell  
dge it, but  
ed its feet,  
o you. . . .  
around it.  
id I doted

n symbolic  
equivocally.  
o the inter-  
eanings can  
h’s mother,  
convey the  
which his  
)” a figure  
on tseri on  
ect the ob-  
ian literary  
f a divina-

n Ea warns  
ings alive”



Muĕh like the literary portrayals of symbolic dreams, the compendium often displays punning relationships between the protasis (what is dreamed) and the apodosis (what the dream means).<sup>66</sup> So, "If a man dreams that he is eating a raven [*arbu*]; he will have income [*irbu*]," and "If [someone] has given him *mihru*-wood; he shall have no rival [*māhiru*]." Often the interpretation is based on an erudite reading of cuneiform signs used to record the dream.<sup>67</sup> Although punning certainly was not the only hermeneutic in existence, it served as one of the most pervasive tools of all Mesopotamian mantics in all periods. Thus, we find it in many other divinatory arts, including abnormal birth omens, extispicy, astronomical omens, augury, and magic stones.<sup>68</sup> Such a divinatory preoccupation with ambiguity recalls the words of Sigmund Freud:

The whole range of wordplay is thus put at the service of the dream activity. The part played by words in the formation of dreams ought not to surprise us. A word being a point of junction for a number of conceptions, it possesses, so to speak, a predestined ambiguity.<sup>69</sup>

Since Freud studied biblical, Talmudic,<sup>70</sup> and Greek dream interpretation,<sup>71</sup> we cannot take his comment as a statement of interpretive universals.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, it stands as a telling witness to the legacy of Mesopotamian divinatory practices.

The religious cosmology that undergirds Mesopotamian divinatory disciplines allows us to appreciate more fully the act of dream interpretation by contextualizing it within a belief system in which words index power.<sup>73</sup> G. Contenau explains:

Since to know and pronounce the name of an object instantly endowed it with reality, and created power over it, and since the degree of knowledge and consequently of power was strengthened by the tone of voice in which the name was uttered, writing, which was a permanent record of the name, naturally contributed to this power, as did both drawing and sculpture, since both were a means of asserting knowledge of the object and consequently of exercising over it the power which knowledge gave.<sup>74</sup>

When viewed in this context, one cannot see the ubiquitous use of divinatory punning and other so-called literary devices as stylistic features. For if words constitute loci of power, then words with multiple associations have greater potential for such power. Hence the need in Mesopotamia for highly literate professionals trained in handling the power inherent in the divine word.

Moreover, to understand how words of power function within dream contexts, we must recognize that acts of divination constitute acts of divine judgment. Not only do diviners use the word *purussá*, meaning "legal decision" or "verdict," to refer to an omen's prediction,<sup>75</sup> divinatory texts in general share in common with legal codes the formula *if x, then y*.<sup>76</sup> From a juridical perspective, wordplays and erudite readings that connect protases to apodoses constitute vehicles for demonstrating and justifying divine judgment.<sup>77</sup> Insofar as they underscore the tie between the sign and its prediction, they illustrate the principle and process of *lex talionis*, "the law of retribution." J. Bottéro describes: "In Mesopotamia . . . each phonetic similarity was to be considered serious and very significant: two realities whose names coincided were bound as closely together as their designations."<sup>78</sup>

Thus, the dream oracles and literary accounts of symbolic dreams not only affirm Mesopotamian theological and legal principles, they embody them; and their punning interpretations are more performative than literary, since words index power and since

flourishment is<sup>2</sup> only the result of a pun's *talion* function. Moreover, insofar as correlations between protases and apodoses reflect mantic efforts to demonstrate that theological principles continue to function (i.e., there is no such thing as coincidence), they register and dispel mantic insecurities. In this sense, dream interpretation in Mesopotamia represents less a preoccupation with ambiguity than an attempt at rendering ambiguity into a projected and authoritative reality.

Complementing the compendium of symbolic dreams are a variety of ritual texts dating mostly from the neo-Assyrian period and onward, called *namburbû*.<sup>79</sup> The ritual techniques mentioned in the *namburbû* vary according to the specific goals of the practitioner. Typically they invoke the gods of fire, light, or magic.<sup>80</sup> Techniques include the use of amulets, figurines, substitution, deity invocation, purification of the dreamer, and incantations. Some rituals purify the sleeper and his environment in preparation for the dream state or instill the dreamer with a good dream. Others aim to provoke dreams that disclose and manipulate the future. Still others exorcise demons and the potentially harmful consequences of bad dreams. The belief in the efficacy of such mechanical measures, one must admit, negates any role for individual moral or religious responsibility. It also directly contradicts the Mesopotamian religious worldview in which fate governs all things.<sup>81</sup> Such incongruencies, however, were either not apparent or unimportant to the Mesopotamians themselves.

We can tell these rituals were as important to the interpreter as to the dreamer, because the first and last two tablets of the *Dream Book* contain *namburbû* incantations. One such *namburbû* transforms a bad dream into a good one by pleading the dreamer's case before the sun god: "Shamash, you are the judge—judge my case! You are the one who makes the decisions—decide my case! Change the dream I had into a good one!"<sup>82</sup> Note the legal language in the incantation, which again illustrates Mesopotamian conceptual links among dream interpretation, divinatory rituals, performative utterances, and divine jurisprudence. In fact, the performance of legal practices sometimes appears in the ritual ceremonies themselves, which often include oath formulae.

Dream rituals also served a medical function.<sup>83</sup> Mesopotamian divinatory professionals promoted the belief that cultic purity ensured good health, and so consequently, bad dreams were blamed on a dreamer's impiety, which in turn caused "the absence of the protective canopy of his personal deities."<sup>84</sup> The loss of this protection opened the door for demons and deceased spirits, the agents of evil, false, and sexual dreams.<sup>85</sup> The ambiguous nature of symbolic dreams, therefore, was cause for concern, and forgetting one's dream spelled disaster, because one needed to know the dream in order to perform the proper ritual. Thus, important *namburbûs* involved washing one's hands in bed, or recounting the dream and transferring it to a substitute figurine, which was then destroyed. Sometimes figurines were buried in a room's corner or placed at the dreamer's head. In the case of dream apparitions, substitute figurines were encircled by flour,<sup>86</sup> an act that parallels the rituals performed when one is visited by demons or ghosts. Such rituals aimed to transfer contamination and outwit demons.

*Namburbû* rituals would begin on an empty stomach "in the early morning, on the day [after] the dream was seen . . . , before the dream's evil took hold of its victim."<sup>87</sup> Dream-provoking rituals took place on auspicious days. Typically the expert performed the *namburbû* on or over the dreamer's bed, sometimes near the bed's head, with one of the dreamer's feet placed on the ground while he or she lies in bed. The very act of interpreting dreams, like the *namburbû* rituals, was therapeutic.<sup>88</sup>



By "solving" the puzzling dream, the interpreter "dissolved" its harmful consequences and thus "resolved" the dreamer's health.

We can explain the close connection among divinatory, legal, hermeneutical, medical, and religious aspects of dream interpretation by considering the interdisciplinary skills required of mantic experts. S. Parpola explains:

In my opinion it is essential to consider these disciplines not in isolation but as integral parts of this larger whole, and to realize that as parts of an integrated system of thought, the different subdisciplines of the 'wisdom' were in constant contact and interaction with each other.<sup>89</sup>

Indeed, there is so much overlap between various disciplines<sup>90</sup> that today it is difficult to distinguish the various mantic professionals and the textual genres they have left us.<sup>91</sup> Take, for example, the terms used for dream interpreters. Mesopotamian texts specify three, or possibly four, different individuals. The first is the *barû*, a term most often associated with extispicy, but also with oil, incense, and bird divination.<sup>92</sup> *Barû* were organized into highly learned guilds with masters and apprentices.<sup>93</sup> A second figure is the *sha'ilu*, who, though apparently highly literate, was perhaps of a lower social status—which might explain, or be explained by, his or her frequent connection to necromancy.<sup>94</sup> Although more men are attested than women for both groups, women dream interpreters do appear, as we have seen already.<sup>95</sup> Despite attempts to distinguish the *barû* from the *sha'ilu*,<sup>96</sup> the textual evidence conflates their roles. Both groups practiced a variety of divinatory arts. By the neo-Assyrian period, dream interpretation also fell partially under the domain of the LÚ.MASH.MASH, a Sumerian term rendered into Akkadian by either *ashipu* "medical practitioner, conjuror" or *mashmashshu* "exorcist."<sup>97</sup>



This brings us to ancient Israelite views on dreams, a topic that we must consider within the greater ancient Near East. Unlike Mesopotamia, the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) preserves no omen or ritual texts; all of its dream accounts occur in literature, making it difficult to reconstruct any ritual or mantic contexts. Moreover, far from representing a monolithic attitude toward dreams and their interpretation, the Bible's dream accounts constitute a pastiche of sometimes varying traditions, often folkloristic in origin, woven together over a long period of time. Biblical dream accounts, therefore, cannot be seen as wholly historical and cannot be divorced entirely from their redactional,<sup>98</sup> polemical, and literary contexts. When seen from a literary perspective, dreams, however categorized, often appear to govern the narrative's compositional structure<sup>99</sup> and to serve theological agendas.

In Mesopotamia, dreams had associations with the underworld and derived from the god of dreams or demons. The Israelites' monolatristic<sup>100</sup> belief system left little room for any agent (mechanical or divine) other than Yahweh, the God of Israel, in the dreaming and interpretive process. Still, the Israelites saw dreams as divine in origin.<sup>101</sup> The Israelites also shared in common with Mesopotamians three elements fundamental to the conceptual framework of divinatory and prophetic discourse: a socio-religious conception of deity as judge; a belief in the performative power of words<sup>102</sup>; and the presence of *lex talionis* as a productive legal, theological, and literary principle.<sup>103</sup> The shared conceptual framework allows us to see in the Bible a similar divinatory con-

ception of words as indices of power and vehicles of divine judgment, even though the elements of divinatory ritual praxis as we know them in Mesopotamia are absent.

Where the Bible differs radically from the conceptual views of Mesopotamia<sup>104</sup> is in its literary and theological, if not polemical, characterization of the interpreter. Not only is effort taken to distance interpreters from all acts of magical praxis, and thus keep them in accord with legislation that forbids "foreign" religio-mantic acts (Deut. 13:2-6, 18:9-15), but the Bible consistently portrays foreigners as not having the divine wisdom, like Israelites, to decipher enigmatic dreams. Despite the presence of a host of mantic professionals, it takes the Israelite Joseph to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh and his prisoners (Gen. 40-41), and Daniel must interpret the dreams of the Babylonian king (Dan. 2 and 4). Even Joseph's family is able to understand his enigmatic dreams (Gen. 37). The only exception to this pattern is the dream of the Midianite soldier (Judg. 7:13-15), which a fellow soldier interprets. Even here, however, the dream positions the import of its interpretation at an Israelite advantage.

Israelite ideological concerns notwithstanding, the Bible's accounts of message dreams resemble their Mesopotamian counterparts in terms of content and purpose. The account of Solomon's dream in 1 Kings 3:1-15 (= 2 Chron. 1:7-13) informs us that the king offered a sacrifice at a high place at Gibeon, and, while spending the night in the shrine (possibly as an incubation rite),<sup>105</sup> experienced a theophoric dream in which Yahweh granted him a "wise and discerning mind" as well as riches and glory. The story's structure and message reminds us of the many of the Mesopotamian historical texts discussed above. Like the Mesopotamian kings, this dream aims to remove doubt concerning Solomon's fitness to rule.

Similar motives appear in the Bible's other message dream accounts, most of which occur in Genesis. The story of the dream of Abimelech king of Gerar (Gen. 20:3-7) explains how the foreign king took Abraham's wife, believing her to be his sister. During the night, God appeared to Abimelech and told him not to touch her, for she was Abraham's wife, and that if he restored her, Abraham would intercede for him and save his life, since he was a prophet. On a literary level, the dream reinforces Abraham's role as a prophet. On an ideological level, it illustrates how Yahweh assumes an active role in saving the founding father of the Israelite religion.

The account of Jacob's dream at Bethel (Gen. 28) is at once a symbolic dream (Jacob sees what appears to be the steps of a ziggurat with angels ascending and descending it) and a message dream. As such, it again attests to the difficulties of the current typology. The message of the dream reads as follows:

I am Yahweh, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac: the ground on which you are lying I will assign to you and your offspring. Your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread out to the west and the east, to the north and the south. All of the families of the earth shall be blessed by you and your descendants.

Upon awakening, Jacob erects a stone and anoints it with oil, naming the place Bethel (lit. "House of God"). Despite the dream's images, which have concerned exegetes for centuries,<sup>106</sup> the dream's divine legitimation of both Jacob and Bethel is more obvious.

Jacob's dream in Gen. 31:10-13<sup>107</sup> similarly illustrates how Yahweh aids his patriarchs. One night, while Jacob was frustrated with the treatment he received from his uncle Laban, God instructed Jacob in a dream how to procure better yields from his flocks. "Note well that all the he-goats that are mating with the flocks are streaked, speckled



and mottled; for I have noted all that Laban is doing to you." Exactly how Jacob followed God's advice is unclear, since the pericope describing the flock manipulation is confusing and involves a subtle shuffling of live stock.<sup>108</sup> Still, the story's ideological message is clear—Yahweh ensures the patriarch's success and has a proactive hand in the history of Israel.

1 Samuel 3 tells the story of the prophet Samuel, who while serving in the Shiloh temple as a boy experienced a dream in which Yahweh promised the complete annihilation of the House of Eli, the rather scandalous family then functioning as overseers of the Ark of the Covenant. The story introduces the reader to Samuel for the first time and functions to characterize him as a true prophet: "Samuel grew up," we are told, "and Yahweh was with him: He did not leave any of Samuel's predictions unfulfilled. All Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of Yahweh" (3:19–20).

I could survey other message dream accounts (e.g., Gen. 15:1–16, 26:24, 31:24, 46:1–4; Num. 22:8–13, 19–21),<sup>109</sup> but their common ideological gist, I think, is by now clear. Like message dreams in Mesopotamian historical and literary works, biblical message dreams serve to legitimate the political, national, or military concerns of the dreamer, who is invariably someone of great importance.

Ideological concerns are present also in the Bible's accounts of symbolic dreams, most of which appear in the Joseph story and the book of Daniel's Aramaic portions. In nearly every case the text uses a dream to demonstrate God's creative hand in Israelite history or to bolster and contrast a biblical figure's character and abilities, which are invariably centered within the theological discourse of Yahweh and his covenant, with the inabilities of foreign kings and mantic professionals.

It is of note that scholars see the formulaic style and consistent literary form of biblical symbolic dreams as evidence of the prestige of deductive oneiromancy and the impact of Mesopotamia.<sup>110</sup> Further support comes from the Bible's use of wordplay as a means of depicting the exegetical methods for interpreting dreams. The story of Joseph's incarceration with Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and baker demonstrates this well. While in prison, the cupbearer dreams of three branches of a vine that budded, blossomed, and bore grape clusters from which the cupbearer pressed juice for Pharaoh's cup. Joseph's interpretation exploits the punning connotations of the objects in the dream. Since the vine can represent a person or people (e.g., Deut. 32:32, Ps. 128:3, and Job 15:33), and the word "budded" (*porhat*) also means "flourish," in the sense of a "restored people" (e.g., Hos. 14:6, Isa. 27:6, Ps. 72:7), and since in the dream the cupbearer performs his former duties, Joseph tells him: "In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head" (*nasa' par'oh et r'oshka*) (Gen. 40:13), that is, "he will exonerate you." Here a pun connects the cupbearer's head (*r'osh*) and his former position (*mishpat ha-rishon*).

Similarly, the baker dreams of three baskets of white bread "upon his head" (*me'al r'osh*) from which birds were eating. Several puns link the contents of the baker's dream and Joseph's interpretation. The first is the baker's reference to Pharaoh's "food" as *ma'akal* rather than the more common word *'okel*. In addition to its generic meaning "food," *ma'akal* appears as a dead carcass for birds of prey (e.g., Deut. 28:26, Ps. 79:2), as a simile for suffering people (e.g., Jer. 7:33, 16:4), and as a metaphor for "people under attack" (Hab. 1:16). Nowhere does the more common *'okel* appear in reference to people. Thus, the image of birds devouring *ma'akal* from the baker's head suggests a predatory or scavenger action. Additionally, the baker's mention of "white bread," (*hori*) suggests Pharaoh's "heated anger" (*harah*) by way of a pun.<sup>111</sup> Thus, the

words used to  
gest Pharaoh's  
description of  
interpretation  
[*nasa' par'oh et*

In Gen. 4  
(41:25–26). I  
emerged and  
Nile and dev  
healthy grain  
heat-scorche  
terious exper

The seven  
seven [*sheba*  
lowed are s  
east wind;  
[*sheba'*] yea  
[*sheba'*] yea  
As for Phai  
mined by C

Here again Jo  
in Pharaoh's  
"are not only  
'scissors symbl  
cles, therefore  
"after" (*'aharē*  
pies: "After th  
punning relat  
found in later  
ahead are sev

In Judges  
terpret: "List  
ley [*tselel leher*  
struck it, and  
mediately aft  
the Israelite C  
his hands" (J  
the interpre  
as in "terrifyi  
Second is the  
gates" (*lahem*

Edifying t  
rived faith fr  
the dream w  
50:22). More  
tle in a way t

words used to describe the baker's dream contain the necessary "ingredients" to suggest Pharaoh's heated response.<sup>112</sup> In addition, Joseph punfully incorporates the baker's description of the birds eating bread "from off of me" (*me'alay*) into his antanaclastic<sup>113</sup> interpretation: "In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head [too], [but] *from off of you* [*nasa' par'oh et r'oshka me'aleka*]" (40:19). Three days later he was promptly beheaded.

In Gen.41:1-7 Pharaoh has two dreams that Joseph interprets identically (41:25-26). In the first, Pharaoh stood by the Nile, from which seven healthy cows emerged and grazed on reeds. Shortly afterward, seven starving cows arose from the Nile and devoured the healthier animals on the riverbank. In the second, seven ears of healthy grain grew on a single stalk and, like the healthy cows, were eaten by seven heat-scorched ears. Unable to locate a dream interpreter who could interpret his mysterious experience, Pharaoh called upon Joseph who interprets:

The seven healthy cows are seven [*sheba'*] years, and the seven [*sheba'*] healthy ears are seven [*sheba'*] years; it is the same dream. The seven [*sheba'*] lean and ugly cows that followed are seven [*sheba'*] years, as are also the seven [*sheba'*] empty ears scorched by the east wind; they are seven [*sheba'*] years of famine . . . Immediately ahead are seven [*sheba'*] years of great abundance [*saba'*] in the land of Egypt. After them will come seven [*sheba'*] years of famine, and all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten. . . . As for Pharaoh having the same dream twice, it means that the matter has been determined by God, and that God will soon carry it out (41:26-32).

Here again Joseph exploits the metaphorical range and multiple meanings of the words in Pharaoh's description. As E. Lowenthal observes, the healthy cows, like the full ears, "are not only metaphors for bounty (as lean cows and ears stand for famine), but are 'scissors symbols' for the annual 'plowing and harvesting' . . ."<sup>114</sup> Seven agricultural cycles, therefore, represent seven years. Similarly, the sequence in which withered ears arose "after" (*'aharêhem*) the full ears (Gen.41:23) suggests a temporal nuance that Joseph espies: "After them (*'aharêhen*) will come seven years of famine . . ." (Gen. 41:30). Note also punning relationship between "abundance" (*saba'*) and "seven" (*sheba'*),<sup>115</sup> a type of play found in later rabbinic dream interpretation.<sup>116</sup> As Joseph states in 41:29: "Immediately ahead are seven (*sheba'*) years of great abundance (*saba'*) in all the land of Egypt."

In Judges 7 Gideon overhears an enemy soldier recount his dream and another interpret: "'Listen,' he was saying, 'I had this dream, [in it] there was a moldy loaf of barley [*tselil lehem she'orim*] whirling through the Midianite camp. It came to the tent and struck it, and it fell; it turned it upside down, and the tent collapsed'" (Judg. 7:13). Immediately afterward, the other soldier interprets: "That can only mean the sword of the Israelite Gideon, son of Joash. God is delivering Midian and the entire camp into his hands" (Judg. 7:14). Several puns in the words used to describe the dream inform the interpreter. First is the word *tselil* which means "moldy, stale," and "tingling sound" as in "terrifying (tingling) news" (e.g., 1 Sam. 3:11, 2 Kings 21:12, Jer. 19:3, Hab. 3:16). Second is the expression "loaf of barley" (*lehem she'orim*), which suggests "fighter in the gates" (*lahem she'arim*) as found just prior (Judg. 5:8).

Edifying the meaning of the dream is Judg. 7:15, which tells us that Gideon derived faith from its interpretation. The rare word used for "interpretation" (*sheber*) fits the dream well since it usually means "grain" (e.g., Gen.42:1) or "battle" (e.g., Jer. 50:22). Moreover, when Gideon raids the Midianite camp, the text describes the battle in a way that recalls the dream. Gideon and his troops smash the jars that contained



their concealed torches and shout "A sword for Yahweh and for Gideon!" (7:18–20). Here the verb meaning "smash" (*shabar*) punfully recalls the "interpretation" (*sheber*).

Like Joseph and the savvy soldier, Daniel also shows a talent for dream interpretation. I refer now to Nebuchadnezzar's secret dream in Daniel 2, in which the king sees a bright colossal statue whose head was of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet and toes of iron and clay. All at once, a stone struck the feet of clay and iron, destroying the statue. Apparently none of the king's mantic experts could interpret the dream, because the king refused to tell it to them (Dan. 2:10, 2:27).<sup>117</sup> This does not stop Daniel, however, whom the text calls a "chief magician" (4:6) equipped with "knowledge and skill in all writings and wisdom" and an "understanding of visions and dreams of all kinds" (1:17).

Scholars have long proposed that the Book of Daniel is steeped in ancient Near Eastern mantic traditions.<sup>118</sup> Evidence for this view again comes from the punning hermeneutic employed in the dream's decipherment. The words used to describe the king's dream, especially the head of gold and feet of mixed clay and iron, become crucial to the Daniel's interpretive strategy. Note how Daniel opens his interpretation by equating the "head" (*r'ôsh*) of the statue and the king as "head" (*r'ôsh*) of his kingdom. Daniel also plays on the word *'erab* "mix": "You saw iron mixed [*mé'arab*] with clay; this means they [the nations] shall intermingle [*mit'arbin*] with the offspring of men, but shall not hold together, just as iron does not mix [*mit'arab*] with clay" (2:43).<sup>119</sup> Additional wordplays inform Daniel's interpretation, but I shall conclude with just one more. Daniel interprets the hurling stone that became a "great mountain" (*târ rab*) (2:35) as God (2:44). The Hebrew reflection of Aramaic "mountain" (*târ*) is *tsûr* "rock," a frequent metaphor for the divine presence (e.g., Num. 20:8, Deut. 32:4, Ps. 31:3).<sup>120</sup>

It should be clear by now that, despite their obvious cultural and theological differences, Mesopotamia and Israel share a great deal in common with respect to dreams and their interpretations. These parallels, both in details and in conceptual framework, when used with caution, help to clarify the mantological social context of dreams and prophetic speech in ancient Israel. With reference to the ubiquity of puns in symbolic dream texts, both the Mesopotamian and biblical texts demonstrate that the function of punning lies in performative divinatory hermeneia rather than rhetoric and style, hermeneia that are informed by a religious worldview in which the divine principle of the law of retribution is mediated through the spoken and written word. Whether a mantic social context lies behind the production of biblical texts remains debatable, but the parallels with Mesopotamia are suggestive. M. Fishbane concurs:

The international character and style of our biblical exegetical materials were undoubtedly due, in large part, to the residency of local experts in mantology in different royal courts, where they both learned new techniques and shared professional information. Indeed, some verification for this hypothesis can be seen in the great formal impact which Mesopotamian oneiromancy had upon Egyptian practices, and in the recorded presence of an Egyptian dream interpreter (*hry tp*) in the Mesopotamian court (called *hardibi*) from the seventh century. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that both Joseph and Daniel performed their oneiromantic services in foreign courts, where they grew up, having been transported to Egypt and Mesopotamia respectively during periods of mass population migrations (drought and exile).<sup>121</sup>

The Mesopotamian parallels also demonstrate that we cannot fully appreciate Israelite references to dreams without examining their ideological contexts. Such a con-

text is es  
corpus, t  
and Dan  
while no  
uate then  
tudes tow

With the  
dreams as  
view drea  
more dire  
of this de  
digmatic  
to him in  
trusted th  
in riddles  
vine com  
they still e  
the princi  
with sacer

Coinci  
tural insti  
political, 1  
time that  
prophecy,  
direct) for

Let no  
augur, a  
familiar  
prophet

Dream int  
was not g  
tional bor

If there  
tent, say  
even if t  
the prop

In the  
dream inte  
but it did  
continued  
1 Sam. 28:

text is especially helpful when examining references to dreams in the Bible's prophetic corpus, to which I now turn. Unlike the stories of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Gideon, and Daniel, the Bible's prophetic texts reference historical events and figures, and while not devoid of (sometimes incongruent) ideological agendas, they allow us to situate them more concretely in history. What they tell us about changing Israelite attitudes toward dreams is fascinating



With the rise of classical prophecy in the eighth century B.C.E., Israelite attitudes toward dreams as reliable modes of divine discourse begin to divide into two camps: those who view dreams as unreliable or unacceptable methods of divine revelation (as opposed to more direct auditory modes) and those who do not. Encapsulating the formative stage of this development is Num. 12:6–8, an early passage that affirms Moses' role as a paradigmatic prophet. "When a prophet of Yahweh arises among you, I make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses; he is trusted throughout my household. With him I speak mouth to mouth, plainly and not in riddles . . ." <sup>122</sup> Although the verse sees dreams and visions as a less direct form of divine communication and, thus, as more suspicious, it does not delegitimize them, for they still embody the prophetic call to Yahwism. <sup>123</sup> Sweek comments: "The text elevates the principal representative figure of the theocratic rule associated with the center and with sacerdotal institutions, above the contemporary divining professional." <sup>124</sup>

Coinciding with this development is a changing attitude toward prophecy as a cultural institution, a change that must be understood in the light of the growing Assyrian political, military, and presumably cultural dominance of the period. It is during this time that aspirations for political independence are reflected in the nature of Israelite prophecy, specifically in the form of legislation that defines sanctioned (Israelite and direct) forms of access to the divine from unsanctioned (foreign and indirect) forms.

Let no one be found among you who consigns his son or daughter to fire, or who is an augur, a soothsayer, a diviner, a sorcerer, one who casts spells, or one who consults ghosts or familiar spirits, or who consults the dead . . . Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet from among your own people, like myself; him shall you heed (Deut. 18:10–11, 15).

Dream interpretation, though representing an indirect form of divine communication, was not grouped with the other mantic arts, but rather was similarly defined along national borders.

If there appears among you a prophet or dream-diviner and he gives you a sign or portent, saying "Let us follow and worship another god"—whom you have not known—even if the sign or portent that he named to you comes true, do not heed the words of the prophet or dream diviner. For Yahweh your God is testing you . . . (Deut. 13:2–4)

In the following centuries, the auditory form of prophecy increasingly eclipsed dream interpretation as the legitimate mode of divine access (see, e.g., Isa. 65:3–4), <sup>125</sup> but it did not do so entirely. For, as several biblical passages attest, dream interpretation continued to serve a productive social function in Israel, <sup>126</sup> as it did in times past (e.g., 1 Sam. 28:6), even if the interpreters we hear about were not to be trusted. The prophet



Jeremiah thunders against dream professionals who falsify claims of divine inspiration (Jer. 23:25–32, 27:9–10, 29:8–9), and the later prophet Zechariah harangues dreamers who speak lies and console with allusions (Zech. 10:2). They do not, I underscore, speak against dreams as tools of divine revelation, only against those who use dreams dishonestly. A similar development occurs with regard to attitudes toward “visions,” which a few prophets (e.g., Isaiah, Micah, and Ezekiel) view with suspicion when announced by figures whom they do not trust (e.g., Ezek. 13:6–9, 13:23, 21:34, 22:28).

Such pronouncements reflect a growing tension between various competing prophetic groups, each vying for influence and delegitimizing the other, thereby positioning itself as an authoritative mediator of Yahweh’s word. Whether this development represents a negative reaction on behalf of the sanctioned authorities to direct or indirect Mesopotamian influence (as asserted in Isa. 2:6) or whether such prophetic indictments against oneiromancy are merely polemical tools of self-identity (as found also in Assyria)<sup>127</sup> we cannot be sure, but one thing is certain—the trend did not last. For when prophecy as a cultural institution went into gradual decline (after the fifth century B.C.E.), especially under Hellenistic influence, positive views toward dreams resurfaced. Hence, the positive and late apocalyptic views in the Book of Daniel and in Joel 3:1: “After that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, your sons and daughters will prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”

This remarkable historical resilience attests to the influence and appeal of ancient Mesopotamian intellectual thought. Its impact was indeed geographically and chronologically pervasive. Not only do we find evidence of Mesopotamian influence in early Greek and Indian sources,<sup>128</sup> but the positive attitude toward mantic dreams appears in apocryphal writings (e.g., 2 Macc. 15:11–16), in the New Testament, and in the works of Philo and Josephus. Eventually Hellenistic oneiromancy, itself heir to Mesopotamian traditions, would play a role, along with the biblical texts and native Mesopotamian practices, in shaping attitudes toward dreams in later Jewish<sup>129</sup> and Islamic communities.<sup>130</sup> Later still, these same sources would come to have a profound impact on the development of modern scientific approaches to dreams.<sup>131</sup> Such is the cultural legacy of ancient Mesopotamia.

#### NOTES

1. Initial research focused on the Bible and Talmud. See, e.g., Kristianpoller (1923); Guillaume (1938); Ehrlich (1953); Resch (1964); Davies (1969); Trachtenberg (1974); Walter (1974); Oppenheim (1956, 1966).
2. Oppenheim (1969, 1974) and more recently Butler (1998).
3. Husser (1999), published originally as “Songe,” in *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible XII* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1996). See also Caquot (1959); Husser (1994).
4. Representative examples include Cryer (1994); Jeffers (1996); Sweek (1996); Bulkeley (1993).
5. E.g., psychoanalytic approaches. See Gnuse (1984), pp. 57–59; Husser (1999), pp. 96–99; Bulkeley (1993); and the still-valid reservations of Oppenheim (1956), p. 185. Purely literary approaches also have not met with success. See Sweek (1996).
6. Hittite dreams (and those mentioned in other Syro-Canaanite sources) fall outside the scope of this chapter. For these see Oppenheim (1956); Vieyra (1959); Husser (1999); Kammenhuber (1976); Frantz-Szabó (1995).
7. Oppenheim (1956), p. 186. The typology was proposed first by Artemidorus of Daldis (ca. 2nd century C.E.). See Daldianus, *Oneirocritica* (1975); Husser (1999), p. 101.

8. Mo  
ma  
imp  
tion  
fer  
9. Th  
“al  
bot  
10. As  
Of  
11. Su  
spe  
mi  
an  
ale  
he  
lo  
12. Fe  
R  
su  
13. N  
14. A  
15. Fe  
th  
M  
16. F  
1  
17. F  
(  
18. C  
19. T  
20. V  
21. C  
t  
22. J  
t  
23. I  
t  
24. S  
25. J  
26. J  
27. J  
28.  
29.  
30.  
31.

8. Moreover, the cultural context of the dream accounts makes it difficult to distinguish mantic elements from non-mantic elements. The proposed dichotomy often rests on implicit assumptions about sanctioned and unsanctioned modes of divine communication. Husser (1999), pp. 139–154, e.g., suggests that some of the prophets cultivated different types of oneiric experience than those against which they pronounced judgment.
9. The Akkadian word *ittu*. The Egyptian language similarly employs the word *teyet* for an “alphabetic letter” or a “sculpted image,” as does biblical Hebrew, which uses *’ot* for both “visual omen” and “alphabetic letter.”
10. Assyrian kings appear to have preferred Egyptian oneirocritics over native experts. See Oppenheim (1956), p. 238.
11. Sumerian is a non-allied agglutinative language written in cuneiform script that was spoken in southern Mesopotamia beginning about 3300 B.C.E., and kept alive with diminished success in the scribal academies to ca. 1700 B.C.E., after which time Akkadian, an East Semitic language, gradually replaced it. Akkadian is comprised of two major dialects: Babylonian, the southern dialect, and Assyrian, the northern dialect. Some add here a third dialect, Old Akkadian (ca. 2500–2100 B.C.E.) and a fourth, Standard Babylonian, which is a literary dialect used in both Babylon and Assyria.
12. For a translation see Jerrold S. Cooper, *Presargonic Inscriptions*, (Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Inscriptions, 1 [New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1986], pp. 33–39. For a survey of Sumerian dream texts, see Falkenstein (1966).
13. Noegel (1993), especially pp. 50–52.
14. Also in the Greek world, e.g., Agamemnon’s dream in *Iliad* 2:6ff.
15. For an accessible treatment of Ningirsu (and other Mesopotamian deities mentioned in this article), see Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), p. 138.
16. Harriet Crawford, *Sumer and the Sumerians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 173.
17. For provisional edition and translation of only the relevant portion, see Vanstiphout (1998), pp. 397–412.
18. On this figure see below.
19. Translation by Vanstiphout (1998), p. 399. Italics are original.
20. Vanstiphout (1998), p. 402.
21. Cf., Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 55a: “A dream that is not interpreted is like a letter that is not read.”
22. Translation by J. S. Cooper and W. Heimpel, “The Sumerian Sargon Legend,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983), 67–82.
23. Husser (1999), p. 39, observes that the dream poses difficulties for the message dream typology since it “contains a clear visual message that does not require interpretation.”
24. Sweek (1996), p. 86.
25. There also exists a seventh-century B.C.E. account known as the “Vision of Kumma,” which I omit for reasons of space. See von Soden (1936); Sweek (1996), pp. 109–111.
26. Oppenheim (1956), pp. 249–250.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. See also Penelope’s dream in *Odyssey* 19 and the Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 55b. In a dream ritual text from Assur we also find: “If he saw a dream within a dream, and he interpreted whatever was favorable or able to be interpreted—[The dream] will not [affect him] for good or evil.” Butler (1998), p. 115.
30. For an edition and translation, see W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), pp. 21–62.
31. Butler (1998), p. 57, suggests that dreams affect the healing of the dreamer. On the medical dimension of dreams, see below.

32. Benjamin Foster, "On Authorship in Akkadian Literature," *Annali* 51 (1991): 17–32.
33. For an edition and translation, see Luigi Cagni, *L'epopea di Erra* (Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, Roma, 1969); *The Poem of Erra* (SAN. Malibu: Undena, 1977).
34. Sasson (1983), pp. 283–293.
35. Sweek (1996), pp. 139–140.
36. Translation by Oppenheim (1956), p. 250.
37. For a translation see Andrew George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1999).
38. Hittite is an Indo-European language written in the cuneiform script known primarily from the region of Anatolia. The Hittites ruled that region from the 17th to 13th centuries B.C.E. For a close study of the redactional history of the epic, see Tigay (1982).
39. Oppenheim (1956), p. 207, concurs: "This clearly means that the message of warning . . . was not given in an immediately understandable terms but rather in a 'symbolic' way."
40. For an edition and translation, see E. Jan Wilson, *The Cylinders of Gudea (Alter Orient und Altes Testament, 244)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996).
41. A testament to the belief that atmospheric phenomenon can influence dreams.
42. Excerpted translation by Th. Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once . . . Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 30–31.
43. Butler (1998), p. 18, opts here for the term "symbolic-message" dreams because "these dreams are really a sub-category of message dreams."
44. Translation by Sasson (1983), pp. 283–293.
45. See J.-R. Kupper, "La Date des *Shakkanakku* de Mari," *Revue d'assuriologie et d'archeologie orientale* 65 (1971), 118, n. 3.
46. There are additional elements of ambiguity, which I omit here for reasons of space.
47. Sasson (1983), p. 289.
48. Ulla Jeyes, *Old Babylonian Extispicy: Omen Texts in the British Museum* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut Te Istanbul, 1989), p. 35.
49. I shall limit the discussion to just two examples from the Old Babylonian version (ca. 2000 B.C.E.), although my remarks apply to the Assyrian and Standard Babylonian versions as well. See Noegel (forthcoming). I also will not touch on the dream sequences as found in the Sumerian stories "Gilgamesh and the Land of the Living" and "The Death of Gilgamesh." For a translation, see Pritchard (1950), pp. 47–50.
50. The translation, with some modification, is by Dalley (1989), pp. 136–137. Contra Bulkeley (1993), the text does not clarify these dreams as nightmares.
51. Dalley (1989), p. 126, notes a similar pun on the word *tseri* in Gilg I:iv, 20 when we are told that Enkidu "spread open her [the harlot's] garments, and lay upon (*tseri*) her."
52. Kilmer (1982), p. 128, has shown that *kitsru* can be read as *kezru*, "curly-haired male prostitute," which alludes to the erotic relationship between Enkidu and Gilgamesh, Enkidu's relationship with a "prostitute," and the mention of Enkidu as "hairy" (II:iii,23). The word "axe" (*hatsinnu*) puns on "male servant of Ishtar" (*assinu*). See Kilmer (1982), pp. 128–132. Gilgamesh recalls that he put the axe on his side (*ahu*), a phrase that also can be read "I treated it as my friend (lit. brother)," since *ahu*, means both "side" and "brother." See Dalley (1989), p. 152, n. 4. Gilgamesh later calls Enkidu "the axe of my side (*hatsin ahiya*), the trust of my hand" (VIII:ii,4).
53. Noegel (1991).
54. Carl Frank, "Zu den Wortspeilen *kukku* und *kibāti* in Gilg. Ep. XI," *ZA* 36 (1925), 216; Noegel (1997).
55. Alasdair Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Parpola (1993), p. 57.
56. "I will reveal to you, O Gilgamesh, hidden words (*amat nitsirti*), and I will tell you the secrets (*pirishtu*) of the gods" (XI:9, 266); "It was not I who disclosed the secret (*pirishtu*)

o  
(  
57. T  
P  
n  
"  
9  
(  
t  
F  
"  
F  
a  
(  
r  
[  
58. ?  
(  
:  
I  
59. ?  
:  
l  
i  
60. ?  
:  
:  
61.



of the great gods. I caused Atra-hasis to examine a dream, and he perceived the secret (*pirishtu*) of the gods" (XI:186–187).

57. This connection finds support in the archaeological record, which bolsters the role that practicing priests had through the Mediterranean world in controlling a variety of textual materials including literary, magical, and lexical texts. See Jacques-Claude Courtois, "La maison du prêtre aux modèles de poumon et de foies d'Ugarit," *Ugaritica* 6 (1969): 91–119; D. Arnaud, *Emar. Recherches au pays d'Astarta VI/3: Textes sumériens et accadiens* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985/87); W. G. Lambert, "The Sultantepe Tablets," *Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale* 3 (1959): 121–124; P. Walcot, *Hesiod and the Near East* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966); Antoine Cavigneaux, "A Scholar's Library in Meturan? With an Edition of the Tablet H 72 (Textes de Tell Haddad VII)," in Abusch and van der Toorn (1998), pp. 251–273. Butler (1998), p. 122, also notes that a tablet of dream omens was found in Assur in the home of an exorcist (O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur: A Survey of the Material from German Excavations, Part 2* [Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Semitica Upsaliensia 8] [Stockholm, Sweden: Uppsala University, 1986], n4, p. 530).
58. The text uses the verb *bāru*, a lexeme often connected with the activities of "seers" (*bārū*). James R. Davila, "The Flood Hero as King and Priest," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54 (1995), 204–205, 213, refers to Utnapishtim as a *shā'ilu*. See below for an explanation of these terms.
59. On the *realia* reflected in Utnapishtim's rituals, see Butler (1998), p. 237. Butler (p. 226) also notes the cultic significance of the reed hut (*kekikishu*) through which Ea speaks to Utnapishtim. In the Atrahasis Epic, the flood hero offers a *mashshakku*, which is the typical offering of the "dream interpreter" (*shā'ilu*).
60. An unfortunate misnomer since it was written on clay tablets long before the invention of the book. The Mesopotamians referred to the series as *Zaqīqu*. On this term see below. For an edition and translation see Oppenheim (1956), pp. 256–344. An earlier collection of Babylonian dream omens dating to ca. 1700 B.C.E. also exists, but it is not as complete as the *Dream Book* and does not refer explicitly to dreams, although the apoduses make it clear that dreaming is implied. Like the compendium, it points to the importance of recognizing the religious cosmology in which Mesopotamian divinatory conceptions are rooted. One omen demonstrates: "If a man while he sleeps (dreams that) the town falls again and again upon him, and he groans and no one hears him: the (protective spirits) Lamassu and Shedu are attached to this man's body." Interestingly, it is our only Mesopotamian description of a nightmare, although frightening dreams are referenced elsewhere. See F. Köcher and A. Leo Oppenheim, "The Old-Babylonian Omen Text VAT 7525," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 18 (1957–1958), 62–77, quotation on p. 67.
61. Depending on which Mesopotamian culture one discusses, one finds various terms for describing dreams. In Sumerian we find MA.MÚ "God(dess) Dream," identified sometimes as a male god of dreams and in later scribal traditions as the daughter of the sun god Shamash. Another term is AN.ZA.QAR (sometimes written as AN.ZAG.GAR.RA), which appears to be an Akkadian loan into Sumerian, and whose meaning suggests a tower-like structure, a fact that has led some scholars to link it to the biblical pillar stone known as a *masebah* (cf. the stone in Genesis 28 erected after a dream. See below). Like the Sumerian MA.MÚ, the Akkadian *Zaqīqu* is known also as a dream god (as found in the invocation discussed above), perhaps originally a dream demon. The Akkadian root *zāqu* appears in conjunction with "breezes," "winds," and demons who enter homes through wall cracks, and for ghosts of the deceased. Such associations have been compared to ancient Greek conceptions as found in the Homeric epics. See Oppenheim (1956), pp. 225, 232–233, 235–236. In Akkadian we find several other words from "dream," including *shuttu* "sleep," *iltu* also "sleep" (or perhaps "pollution [in a dream]), *munattu* "early morning sleep, day dream," and the more poetic *tabrit mushi* "vision of the night."

991): 17–32.  
di Studi del Vi-  
977).

rk: Barnes and

nown primar-  
e 17th to 13th  
epic, see Tigay

of warning . . .  
mbolic' way."  
ea (*Alter Orient*  
5).

dreams.  
*Poetry in Trans-*

because "these

*rie et d'archeolo-*

nc space.

fanbul: Neder-

an version (ca.  
abylonian ver-  
eam sequences  
ing" and "The

5–137. Contra

0 when we are  
(*tseri*) her."

ly-haired male  
nd Gilgamesh,  
du as "hairy"  
" (*assinu*). See  
is side (*ahu*), a  
ce *ahu*, means  
r calls Enkidu

6 (1925), 216;

*rian and Baby-*

ill tell you the  
ser (*pirishtu*)



62. Two Egyptian dream manuals of different types exist, one dating to ca. 1290 B.C.E. and the other to the Greco-Roman period. The Assyrian compendium more closely resembles the latter (Demotic) dream manual, which led Oppenheim (1956), p. 245, to aver a degree of Mesopotamian influence.
63. The remark by Larsen (1987), pp. 209–212, refers to lexical lists. But see also Sweek (1996), pp. 144–147.
64. Only one dream omen pertains to a king. See Oppenheim (1956), p. 239.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 289.
66. Oppenheim (1956), p. 241, suggests that such punning is rare, but until recently no systematic attempt has been made to study the compendium's employment of hermeneutical punning. The evidence will appear in Noegel (forthcoming).
67. Noegel (1995).
68. Punning is a ubiquitous feature in magic texts generally. See, e.g., Walter Farber, "Associative Magic: Some Rituals, Word Plays, and Philology," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1986), 447–449; Piotr Michalowski, "Carminative Magic: Towards an Understanding of Sumerian Poetics," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 71 (1981), pp. 1–18; Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, "Alliterative Allusions, Rebus Writing, and Paronomastic Punishment: Some Aspects of Word Play in Akkadian Literature," in Noegel (2000), pp. 63–87; Sheldon W. Greaves, "Ominous Homophony and Portentous Puns in Akkadian Omens," in Noegel (2000), pp. 103–113.
69. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. A. A. Brill (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1927), p. 315.
70. For a recent assessment of the impact of Jewish traditions on Freud, see Frieden (1990), pp. 47–93, 117–119; also Roback (1929), pp. 162–165; Grinstein (1968).
71. Daldianus, *Oneirocritica*. For a connection between rabbinic and Greek dream interpretive techniques, see Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, [1950]; reprinted 1994), p. 71, who cites Heinrich Lewy, "Zu dem Traumbuche des Artemidoros," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Geschichte und griechische Philosophie* 48 (1893): 398–419.
72. It is a curious footnote of scholarship that in his seminal work on the Demotic *Dream Book*, Aksel Volten, *Demotische Traumdeutung (Pap. Carlsberg XIII und XIV Verso)*, *Analecta Aegyptiaca*, 3 (Copenhagen: Einar Munggaard, 1942), p. 60, n. 2, remarked: "word play is a feature of dream interpretation for all peoples (lit. "Das Wortspiel ist bei allen Völkern ein Charakteristikum für die Traumdeutung"), a remark that Oppenheim (1956), p. 241, appears to have accepted. Nevertheless, this assumption is problematic. Evidence suggests that both the Demotic *Dream Book* and the later rabbinic materials represent Mesopotamian influence. There also are no extant non-Near Eastern dream manuals contemporaneous with the materials we have examined, and thus we have nothing to which we might compare our texts for the presence of punning. Even the Greek dream manual of Artemidorus shows signs of interregional influence. See Noegel (forthcoming). Moreover, later Byzantine sources do not aid comparative analysis since they represent the influence of Greek and Arabic dream manuals (both the legacy of ancient Mesopotamia). Finally, as far as I have been able to determine, the punning strategy is not employed by dream interpreters in traditional societies in modern Africa, where one might look for analogs or survivals of this technique. See, e.g., M. C. Jedrej, and Rosalind Shaw, eds., *Dreaming, Religion and Society in Africa* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992). Thus, Volten's assertion concerning the universality of the punning oneirocritic strategy cannot be supported by the evidence. I suspect (and this brings the topic full circle) that on this point he was influenced by Freud!
73. Stanley J. Tambiah, "The Magical Power of Words," *Man* 3 (1968), 175–208; F. L. Moriarty, "Word as Power in the Ancient Near East," in H. N. Bream et al, eds., *A Light Unto My Path: Old Testament Studies in Honor of J. M. Myers* (Philadelphia: Temple University,

- 1974), pp. 19–30.
74. Georges Duménil, *The Greaves, California, Be*
75. See Butler (1955), p. 10.
76. Francesca Stiles, *Mesopotamia* (1999): 5!
77. Compare the punning in Aramaic, "in magic: "s mulaic la legal situ:
78. Jean Bottero, *Chicago*
79. Oneironomancy, *On the c*
80. The god
81. See Oppenheim
82. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
83. At least one *Book itse*
84. Butler (1955), p. 10.
85. da Silva
86. As descr
87. Butler (1955), p. 10.
88. The *Mesopotamian Dream I*
89. Parpola
90. Gadd (1925), p. 10.
91. The dif
92. Bottéro

- 1974), pp. 345–362; I. Rabinowitz, *A Witness Forever: Ancient Israel's Perception of Literature and the Resultant Hebrew Bible* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993); Sheldon W. Greaves, *The Power of the Word in the Ancient Near East* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1996).
74. Georges Contenau, *Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria* (London: Edward Arnold, 1955), p. 164.
  75. See Butler (1998), p. 36.
  76. Francesca Rochberg, "Empiricism in Babylonian Omen Texts and the Classification of Mesopotamian Divination as Science," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119 (1999): 559–569.
  77. Compare the remark of Shaul Shaked, "The Poetics of Spells: Language and Structure in Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity. 1: The Divorce Formula and its Ramifications," in Abusch and van der Toorn (1998), p. 174, with respect to the language of magic: "spells are like legal documents, . . . in that they have the tendency to use formulaic language, and that the language they use creates, by its mere utterance, a new legal situation."
  78. Jean Bottéro, *Mesopotamia: Writing, Reasoning, and the Gods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 121.
  79. Oneiromancy was practiced at least eight hundred years earlier. See Butler (1998), p. 97. On the complex history of ritual texts, see Oppenheim (1956), pp. 295–307.
  80. The gods Gibil, Husku, Shamash, Sin, Ea, or Marduk. See Butler (1998), p. 135.
  81. See Oppenheim (1956), p. 239.
  82. *Ibid.*, p. 300.
  83. At least one medical text even contains a prescription for dream content, and the *Dream Book* itself is mentioned by name in two different catalogs, one belonging to an exorcist and the other to a doctor. See Butler (1998), p. 115. See, also Bottéro (1974), pp. 88–89, 188–190. Daldianus, *Oneirocritica* (1975), p. 195, also notes the connection between dream interpretation and medical prescriptions.
  84. Butler (1998), p. 23.
  85. da Silva (1993); Butler (1998), pp. 28, 62.
  86. As described also in the Epic of Gilgamesh IV.1.4–32'. See Husser (1999), 49.
  87. Butler (1998), pp. 123–124. Dreams experienced just before morning appear to have been viewed as more prophetic.
  88. The Mesopotamian belief in the medicinal properties of dream interpretation influenced later Talmudic traditions, which, according to Monford Harris, *Studies in Jewish Dream Interpretation* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1994), especially pp. 29–32, pervaded rabbinic writings well into the 13th century C.E.
  89. Parpola (1993), p. 52.
  90. Gadd (1966), pp. 21–34; Parpola (1993), pp. 47–59; Nissenen (2000), p. 108. On the relationship between dreams and sacrifice see Bottéro (1974), p. 112; Erle Leichty, "Ritual, 'Sacrifice,' and Divination in Mesopotamia," in Quaegebeur (1993), pp. 237–238. Reiner (1995), pp. 15, 72, cites texts that invoke the power of stars in dream oracles. For these figures in the context of ancient medicine, see Avalos (1995), pp. 157–172; Scurlock (1998); Oppenheim (1956), pp. 225–226; G. Castellino, "Rituals and Prayers against 'Appearing Ghosts,'" *Orientalia* 24 (1955): 240–274; Bottéro (1974), p. 97; Miranda Bayliss, "The Cult of Dead Kin in Assyria and Babylonia," *Iraq* 35 (1973): 115–125. On the relationship between Mesopotamian and Talmudic necromancy, see Irving L. Finkel, "Necromancy in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 29 (1983): 14–15.
  91. The difficulty distinguishing prayers from incantations is a case in point. See, e.g., Mark E. Cohen, "The Incantation-Hymn: Incantation or Hymn?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 95 (1975), 592–611.
  92. Bottéro (1974), p. 129, n. 7.

93. W. G. Lambert, "The Qualifications of Babylonian Diviners," in Stefan M. Maul, ed., *Festschrift für Rykle Borger zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 24. Mai 1994*, Cuneiform Monographs, 10 (Gronigen: Styx, 1998), pp. 141–158.
94. Although the connection could be due to the fact that both practices privilege access to liminal space. In the cuneiform archive found at Amarna in central Egypt (ca. 1350 B.C.E.) the *shā'ilu* is a diviner of birds. 103.
95. In fact, the earliest glyptic evidence (ca. 24th century B.C.E.) for dream interpretation depicts a woman. See J. M. Asher-Greve, "The Oldest Female Oneiromancer," in J. -M. Durand, ed., *La femme dans le proche-orient antique, XXXIIIe rencontre assyriologique internationale* (Paris: Recherches sur les civilisations, 1987), pp. 27–32. The only female recipient of a message dream is a Hittite queen. See Oppenheim (1956), p. 197. Others typically are important figures (kings and priests), except at Mari, where there exist no royal message dreams and where nine out of seventeen individuals whose dreams are mentioned are female. Neo-Assyrian dream narratives report only the experiences of men. See Butler (1998), p. 17. 104.
96. Contra Oppenheim (1956), p. 190, whose view is adopted by Husser (1999), pp. 37–38, Butler (1998), p. 19, does not agree that women experienced symbolic dreams more often than men, but rather sees the evidence as roughly equally distributed between men and women. Husser (1999), pp. 170–171, also asserts that the distinction between the *bārú* and the *shā'ilu* rests in the degree of training, i.e., the former is highly trained and familiar with the pertinent scholarly compendia and divinatory lore, whereas the latter relies less on deductive practices and more on intuition. This distinction is difficult to maintain given the paucity of evidence. As Ivan Starr, *The Rituals of the Diviner*, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica, 12 (Malibu, CA: Udena, 1983), p. 7, remarks: "It is interesting to note that both in the literary and popular idiom, the dream interpreter (*shā'ilu/shā'iltu*) and the diviner (*bārú*) often appear side by side." 105.
97. Butler (1998), p. 120. 106.
98. For more than a century, Bible scholarship has proposed a complex redactional history for the biblical text. This source-critical theory, known commonly as the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis, while once dominant in biblical studies, has largely given way to other methodological approaches, many of which reject the criteria upon which the hypothesis is based and which instead opt to see the text as holistically as possible, regardless of which sources underlie the text as we have it. Thus, for some scholars (e.g., Gnuse [1984], Husser [1999]), to understand biblical dream narratives, one must understand the proposed compositional history of the text as well, whereas for others, including this writer, such an approach is less useful. 107.
99. Husser (1999), pp. 103–104. 108
100. Whereas a polytheist worships and believes in the existence of many gods, and a monotheist worships and believes in only one, a monolatrism worships one god but believes in the existence of many. Such is the religious system of ancient Israel for much of its history. 109
101. Husser (1999), p. 102, avers that some biblical passages (e.g., Isa. 29:8, Qoh. 5:2, Job 20:8, Ps. 73:20, 126:1) contextualize some dreams as natural as opposed to supernatural. Thus, this distinction signals an increasing desacralization of the phenomenon, one that comes to the fore under the impact of Hellenism in the second century B.C.E. However, the passages in question do not explicitly deny the divine origin of dreams, only the value or perhaps possibility of interpreting them (accurately) for the dreamer. Perhaps, then, the change testifies to an increasing skepticism with regard to the dream interpretation as a cultic institution. 110
102. See, e.g., Delbert R. Hillers, "The Effective Simile in Biblical Literature," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 181–185; Walter Houston, "What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing?: Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old 111



ir fan M. Maul, ed.,  
95 Uniform Mono-

practices privilege access  
1 central Egypt (ca. 1350

for dream interpretation  
Oneiromancer," in J. -M.  
contre assyriologique in-  
27-32. The only female  
m (1956), p. 197. Others  
ari, where there exist no  
iduals whose dreams are  
only the experiences of

Husser (1999), pp. 37-38,  
1 symbolic dreams more  
ally distributed between  
the distinction between  
former is highly trained  
natory lore, whereas the  
. This distinction is diffi-  
*The Rituals of the Diviner*,  
7, remarks: "It is interest-  
, the dream interpreter  
le."

np<sup>1</sup> redactional history  
r. as the Graf-Well-  
has largely given way to  
criteria upon which the  
ologically as possible, re-  
s, for some scholars (e.g.,  
narratives, one must un-  
ll, whereas for others, in-

ce of many gods, and a  
worships one god but be-  
f ancient Israel for much

.29:8, Qoh. 5:2, Job 20:8,  
sed to supernatural. Thus,  
omenon, one that comes  
tury B.C.E. However, the  
of dreams, only the value  
e dreamer. Perhaps, then,  
the dream interpretation

. Literature," *Journal of the*  
ouston, "What Did the  
tic Discourse in the Old

Testament," in Robert P. Gordon, ed., *The Place Is Too Small for Us: The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study, 5 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1995), pp. 133-153.

103. See, e.g., Philip J. Nel, "The Talion Principle in Old Testament Narratives," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 20 (1994), 21-29; Scott B. Noegel, "Drinking Feasts and Deceptive Feats: Jacob and Laban's Double Talk," in Noegel (2000), pp. 163-179.
104. Another conceptual difference is suggested by the Hebrew root for "dream" (*hālam*). Cognate evidence shows that the word essentially means "strong," in the sense of "sexually mature" (e.g., Job 39:4, where it is used of beasts). Much has been made of the root's sexual dimension. Husser (1999), p. 88, e.g., sees it deriving more from the notion of penile erection during sleep than from the content of a mature person's dreams. Also used of dreams is "night vision" (*hāzōn laylāh*). A third term is "deep sleep" (*tardemāh*) of Yahweh, said, for example, of Adam (Gen. 2:21), Abraham (Gen. 15:12), Jonah (1:5), Daniel (8:8), Saul (1 Sam. 26:12), and Job (4:13, 33:15).
105. For Oppenheim (1956), p. 331, all message dreams derived from incubation rites. Not all scholars agree, and the evidence is often ambiguous. Gnuse (1984), p. 82, summarizes arguments on both sides. Other texts suggested as having origins in incubation practices include: Gen. 15, 28:10-17, 46:1-4; Isa. 65:4, Ps. 3:6, 4:6, 17:5, 63. The oldest clear reference to incubation appears in an early magic incantation from Mari (ca. 2500 B.C.E.). See Bonechi and Durand (1992).
106. The passage presents two difficulties. First, the word usually translated "ladder" (*sullām*) appears only here and must be translated based on cognate evidence. (Akkadian *simmiltu* means "steps of a ziggurat.") The second crux involves why the angels first ascend then descend the steps; one would expect the direction to be just the opposite, since the angels come from the heavens (noted already by Rashi [= Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaq], ca. 1040-1105 C.E.).
107. Husser (1999), p. 135, sees this dream as a message dream superimposed by an oneiric vision.
108. See Noegel (1997), pp. 7-17.
109. Some add the sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22), based on the Qur'anic parallel (37:100), which states that God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son in a dream.
110. The relationship between the literary accounts of symbolic dreams and the Assyrian compendium was espied by Richter (1963), who suggested that symbolic dreams derive from the practice of oneiromancy.
111. The idiom meaning "anger" usually requires the use of the word "nose" (*'ap*), and so "nose" is played on the word "baker" (*'oph*), the verb "baked" (*'apāh*), and in the baker's declaration to Joseph in 40:16: "In my dream, similarly (*'ap*), there were three baskets of white bread on my head."
112. This resembles the use of "nose" (*'ap*) in a dream interpretation found in the Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 56b, in which Bar Kappara reports a dream in which his "nose" (*'ap*) falls off. As Rabbi interprets his dream: "Heated anger (*hārōn 'ap*) has been removed from you."
113. Antanaclasis is a form of wordplay that repeats a word or expression, each time with a different meaning.
114. Eric I. Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis* (New York: Ktav, 1973), p. 54. Observed already by Ramban (= Rabbi Moses ben Nahman, 1194-1270 C.E.).
115. Noted also by Fishbane (1985), p. 451.
116. The play involves moving the diacritical dot above the Hebrew letter *shin*. Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 57a and Megillah 15b. Found also in Finkel (1963), p. 368.
117. Opinion appears to be divided on whether the king forgot his dream, which, of course, in the Mesopotamian context, would spell disaster. See John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 156.

118. Hans-Peter Müller, "Magisch-mantische Weisheit und die Gestalt Daniels," *Vqarit Forschungen* 1 (1969), 79-94; B.A. Mastin, "Wisdom and Daniel," in John Day et al., eds., *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 166.
119. This root is similarly played on in a dream interpretation, *Yalqut* I, 26a.
120. André LaCoque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans. David Pellauer (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 49.
121. Fishbane (1985), pp. 455-456.
122. Prov. 1:6 states that God's wisdom must be sought in word play and riddles, so perhaps Num. 12:6-8 hints at the punning hermeneutic. Compare Artemidorus' comment that symbolic dreams "are those which disclose their meaning in riddles." See Daldianus (1975), p. 185.
123. Note that, contra Bulkeley (1993), p. 162, no attempt is made to distinguish "the clear dream of the Jews and the 'dark' speech of the Gentile's dreams as a way of illustrating the special relationship of the Jews with God." In fact, the use of divinatory punning in biblical texts suggests that "dark sayings" were quite at home in Israel.
124. Sweek (1996), p. 198.
125. Cf., the Septuagint. Isa. 29:7-8 does not, in my view, constitute a negative assessment of dreams, only a poetic metaphor.
126. On suggested social functions, see McDermot (1971), p. 192; Sweek (1996).
127. Nissenen (1996).
128. Gnuse (1984), pp. 42-44; Daldianus (1975); Noegel (forthcoming).
129. Lieberman (1987); Tigay (1983), pp. 169-189; Elman (1998); Geller (2000).
130. E.g., Oberhelman (1991); Lamoreaux (1999).
131. Frieden (1990), pp. 47-93, 117-119.

## REFERENCES

- Abusch, T., and Karel van der Toorn, eds., *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretive Perspectives*, Studies in Ancient Magic and Divination, 1 (Groningen, the Netherlands: Styx, 1998).
- Avalos, Hector. *Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East: The Role of the Temple in Greece, Mesopotamia, and Israel*, Harvard Semitic Monographs, 54 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995)
- Bonechi, M., and J.-M. Durand. "Oniromancie et magie à Mari à l'époque d'Ebla," *Quaderni di Semistica* 18 (1992): 151-159.
- Bottéro, Jean. "Symptômes, signes, écritures en Mésopotamie ancienne," in J. P. Vernat et al., eds., *Divination et rationalité* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1974), pp. 70-197.
- Bulkeley, Kelly. "The 'Evil' Dream of Gilgamesh: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Dreams in Mythological Texts," in Carol Schreier Rupprecht, ed., *The Dream and the Text: Essays on Literature and Language* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 159-177.
- Butler, S. A. L. *Mesopotamian Conceptions of Dreams and Dream Rituals*, *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 258 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998).
- Caquot, André, "Les songes et leur interprétation selon Canaan et Israël," in *Les songes et leur interprétation*, Sources orientales II (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1959), pp. 99-124.
- Cryer, Frederick. *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Sup.*, 142; (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).
- Daldianus, Artemidorus. *Oneirocritica*, trans. Robert J. White, Noyes Classical Studies (Park Ridge, IL: Noyes Press, 1975).
- Dalley, Stephanie. *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Davi  
Y  
Ehrl  
n  
Elm:  
F  
Falk  
ii  
t  
Fink  
Fishl  
Fran  
ii  
Frie:  
Gad:  
e  
c  
2  
Gell  
F  
a  
N  
Gnu  
e  
Grir  
Guil  
c  
Har:  
Hus  
(  
Hus  
z  
Jedr  
1  
Jeffe  
Karr  
(  
Kiln  
i  
(  
Köc  
(  
Kris  
1  
Larr  
v  
Lars  
t  
l  
c  
Liet  
1

- Davies, T. Witton. *Magic, Divination, and Demonology among the Hebrews and Their Neighbors* (New York: KTAV, 1969).
- Ehrlich, Ernst Ludwig. *Der Traum im Alten Testament*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 73 (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1953).
- Elman, Y. *Dream Interpretation from Classical Jewish Sources by Rabbi Shelomo Almoli* (Hoboken: KTAV Publishing, 1998).
- Falkenstein, A. "'Wahrsagung' in der Sumerischen Überlieferung," in D. F. Wendel, ed., *La divination en Mésopotamie ancienne et dans les régions voisines*, XIVe rencontre assyriologique internationale (Saint-Germain, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), pp. 45–68.
- Finkel, Asher. "The Peshet of Dreams and Scriptures," *Revue de Qumran* 15 (1963): 357–370.
- Fishbane, Michael. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).
- Frantz-Szabó, Gabriella. "Hittite Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination," in Jack M. Sasson, ed., *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, vol. 3 (New York: Scribner, 1995), pp. 2007–2019.
- Frieden, Ken. *Freud's Dream of Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).
- Gadd, C. J. "Some Babylonian Divinatory Methods, and Their Inter-relations," in D. F. Wendel, ed., *La divination en Mésopotamie ancienne et dans les régions voisines*, XIVe rencontre assyriologique internationale (Saint-Germain, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), pp. 21–34.
- Geller, M. J. "The Survival of Babylonian Wissenschaft in Later Tradition," in Sanno Aro and R. M. Whiting, eds., *The Heirs of Assyria: Proceedings of the Opening Symposium of the Assyrian and Babylonian Intellectual Heritage Project Held in Tvärminne, Finland, October 8–11, 1998*, Melammu Symposia I (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2000), pp. 1–6.
- Gnuse, Robert Karl. *The Dream Theophany of Samuel: Its Structure in Relation to Ancient Near Eastern Dreams and Its Theological Significance* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984).
- Grinstein, Alexander. *On Sigmund Freud's Dreams* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968).
- Guillaume, Alfred. *Prophecy and Divination among the Hebrews and Other Semites* (London: Hodder, 1938).
- Harris, Monford. *Studies in Jewish Dream Interpretation* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1994).
- Husser, Jean-Marie. *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World*, Biblical Seminar, 63 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).
- Husser, Jean-Marie. *Le songe et la parole: Étude sur le rêve et sa fonction dans l'ancien Israël*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 210 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994).
- Jedrej, M. C., and Rosalind Shaw, eds. *Dreaming, Religion and Society in Africa* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992).
- Jeffers, Ann. *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
- Kammenhuber, Annelies. *Orakelpraxis, Träume, und Vorzeichenschau bei den Hethitern* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1976).
- Kilmer, Anne Draffkorn. "A Note on an Overlooked Word-Play in the Akkadian Gilgamesh," in G. van Driel et al., eds., *Zikir Shumin: Assyriological Studies Presented to F. R. Kraus on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982).
- Köcher, F., and A. Leo Oppenheim. "The Old-Babylonian Omen Text VAT 7525," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 18 (1957–1958): 62–77.
- Kristianpoller, Alexander. *Monumenta Talmudica. Traum und Traumdeutung* (Wien: Benjamin Harz, 1923).
- Lamoreaux, John C. *Dream Interpretation in the Early Medieval Near East* (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1999).
- Larsen, Mogens Trolle. "The Mesopotamian Lukewarm Mind: Reflections on Science, Divination, and Literacy," in Francesca Rochberg-Halton, ed., *Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987), pp. 203–225.
- Lieberman, Stephen J. "A Mesopotamian Background for the So-Called Aggadic 'Measures' of Biblical Hermeneutics," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 58 (1987): 157–225.



- McDermot, Violet. *The Cult of the Seer in the Ancient Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
- Nissenen, Martti. "Falsche Prophetie in neuassyrischer und deuteronomistischer Darstellung," in Timo Veijola, ed., *Das Deuteronomium und seine Querbeziehungen*, Schriften der Finnischen Exegetischen Gesellschaft, 62 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 172-195.
- . "The Socioreligious Role of the Neo-Assyrian Prophets," in Martti Nissenen, ed., *Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives*, Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series, 13 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), pp. 235-271.
- Noegel, Scott B. "Atbash in Jeremiah and Its Literary Significance," *Jewish Biblical Quarterly* 24/2-4 (1996): 82-89, 160-166, 247-250.
- . "Fictional Sumerian Autobiographies," *Journal of the Association of Graduates in Near Eastern Studies* 4 (1993): 46-55.
- . "Fox on the Run: Catch a Lamassu by the Pun," *Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires* 73 (1995): 101-102.
- . "A Janus Parallelism in the Gilgamesh Flood Story," *Acta Sumerologica* 13 (1991): 419-421.
- . *Nocturnal Ciphers: The Allusive Language of Dreams in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (forthcoming).
- , ed., *Puns and Pundits: Wordplay in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2000).
- . "Raining Terror: Another Wordplay Cluster in Gilgamesh Tablet XI (Assyrian Version, ll. 45-47)," *Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires* 75 (1997): 39-40.
- . "Sex, Sticks, and the Trickster in Gen. 30:31-43: A New Look at an Old Crux," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 25 (1997): 7-17.
- Oberhelman, Steven M. *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Medieval Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1991).
- Oppenheim, A. Leo. "A Babylonian Diviner's Manual," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 33 (1974): 197-220.
- . "New Fragments of the Assyrian Dream-Book," *Iraq* 31 (1969): 153-165.
- . "Perspectives on Mesopotamian Divination," in D. F. Wendel, ed., *La divination en Mésopotamie ancienne et dans les régions voisines*, XIVe rencontre assyriologique internationale (Saint-Germain, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), pp. 35-43.
- . *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East: With a Translation of the Assyrian Dream Book*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, volume 46/3 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1956).
- Parpola, Simo. "The Forlorn Scholar," in F. Rochberg-Halton, ed., *Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner*, American Oriental Series, 67 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 257-278.
- . "Mesopotamian Astrology and Astronomy as Domains of Mesopotamian 'Wisdom,'" in Hannes D. Galter, ed., *Die Rolle der Astronomie in den Kulturen Mesopotamiens*, Beiträge zum 3. Grazer Morganländischen Symposium (23-27 September 1991) (Graz: GrazCult, 1993), pp. 47-59.
- Pritchard, James B. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950).
- Quaegebeur, J., ed., *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, 55 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1993).
- Reiner, Erica. *Astral Magic in Babylonia*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 85/4 (Independence Square, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1995).
- Resch, Andreas. *Der Traum im Heilsplan Gottes: Deutung und Bedeutung des Traums im Alten Testament* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964).

Richter, W. ' 202-220.

Roback, A. A

Sasson, Jack I

Scurlock, Jo/ in T. Abu pretive Pe Styx, 199

Silva, A. da. 310-310

Soden, Wolf syriologie

Sweek, Joel the Anc

Tigay, Jeffrey History, Magnes

———. T 1982).

Trachtenbe Athene

Vanstiphou Analsi Presenty of

Vieyra, M pretatic

Walter, G ters T1

- Richter, W. "Traum und Traumdeutung im Alten Testament," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 7 (1963): 202-220.
- Roback, A. A. *Jewish Influence in Modern Thought* (Cambridge: Sci-Art Publishers, 1929).
- Sasson, Jack M. "Mari Dreams," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 283-293.
- Scurlock, JoAnn. "Physician, Exorcist, Conjuror, Magician: A Tale of Two Healing Professionals," in T. Abusch and Karel van der Toorn, eds., *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretive Perspectives*, Studies in Ancient Magic and Divination, 1 (Groningen, the Netherlands: Styx, 1998), pp. 69-79.
- Silva, A. da. "Dreams as Demonic Experience in Mesopotamia," *Studies on Religion* 22 (1993): 310-310.
- Soden, Wolfgang von. "Die Unterweltsvision eines assyrischen Kronprinzen," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 9 (1936): 1-31.
- Sweek, Joel. "Dreams of Power from Sumer to Judah: An Essay on the Divinatory Economy of the Ancient Near East," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1996.
- Tigay, Jeffrey H. "An Early Technique of Aggadic Exegesis," in H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld, eds., *History, Historiography, and Interpretation: Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), pp. 169-189.
- . *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).
- Trachtenberg, Joshua. *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study of Folk Religion* (New York: Atheneum, 1974).
- Vanstiphout, H. L. J. "Reflections on the Dream of Lugalbanda (A Typological and Interpretive Analysis of LH 332-365)," in Jiri Prosecky, ed., *Intellectual Life in the Ancient Near East: Papers Presented at the 43rd rencontre assyriologique internationale, Prague, July 1-5, 1996* (Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Oriental Institute, 1998), pp. 397-412.
- Vieyra, Maurice. "Les songes et leur interprétation chez les Hittites," in *Les songes et leur interprétation*, Sources orientales II (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959).
- Walter, Gerry H. *Dreams in the Literature of the Ancient Near East and the Babylonian Talmud*, (Masters Thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1974).