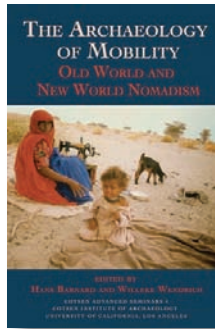


The Archaeology of Mobility: Old World and New World Nomadism



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

l history that the basic structure of created, are maintained while their continue to change” (161). Kessler development of social structures and chapter with those that precede it, ganized by political epochs.

ts of the book, especially for people ge textbook, is the key points box at er. Additionally, this book is a sur- ks translated from German, as this rmanic writing style, with long sen- ve voice; Maloney did an admirable ssible and interesting.

d use of biblical writings, ancient torical analogies, he included little ical realities of ancient Israel. More he physical environment in ancient archaeological record would make stopping point in the Hasmonean ological from a historical perspective gh the end of the Hasmonean era l the Jews gave up on rebuilding the explains this choice in terms of the t (158)

ssler identifies his target audience as pastors, teachers, and colleagues in (ix), yet this book is also appropri- nimal familiarity with the Bible and ties, such as upper-division under- ructors will most likely want to use rimary sources and, ideally, with a rry and another on the archaeology e complete picture. Kessler has also s online, including a study guide, a a premade test, and a research bib- ssroom adoption (see <http://store/product/3883/The-Social-History-duction>). The vast majority of the f the very beginning and ending, is ublic or nonsectarian institution, but lace the work in a clearly Christian

ful book and a good addition to the nt Israel. It will be very effective as ion when used in conjunction with archaeology.

of mobility, as well as some theoretical considerations. These fourteen chapters cover a variety of regions, such as the U.S. (Eerkens, Holman and Lovis), South Africa (Smith), Near East (Betts, Bernbeck, Alizadeh, Rosen, Buccellati), and so on. In this section, Steve Rosen's "Desert Pastoral Nomadism in the *Longue Durée*" stands out as an example of using ethnohistory, ethnography, and archaeological data from the southern Levant as props to discuss the complexity of the problem in studying archaeological nomadism. His contention that this phenomenon "shows intense variation over time" is spot on, as is the notion that we need to look in depth at climate, ecology, social organization, and the relationship between nomads and the state within the greater economic and social context (see also the articles by Buccellati and Alizadeh).

I learned much from the article by Milne, on Paleo-Eskimo land-use patterns, as well as the chapter by Holman and Lovis on the Upper Great Lakes Region. Both papers deal with hunter-gatherer mobility but are nevertheless quite fascinating in their approaches and conclusions. One of the main questions Milne asks is why the colonizers of the northern North American region, Paleo-Eskimo populations arriving from Siberia around 3800 B.P., moved so far to the east (i.e., Baffin Island by ca. 3600 B.P.). His conclusions that the search for lithic sources and the need for biological diversity drove these populations long distances every year over one of the harshest landscapes on earth are also applicable to other forms of mobility systems, including pastoral nomadism.

Holman and Lovis use ethnographic analogy, documentary evidence, and archaeology to analyze the changing mobility patterns of late prehistoric populations in the Great Lakes region. The fact that domestic plants arrived late and that the populations remained semi-mobile even after the introduction of horticulture is clearly a result of the scarcity of resources and their distribution along the northern shores of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Even after the arrival of Europeans after circa

1630, populations remained semi-mobile, and it was only after the introduction of intense fur trading that larger aggregates began to coalesce.

In the second section, among a number of interesting papers, the chapter by S. T. Smith on Nubia and Chang's paper on Kazakhstan are especially impressive, using ethnographic and archaeological data to produce models of nomadic behavior. In Kazakhstan, the Kurgan tradition of the eighth-century B.C.E. suggests that pastoral confederacies were already "hierarchical and stratified." Chang asks the question of how mobile these societies really were and what role these "chiefdoms" played in integrating settlement types within the region. Further, her data leads her to the new objective of redefining Iron Age mobility patterns on the European Steppe to include militarism and predatory raiding, concepts that appear to be unique to this region (see also Frachetti's chapter).

Smith, on the other hand, deals with nomadism and the "the dynamics of ethnicity" in the archaeological record, looking at colonial occupation at two sites in southern Egypt. He finds that at these two Egyptian sites—Tumbos and Askut—the nomadic, Nubian element can be found in certain contexts and then concludes that "ethnicity is socially contingent and can shift depending on the social and economic interests of individual actors."

I believe that anyone approaching problems of identifying mobility should refer to this volume. The breadth and scope of the book is impressive, as is its production. I recommend *The Archaeology of Mobility* without hesitation.

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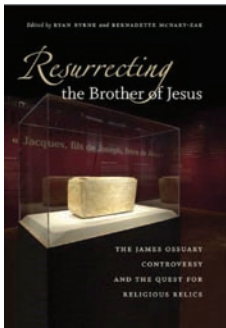
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James L. Phillips
Field Museum of Natural History

Resurrecting the Brother of Jesus: The James Ossuary Controversy and the Quest for Religious Relics



Edited by Ryan Byrne and Bernadette McNary-Zak. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. Pp. viii + 215. Cloth, \$29.95. ISBN 978-0-8078-3298-1.

In the fall of 2002 readers of *Biblical Archaeology Review* were informed of the spectacular discovery of an antique limestone burial box with a clearly legible Aramaic inscription reading “James son of Joseph, brother of Jesus.” The James ossuary soon gained an enormous popularity, being considered the oldest archaeological evidence for the existence of Jesus of Nazareth so far. A special exhibition of the assumed sensational find in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto soon became a major attraction. Critical voices that alluded to the lack of a traceable archaeological context of the unprovenanced artifact were mostly ignored until a team of experts convened by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) debunked the inscription as a modern forgery. The authenticity of the amazing discovery is still debated, as other prominent scholars have rebutted accusations of forgery. In 2008 an Israeli court preliminarily recommended that the case brought by the IAA against the owner of the ossuary be dropped for lack of convincing evidence, but the legal process is ongoing.

The volume at hand contains six contributions, each of which deals with one particular aspect of the popular, theological, and scholarly reception history of the ossuary and its meaning in the context of modern Western society. In their introduction (1–17) the editors first emphasize the strong relationship between burial practices and economic status in Roman-period

Judaism and Christianity, then give a inscription and its publication.

Byron R. McCane (19–30) in his essay discusses the sensationalistic character of the publicity surrounding the ossuary: “Even if the words ‘James son of Joseph, brother of Jesus’ had been an authentic ancient inscription, they would not have referred to Jesus of Nazareth, they would have referred to anything we did not already know about Jesus. It could have been an ossuary, an ossuary inscription, Jewish or Christian, Roman Jerusalem, or even primitive Christianity. In the context of his argumentation, McCane argues that the forgery of the inscription is especially interesting because, for him, it is a simple combination of several elements that were copied out of Levi Rahmani’s *Catálogo de Ossuários em the Collection of the State of Israel* and then combined by means of a scanner and a computer software. The text of the newly created inscription was engraved on an authentic but robbed ossuary, which was finally, coated with fake patina.

Thomas S. Bremer (31–58) traces the history of the course of the exhibition of the James Ossuary at the Royal Ontario Museum and addresses in the introduction the function of the exhibit as an object of the construction of ancient history as it is demonstrated in the construction of museum space for the exhibit. As a religiously charged object, he argues that the inscription on verified historical dates and facts. Its construction of ancient history instead lies in the construction of a current cultural construction of ancient history interweaves piety, scepticism, science, and religion. He points out that “museum practices do not simply inform the public about the items in their collection, but they also constitute the constitutive discourses of modernity.”

The short contribution of Bernadette McNary-Zak deals with the conundrum of relics in the context of the exhibition on the basis of response-theoretical categories. She discusses the active and productive contribution of the exhibition to the definition of the religious meaning of the ossuary, arguing that this aspect was also a leading point of discussion of the Royal Ontario Museum while planning the exhibition. She concludes that “the exhibition of the ossuary as a religious relic was grounded in the concerns of the present and not the past” (58).

The first extensive documentary about the ossuary was shown on the Discovery Channel in the fall of 2002. In the background Milton Moreland (73–80) discusses the responsibilities of scholars in the production and dissemination of information in the age of mass media. He responds to the meaning of the ossuary in the context of theories that deal with the ques-