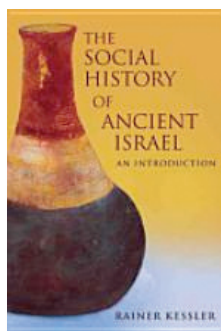tion project can never cover all aspects of a site that may interest future scholars. We all must ensure that our field notes, records, and maps are properly archived for future generations. In fact, would it not be great if museums made archival material available online to whoever was interested in researching our rapidly vanishing past?

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The Social History of Ancient Israel: An Introduction

By Rainer Kessler, Translated by Linda M. Maloney. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008. Pp. ix + 273. Paper, $32.00. ISBN 978-0-8006-6282-0.

The Social History of Ancient Israel: An Introduction does just what the title claims to do: it introduces the reader to the history of ancient Israel, focusing primarily on the development of social institutions and structures. Kessler's intended audience is Christian academics and pastors (ix), but the vast majority of the book is appropriate for a broader audience than that.

Kessler begins with an explanation of "social history" as a subdiscipline of history and of Old Testament exegesis, then introduces the methodology of the book as a whole. He structures the book by time period, focusing on "radical shifts within society and what is characteristic of a particular period [more] than on the continuing features such as family structures" or social stratification (5). Each chapter begins with a box of key points, which is useful for instructors who want to use the book as a textbook.

Part 1, "Methods for Studying the Social History of Israel," consists of four chapters, the first of which introduces social history as a methodology. Chapter 2, "Environment as Living Space," highlights the importance of Israel's location as a crossroads and buffer between larger entities and describes its local environment, as well as the economic and social implications of the broken and varied geography and of rainfall-based agriculture. In chapter 3 Kessler describes material remains, including excavated inscriptions, as primary sources, evaluates their use-

fulness for social history, and concludes that secondary sources such as the Bible and tertiary sources such as analogies are vital for understanding the social history of ancient Israel.

Chapter 4 introduces the Bible as a source for social history and historiography. Kessler describes the Bible as fiction, outside the realms of truth and falsehood (24). It represents, however, an accurate cultural milieu, though it may illuminate the time of writing rather than the time being written about. Kessler rejects a postexilic dating of all biblical texts and accepts much of what is written about preexilic Israel. He further notes that all of the information that is useful for social history is incidental to the purposes of the texts and reflects an unintentional tradition.

The final chapter in part 1, "In Search of Analogies," describes analogies as interpretative frameworks within which information is organized (33). Such analogies are imposed upon the text or society by modern scholars; they were never intrinsic to ancient societies. Further, while scholars use modern sociological categories in analogies, the task is not to find similarities but to "discover and depict what is different and strange" in ancient Israelite society (36).

Part 2, "The Epochs of Israel's Social History," describes each period in terms of its dominant social organization. Each chapter again begins with a box of key points, then summarizes the basic political history of the time. Kessler summarizes the mutations in social features discussed in previous chapters and then delineates the dominant institution of the period in question. For prestate Israelite society (ch. 6), he highlights the *bet av* and kinship as the dominant social structure. Chapters 7 and 8 examine the development of the state and its increasingly stratified, class-based society. Chapter 9 describes exilic Israel, both in Egypt and Babylonia, and in Judah itself, from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus, highlighting the differences between the regions.

Chapter 10, on the Persian period, examines the question of membership in Israel and documents the transformation of Yehud into a theocracy and Persian province. The final, eleventh chapter, begins with Alexander the Great and ends with the Hasmoneans and the transformation of Israel/Yehud into a Hellenistic *ethnos*. A brief conclusion follows, summarizing Israel's dominant social features and identities over time and finishing with the theological importance of Israel's social history to Christianity. Fifty pages of endnotes follow, as well as a glossary, bibliography, and indices of selected topics and biblical passages.

Kessler's social history integrates a range of institutions such as family structures, state institutions, and cultic institutions and explains their relationships with the economic systems that they often supported but sometimes undercut. He emphasizes continuity of structures over time, for example: "It is character-

istic of ancient Israel's social history that the basic structure of social relationships, once created, are maintained while their concrete manifestations continue to change" (161). Kessler uses the continuity and development of social structures and processes to integrate each chapter with those that precede it, although the chapters are organized by political epochs.

One of the strongest points of the book, especially for people who wish to use it as a college textbook, is the key points box at the beginning of each chapter. Additionally, this book is a surprisingly smooth read; books translated from German, as this was, often retain a rather Germanic writing style, with long sentences and an excess of passive voice; Maloney did an admirable job of making the book accessible and interesting.
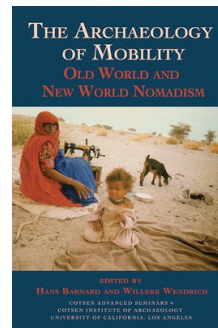
While Kessler made good use of biblical writings, ancient Near Eastern texts, and historical analogies, he included little information about the physical realities of ancient Israel. More integrated information on the physical environment in ancient Israel and especially on the archaeological record would make it a stronger textbook. The stopping point in the Hasmonean era is a bit abrupt. It seems logical from a historical perspective to continue the book through the end of the Hasmonean era and the Roman period, until the Jews gave up on rebuilding the temple. However, Kessler explains this choice in terms of the writing of the Old Testament (158)

As mentioned above, Kessler identifies his target audience as being students of theology, pastors, teachers, and colleagues in the field of Old Testament (ix), yet this book is also appropriate for people who have minimal familiarity with the Bible and ancient Near Eastern societies, such as upper-division undergraduates. In that case, instructors will most likely want to use it in conjunction with the primary sources and, ideally, with a book of basic political history and another on the archaeology of ancient Israel, for a more complete picture. Kessler has also placed additional resources online, including a study guide, a research guide, a glossary, a premade test, and a research bibliography to assist in its classroom adoption (see http://store .fortresspress.com/store/product/3883/The-Social-History-of-Ancient-Israel-An-Introduction). The vast majority of the book, with the exception of the very beginning and ending, is appropriate for use in a public or nonsectarian institution, but the first and last chapters place the work in a clearly Christian context.

Overall, this is a very useful book and a good addition to the corpus of histories of ancient Israel. It will be very effective as a tool for classroom instruction when used in conjunction with other types of histories and archaeology.

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The Archaeology of Mobility: Old World and New World Nomadism

Edited by Hans Bernard and Willeke Wendrich. Cotsen Advanced Seminars 4. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008. Pp. xi + 601; plates, maps. Cloth, $89.95; paper $55.00. ISBN 978-1-931745-50-5; 978-1-931745-49-9.

This is a very important volume. Unlike several published over the past twenty years (see Bar-Yosef and Khazanov 1991; Khazanov 1984; Khazanov and Wink 2001), dealing with the concept of mobility equals nomadism, this volume covers "nomadism" worldwide, both from an archaeological and an ethno-archaeological perspective. The volume is divided into two sections: "The Past at Present," containing fourteen chapters; and "The Present and the Future," with eleven. An introduction by the editors concerns definitions and research approaches.

The editors state that one of the goals of the symposium that produced these chapters was "to facilitate the discussion and interaction between scholars of Old World and New World archaeology." A very strange statement follows: "As archaeology in the Old World is usually associated with history, languages, and sciences, while archaeologists in the New World have more affinity with social sciences, especially anthropology.…" I can only assume the editors mean that the subject of nomadism, where domestic animals are part of the equation, falls under Near Eastern studies, as at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. This, of course, is untrue; many anthropological archaeologists work on subjects dealt with in this volume in the Near East and other Asian and African regions.

The editors define mobility "as the capacity and need for movement from place to place." The very broad definition, of course, would also describe hunters/gatherers, in addition to populations who move with domestic animals. One of the best features of the introduction is figure 1.2 (5), which schematically represents four types of mobility, as well as table 1.2 (6), which presents differences between hunters/gatherers and pastoral nomads (after Cribb 1991).

The range of articles is outstanding, covering most parts of the archaeological or ethno-archaeological world. The first part of the book concerns studies of both archaeological recognition