

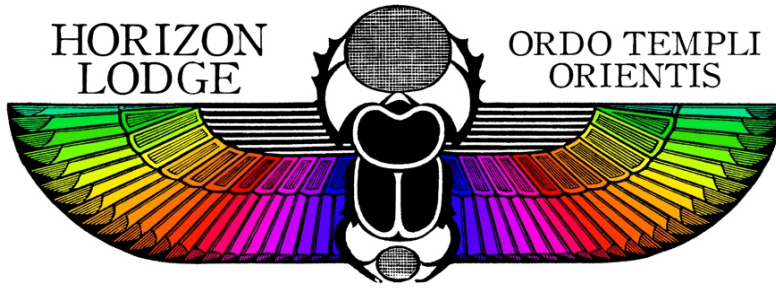
The circle of the horizon is the earth and sky's embrace

HORIZON
LODGE

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Sky's Embrace

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THE MAGICIAN BY SARAH RILEY

18 × 14 acrylic on canvas

<https://sarahlunariley.wixsite.com>

The Akkadian Cross

adapted from Prayer to the Goddess Ištar in *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery* by Leonard W. King

Contributed by Brian Mellinger

rimi-nin-ni-ma ilu Iš-tar ki-bi-i na-ha-ši
iš-ti-`-ú nam-ri-ir-ri-ki lim-mi-ru zi-mu-ú-a
lu tas-lim ilu šīdu damiktu ša pa-ni-ki
ša ár-ki-ki a-li-kat ilu lamassu lu tas-lim

Have mercy on me, Holy Ištar! Command abundance!

I have sought Thy light: let my brightness shine!

Propitious be the favorable Holy Šīdu (lion) who is before Thee: may the Holy Lamassu (bull) that goeth behind thee be propitious!

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Horizon Lodge is a local body of Ordo Templi Orientis, the Order of Oriental Templars, or Order of the Temple of the East. We are located in Seattle, Washington.

The O.T.O is a hierarchical, fraternal membership organization. Our mission is to effect and promote the doctrines and practices of the philosophical and religious system known as Thelema, with particular emphasis on cultivating the ideals of individual liberty, self-discipline, self-knowledge, and universal brotherhood. To this end, we conduct sacramental and initiatory rites, offer guidance and instruction to our members and organize social and educational events.

For more information, visit our web site at <http://seattle-oto.org/>

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ALTAR BY LUCY MOORE SOROR HEKA
<https://www.etsy.com/shop/SteleOfRevealing93>

Following Roads

BY JANICE VAN CLEVE

*Janice Van Cleve is the author of *Gods, Gaps and Gravity*, and *What Makes Me Happy*. The following is an excerpt from *Gods, Gaps, and Gravity*.*

Bilbo Baggins once said: "It's dangerous business, Frodo, stepping out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept up to."

It's true. My own journey started simply enough. After my first eye surgery, I was banned from any computer work or reading for ten days. The objective was to reduce eye strain and limit eye movement. I was encouraged to watch TV from a distance because that would keep my head upright. The theory was that the gas bubble the doctor inserted into my eyeball would float up to the top and push the retina back where it was supposed to be. So I got an armload of DVDs from the public library and set down to watch.

One DVD was a version of the book: *The Bible Unearthed: Archeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts*, by eminent archeologists I. Finkelstein and N. Silberman. Many earlier archeologists had used the Bible as a guide to their excavations in an effort to "prove" the Old Testament. This "treasure map" method worked for Heinrich Schliemann, a German businessman who discovered Troy in 1873 using Homer's *Iliad* as his guide. Finkelstein and Silberman started instead with modern scientific methods and tools. Armed with facts on the ground, they were better able to put the

Old Testament stories into context. This sounded like an interesting road so I decided to follow it. Their findings were startling.

First there is Abraham. There is no evidence for a migration of a clan from Ur west to Canaan. What little written clues do exist indicate that Abraham was a clan chief in Hebron, a town in Judea. Isaac and Jacob were not related to him. They were his contemporaries – chiefs of their own clans in Beersheba and Samaria respectively. Then there is the book of Exodus. There is no evidence from any source – Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Canaanite or archeology – that a people migrated from Egypt to Canaan. Yet there is clear evidence on the ground that the hill country of Canaan gained a massive influx of people between 1200-1100 BCE. Early archeologists jumped to the conclusion that this must be when the Hebrews arrived from their exodus. However, the facts prove that this population explosion was no invasion but rather a gradual settlement by people from within Canaanite society. They were leaving the city states along the plains and coasts. Why? I was soon to find out.

Just as important as the archeology on the ground is the history of the writing. Who wrote those Old Testament stories? When did they write them? What was their agenda? After all, "history is written by the winners." Homer wrote 400 years after the events he described. The surviving version of the Pentateuch or first five books of the Old Testament were finalized by the priests in Jerusalem 600-700 years after the events they describe. Modern Biblical scholars organize the lineage of the first five books thus:

Diagram of the 20th century documentary hypothesis

J: Yahwist (10th - 9th century BCE)

E: Eulogist (9th century BCE)

Dtr1: early (7th century BCE) Deuteronomist historian

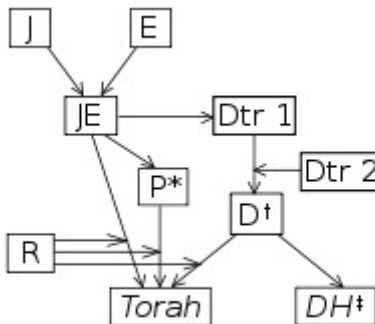
Dtr2: later (6th century BCE) Deuteronomist historian

P*: Priestly (6th - 5th century BCE)

D†: Deuteronomist

R: Redactor

DH†: Deuteronomistic history (books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings)



The priests assembled these stories from what was familiar to them in 600-500 BCE which is clear from the fact that they named places and kingdoms that did not exist yet in 1200 BCE. Also in the 600's BCE, north Canaan was recovering from an Assyrian invasion and the priests in Jerusalem were anxious to reunite the people in the hill country through a common religion. Up to that time, the Judean god Yahweh shared the religious stage with Elohim, Ashera, Baal, and a golden calf.

Fascinating. By the time I had gone through the DVD several times and taken notes, I was hooked. I had to follow the side roads, too. I consulted a friend who specializes in the history and archeology of early Israel and she loaned me William Dever's book: *Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From?*. Dever is a renowned archeologist and expert on Near Eastern history. In this book he examined the arguments and findings of most of the other archeologists in the field –

including Finkelstein and Silberman – and drew his own conclusions. In his words:

“The biblical writers and editors had some genuine sources, but they did not hesitate to manipulate them. They did this not only with exaggerations and embellishments, but also with additions and outright inventions, in order to make the stories serve their own ideological agenda.”

Thus most of Genesis is folk myth, except for Joseph. There were frequent comings and goings between Canaan and the Nile and Egyptian society was very open when it came to incorporating newcomers. When crops failed in Canaan, people often went to Egypt where Nile floods guaranteed a bounty. There *may* well have been a Joseph who was a Canaanite and who traveled to Egypt. Whether he rose to prominence is unproven. Exodus is also fiction, except for the tribe of Levi who *may* have made a journey from Egypt across

the Sinai. It is the Levites who eventually monopolized the priesthood and wrote the Old Testament; so they may have emphasized the roles of Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. In fact, Dever points out that only the Levites had Egyptian names – all the rest of clans that later would become Hebrews bore Canaanite names, indicating that they never left home. The Levites incorporated all the clans in the Exodus experience to create a shared myth of liberation. It was easy to sell the myth because at the time of the writing, many of the people had just been liberated from the Babylonian Captivity, so they could empathize.

Joshua and Numbers are pure fiction. There was no conquest of Canaan because most of the people who would later adopt the Hebrew identity were already there or migrated from the coastal city states. Leviticus is obviously the rules laid down by the Levites. Dever points to the book of Judges as hewing closer to factual history. Archeologists and biblical scholars agree that Deuteronomy was “discovered” by King Josiah (640-609) in his attempt to regain control of the northern hill country after the fall of the Assyrians. Deuteronomy emphasizes the primacy of the temple in Jerusalem where Josiah ruled. Dever also argues that Moses was not a historical figure at all but rather a literary archetype to advance the primacy of Yahweh over Elohim. Bilbo was right. This road was getting more interesting all the time!

However, the agenda of King Josiah and the decline of the Assyrians were not the only things going on between 1300 and 600 BCE. There were Hittites, Egyptians, Babylonians, Mycenaeans, and Sea Peoples. There were Ramses II & III, Nebuchadnezzar, Agamemnon, Saul & David and battles like Kadesh and Troy. Since Canaan was on the main highway

between all these conflicting interests, every one of them had an impact.

We do have some solid dates. The Hyksos, a conglomeration of Canaanite and Semitic invaders, sacked Memphis in Egypt in 1720 BCE. Santorini volcano blew up in 1650, weakening the Minoan civilization in Crete and opening the door for the Mycenaeans of Greece to gradually absorb the island around 1450. Agamemnon sacked Troy in 1280. Ramses II (1279-1212) reasserted Egyptian dominance over the coastal Canaanite city states and fought the Hittites at Kadesh in 1274. His son, Merneptah (1212-1202) again campaigned in Canaan. He dedicated a stela in 1207 which contains the first mention of a “people of Israel”. On it he says:

“The princes are prostrate, saying mercy!
Not one raises his head among the Nine
Bows.

Desolation is for Tehenu; Hatti is pacified,
Plundered is the Canaan with every evil;
Carried off is Ashkelon; seized upon is
Gezer;

Yanoam is made as that which does not
exist;

(the people of) Israel are laid waste; their
seed is not;

Hurru has become a widow for Egypt!
All lands together, they are pacified.”

Tehenu is Libya, Hurru are the Hurrians, and Hatti are the Hittites. Ashkelon, Gezer, and Yanoam are Canaanite city states. The hieroglyphs for Israel however do not mean city state; rather they indicate a collection of people outside of direct Egyptian control. They inhabited the core of what would later become the northern kingdom of Israel. The main focus of Merneptah’s stela, however, was on his victory against the Libyans and their allies, the Sea Peoples.

I turned to Nancy Sanders' book *The Sea Peoples*. The Sea Peoples exerted a strong influence on the course of history in the Middle East as the Bronze Age came to a close. Egypt, Assyria, the Mitanni, the Hittites, and the Mycenaeans were the five powers which had stabilized the region for most of the Bronze Age. This encouraged a vibrant regional economy based on trade. They were not organized "empires" like Rome. Except for Egypt, they were more like the Aztecs – extracting tribute and stationing garrisons, but not necessarily governing in the modern sense. As they fell or became distracted by internal troubles, trade fell off. The economy crashed. Peasants still had their farms or fishing but merchants and soldiers had no work and rulers had no taxes to support their life style. They turned to piracy, raiding, and selling themselves as mercenaries.

Some of them joined the Libyan attack on Egypt. After their defeat, Merneptah incorporated some of them into the Egyptian army and placed them in garrisons in Canaan. Ramses III crushed another raid by the Sea Peoples in 1178 and did the same thing. Egyptian inscriptions called them Denyen, Shardana, Lukka, Teresh, Shekelesh, and Peleset to name a few. Most of these came from the Aegean littoral, according to Sanders. The Teresh may have been survivors from Troy. The Lukka came from southwest Anatolia. The Shardana came from northwest Syria.

The loyalties of these mercenaries were flexible, nor did they long stay anyplace once the booty ran out. Agamemnon did not sack Troy to expand his territorial control. He took the booty and slaves and left. If he was not a "Sea People" himself, he was certainly a prototype for them. Some of the Shardana eventually left the Middle East and ended up giving their name to Sardinia where archeologists have found artifacts that point to them.

Not all the Sea Peoples came by sea. One group of them, came by land down the coast of Canaan and settled in the Gaza area. These were the Peleset who gave their name to Palestine and who are known to history as the Philistines. They became the new elites of the five Canaanite city states they took over and soon adopted the ways and religions they found there. The reason people left the Canaan plains and went to the hills 1200-1100 BCE may have something to do with escaping Egyptian control, Sea People and Philistine plundering, corrupt and oppressive Canaanite overlords, and the constant fighting on the plains.

Meanwhile the people of Judah abandoned the rule of judges and raised up Saul (1050-1011) to be their king. He, David (1011-971), and Solomon (971-931) temporarily brought Judah and Israel into one state. After Solomon, however, things got messy. Israel and Judah separated again. Assyrians conquered both kingdoms in 721. Egypt briefly reasserted control over Canaan at the battle of Megiddo in 609, killing King Josiah of Judah in the process. Babylon overthrew Assyria, defeated Egypt at Carchemish in 605, and took over Canaan. Babylon forced Judah to pay tribute and when it failed, attacked and deported some of its people back to Babylon. Four times they deported people but archeology shows that roughly 75% of the Hebrews remained in Canaan. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 597 and again ten years later. The Persians conquered the Babylonians in 539 and the Persian King Cyrus allowed all the prisoners of Babylon to return home. Shortly after 520 the foundations of the second temple were laid in Jerusalem.

The deportation period is called the Babylonian Captivity. During this time many of the books of the Old Testament were written and after the return to Jerusalem, the priests constructed its final version. Undoubtedly the experience of the captivity, the urgency to

rebuild the religion and its temple, and memories of the glory days of David strongly influenced the writing. As biblical scholar and Israeli philosopher Yehezkel Kaufmann said: “The exile is the watershed. With the exile, the religion of Israel comes to an end and Judaism begins.”

So I “stepped onto the road” and got swept off into a fascinating and multi-dimensional research project (This was probably Goddess Fascinata’s doing!). The work by expert archeologists in the field and scientific biblical scholars places the stories in the Old Testament into context. Their work in no way trashes the Old Testament any more than science trashes the *Gilgamish Epic*, the *Nibelungenlied*, or the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The writers of these classics and of the Old Testament were not, and did not intend to be, documenting actual history. For example, did Ulysses really go to Tunisia, Sicily, and Naples? Who knows? Yet what Homer’s story reveals is that he and his readers in 800 BCE were well aware of the geography of the whole Mediterranean and likely many sailors had traveled those waters for years. Likewise there may not have been a Siegfried or Brunhilde among the Burgundians, but the *Nibelungenlied* probably does reveal the impact of the Hun invasion on the Germanic tribes.

Understanding the times and agendas of the writers helps me appreciate more the stories they created without depending on them for “truth”. All writing, including today’s news, should be examined with a critical eye to put it into context.

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TWO WEREWOLVES SMOKING BY JAMES DALTON

The Book of the Most Precious Substance by Sara Gran

Review by MARK DALTON

Magical initiates looking for an enjoyable bon bon of a book might want to look into Sara Gran's new sex-magick adventure, *The Book of the Most Precious Substance*. Gran is best known for her series about the bumbling millennial detective, Claire DeWitt, who barely stays sober enough to solve a succession of bizarre crimes. This book is a bit different, in that the hero is a book dealer and one time best-selling author, whose life has been up-ended by her husband's early-onset dementia. Once the darlings of the jet-set literary crowd, she and her afflicted mate have watched their friends and associates steadily drift away as his dementia gradually takes hold, eventually leaving him unable to speak or react to his surroundings, and our hero scuffling to support them both and his full time Nigerian caregiver too.

The book follows her through a succession of book fairs and gives an interesting and possibly accurate picture of what business at the upper levels of bookselling is like — rare books, valuable books, many of them dealing with the occult. At times, the story strongly reminded me of the novel *The Club Dumas* by

Arturo Perez-Reverte, and Polanski's subsequent film, *The Ninth Gate*. Lily, our hero book seller, hears about an extremely rare and valuable book (also the title of this book), and a possible buyer who is prepared to pay any price to obtain it. The game is afoot when Lily and her collaborator Lucas set out to find it.

It won't take much imagination for those with a rudimentary knowledge of sex magick to picture what "the most precious substance" might refer to, and Gran's book name-checks a number of folks quite familiar to members of our Order: The Beast, of course ("a Crowley first edition could make your month,"), Doctor Dee, Austin Osmond Spare, William Blake, Elizabeth Bathory, etc. The five steps of ritual described in the Book will supposedly bestow increasing magical benefits on the possessor at each step ... but there may be costs to pay, of course.

As in *The Ninth Gate*, the pursuit of the book takes Lily and Lucas through exotic locales, and they meet some peculiar rich people along the way. There is plenty of sex too, some quite inventive. The benefits (and costs) are definitely there. The blurb on the back of Gran's book says "A mysterious book promises unlimited power and unrivaled sexual pleasure." It's a pretty good ride, I say.

Literature or Life by Jorge Semprun

Review by MARK DALTON

This is a great book. Like Semprun's previous book on World War II, *What a Beautiful Sunday*, this one uses his experience in Nazi concentration camps to tell a quite remarkable story (and stories within stories within stories), but also as a jumping-off place for wide-ranging musing about life, and art, and the dependency of each on the other (hence the apt title).

The book circles around the liberation of Buchenwald and the first few weeks afterwards, with extended forays into his experiences there, previous experiences with the French underground as a student at the Sorbonne, and with a lot of discussion of writers and philosophers along the way.

He starts by addressing the question of whether an experience like being in Buchenwald can be truly and fully addressed in literature — he says yes, certainly, given enough skill and commitment by the writer. Finding readers who are capable of comprehending and believing what is written is the problem. I think we have a good writer-reader match here, because I find Semprun to be startling in his clarity, illuminating, riveting, horrifying and very funny from time to time (a sense of humor and absurdity that obviously served him well, and those that leaned on him for support well, too).

There is a bizarrely funny scene at the opening of the book, for example, when three British soldiers, brand new to the scene in Buchenwald walked up to him, and he was so happy to see them (“I felt more like laughing, gamboling in the woods, running from tree to tree”) that he tried to engage them in what was, for him, normal conversation. (“Say, I bet you

fellas are noticing how quiet it is here — it's the birds! The smell of the crematory has driven them off, so the usual racket you hear in the forest just ain't happening here!”) Meanwhile these soldiers are staring at him in open-mouthed horror, as if he was a talking corpse, some kind of zombie... It takes Semprun a few minutes to figure out what the problem is here, and he decides, on reflection, that their perception is correct — that he and his comrades, the survivors, are a sort of zombie, that they hadn't really avoided death — that death and what he calls “radical evil” were so pervasive in the camp that nobody there survived in the usual sense — and he said that, for the rest of his life, much of it as a younger man spent continuing to put himself in danger as a revolutionary fighter of various kinds, he felt an odd sort of invulnerability — an assumption that he would not be killed or even caught because he'd already been there, and somehow been given a pass to return to finish his business here.

One of his extended side trips is a discussion of Heidegger, of whom he says, in part, “Of course, there was a certain fascination — sometimes mixed with irritation — with the philosopher's language. With that abounding obtuseness through which one has to hack one's way, cutting clearings without ever reaching a definitive clarity. A never-ending labor of intellectual decipherment that becomes absorbing through its very incompleteness.”

It seems clear to me that Semprun used his experience with Heidegger partially as a guide in his own development as a thinker and writer, because, again, he writes with exceptional clarity, and no matter how far afield his musings range, he never loses the thread or the point of a remarkable and essential story in the process.



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24 × 20 acrylic on canvas

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