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William Tooman, University of St Andrews

Crafting Complexity: Character Comparisons in Ancient Greek and Hebrew Literature

Citations and Allusions in the Hebrew Bible

A number of scholars have argued that character-comparison (or character-analogy) features in the poetics of ancient literatures from different times, places, and cultures. Two ancient literary cultures that made extensive use of character-comparison as a poetic technique are the Greek and Hebrew cultures. By comparing ancient Greek practices of characterization with ancient Hebrew practices, this essay reveals that character-comparison, particularly intertextual character-comparison, is commonplace enough that its neglect in characterization studies—especially with respect to scriptural traditions—needs redressing. Comparing examples from Plutarch, Herodotus, Josephus, and the Book of Samuel, I show that transtextual character-comparison was a powerful device for lending depth and dimension to characters and for empowering reader-evaluation of those characters.

Zoltán Bödör, University of Jewish Studies in Budapest and Tamás Biró, University of Jewish Studies in Budapest

Agencying the Heart: Metaphors in the Book of Job

Cognitive and Cultural Evolutionary Perspectives on the Biblical World

The combination of two theoretical frameworks is proposed for the study of biblical anthropology (cf. Hans Walter Wolff), in particular, the usage of the word *lev/levav* ('heart') in Job. The 30 occurrences of this word are categorized as follows: the heart as the place of thoughts, feelings and will (e.g. 8:10. 10:13), a manageable entity (e.g. 1:8. 11:13. 23:16.), an active agent (e.g. 15:12. 31:7), a seducer or seducee (31:9. 31:27), or the moral centre, "driving core" acting positively or negatively (e.g. 9:4. 36:13), and as a synonym for understanding (e.g. 12:3. 34:10). Referring to the cognitive metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson), we group these categories as (a) *pars pro toto*, (b) the heart as homunculus, and (c) the heart as container. The first two types turn a human organ into an agent, with will and volition, capable of goal-directed actions. In contrast, the last one deprives the heart of human-like features. What is more, it ceases to be an entity and is turned into a space accommodating entities, such as reified feelings and knowledge. We also refer to our purportedly innate ontology, lying behind Chomskyan syntax and the cognitive science of religion. In this ontology, entities are humans, animals, plants, artifacts, or natural objects. Non-entities include, among others, natural forces, properties, quantities, space, and time. CSR argues religious belief systems emerge from this ontology. In syntax, the thematic (theta) roles of a predicate are filled by elements in our mental ontology. The agent of a sentence must be an agentive entity, the patient might be any entity, and the location must be a space. Yet, the experiencer's theta-role poses difficulties, exposing a deeper cognitive challenge. The metaphors in Job address the same challenge. The heart, a body part, is neither a living entity, nor an inanimate object. By turning it into either an agent or a space, human mental ontology can easily accommodate emotions, sensations and knowledge.

Simon Brummer, Trinity College Dublin

The Appeal of Rejection: Exploring the Cognitive Rationale Behind Jesus' Dispute in his Hometown Nazareth

Cognitive and Cultural Evolutionary Perspectives on the Biblical World

The PhD project explores the portrayal of Jews and Judaism in Luke-Acts while applying insights of the Cognitive Science of Religion (short CSR) in combination with text-critical methods. As scholarship on the treatment of Jews and Judaism and anti-Judaism in Luke-Acts has not achieved a broad consensus yet, CSR as a relatively new methodological approach in biblical studies may hold promise in progressing current conversations. In this context, the specific CSR theories and methods that are applied are identified according to the main focus of this study which is the production of the text and