information, and ideas are ever expanding. The limitations of canon and authorial control were not the principal standards by which textual creations were measured. Indeed, they seem, in some ways, not to have been measured at all. The very expansiveness of both texts and characters recommended their special importance and sacred status in the ancient literary imagination.

While written primarily for specialists, Mroczek's book is nevertheless an accessible and interesting read. Her book is a much-needed contribution to biblical scholarship because it calls attention to shortcomings in scholarly inquiry about the textual past. It also suggests fine possibilities for the kinds of questions that ought to be asked in the future. Mroczek's lens for rethinking ideas about authorship and textual production could also yield a more nuanced approach to textual criticism, both higher and lower. Also, while Mormon scholarship has been keenly aware of what ancient texts have to say about sacred libraries and expansive text collections for some time, Mroczek's book enriches those studies and highlights elements from literary antiquity that might produce more abundant areas of study. The book is a meticulous, creative, and refreshing contribution to the conversation in biblical studies about the literary world of Jewish antiquity.

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Mark S. Smith. *Where the Gods Are: Spatial Dimensions of Anthropomorphism in the Biblical World.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.

Reviewed by Daniel O. McClellan

MARK S. SMITH IS PERHAPS BEST KNOWN as one of the world's leading scholars of ancient Judahite and Israelite conceptualizations of YHWH, the God of Israel. From his 1990 book *The Early History of*

God[1] to his 2008 *God in Translation*,[2] Smith has been at or near the forefront of biblical scholarship's engagement with the most important questions related to the way early Judahites and Israelites thought and wrote about their patron deity.[3] His commitment to understanding the worldviews responsible for the production of the biblical texts as firmly embedded in a broader Northwest Semitic cultural matrix— and his direct scholarly engagement with the other main purveyors of that matrix in their own right—has carved for Smith a comfortable niche in the academy. Historical criticism has always been the bedrock of his methodologies, but his more recent publications have also incorporated frameworks and insights from more contemporary theoretical models related to phenomena like social memory and cultural translation.

Smith's newest book, *Where the Gods Are: Spatial Dimensions of Anthropomorphism in the Biblical World* (part of the Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library), continues that multidisciplinary trajectory, examining early anthropomorphic conceptualizations of deity in the Hebrew Bible and in cognate literature, as well as the way place and space mediated, influenced, and constrained those conceptualizations. The salience of anthropomorphism in recent years owes much to recent publications like Esther Hamori's "*When Gods Were Men*" (2008),[4] Benjamin Sommer's *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (2009),[5] and Anne Knafl's *Forming God: Divine*

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1. Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990).

2. Mark S. Smith, *God in Translation: Deities in Cross-Cultural Discourse in the Biblical World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

3. See also Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Smith, *The Memoirs of God: History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004).

4. Esther J. Hamori, "*When Gods Were Men*": *The Embodied God in Biblical and Near Eastern Literature* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008).

5. Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch (2014),[6] and Smith engages with each in outlining a unique model of divine embodiment. However, Smith also seeks new insights in *Where the Gods Are* through the interpretive frameworks of materiality and spatiality, briefly roping in discussions about cognitive science and anthropology (without straying too far from his methodological wheelhouse).

Where the Gods Are is divided into an introduction, three parts comprising two chapters each, and an epilogue meant to provide a brief synthesis of the most relevant points of the discussion. Part 1 is entitled "Spatial Representations of Divine Anthropomorphism," part 2 is "Anthropomorphism and Theriomorphism in Cultic Space," and part 3 is "Gods of Cities, Cities of Gods." The physical spaces treated in each part are shrines and the home (part 1), the cultic spaces at Dan and Bethel (part 2), and cities (part 3).

Smith opens his introduction on an autobiographical note, explaining his interest in the ways that human embodiment and constructed spaces operate as the canvas and brush that constrain our conceptualization of deity and its mechanisms for interacting with humanity. The majority of the introduction strikes an important methodological chord, however, by raising concern with the presentism usually inherent and unconscious in our scholarly reconstructions of ancient thought.[7] While Smith seeks a path around this pitfall through modern theoretical frameworks that may uncover some universals of human cognition and thus reveal something of the nature and function of ancient thinking, he tends toward rather modern concepts for framing the discussion, as, for instance, when he refers to "'being,' which for the ancient world consisted of God or deities perceived as the 'ground' of reality

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6. Anne K. Knafl, *Forming God: Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014).

7. Smith's concerns are reminiscent of George Tyrrell's criticism of Adolf van Harnack's reconstruction of Christ in *Das Wesen des Christentums*: "The Christ that Harnack sees, looking back through nineteen centuries of Catholic darkness, is only the reflection of a Liberal Protestant face, seen at the bottom of a deep well." Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Crossroads* (London: Longmans, Green, 1910), 44, citing Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).

for people" (p. 1). "Being" and "reality" are philosophical frameworks not known to have been operative for the authors of the biblical texts.[8]

The two chapters in Smith's first section are revised versions of previously published papers.[9] In the first, "The Three Bodies of God in the Hebrew Bible," Smith argues for a broadly tripartite division of Israelite conceptualizations of God's body. The first is a human-sized corporeal body (found in Genesis), the second is a luminous super-human-sized body (found in Exodus and Isaiah), and the third, from the later prophets, is a mystical body that appears anthropomorphic but is ambiguous in terms of materiality (found primarily in Ezekiel). Smith suggests the first two represent separate traditional conceptualizations of divine presence deriving from the material representations of God used in private or public ritual worship (cultic images). The third divine body is a development of a later time period, owing, according to Smith, to a postexilic Mesopotamian cosmic framework that merged with Priestly monotheistic ideologies to universalize YHWH and obscure his corporeality.

Smith's second chapter, entitled "Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People)," refers not only to the tendency of temple design and function to reflect salient aspects of the divine, but also to the tendency of those salient aspects to be refractions of important features of humanity. In this chapter, Smith argues that temples express divine characteristics in four different modes (p. 31): (1) "deities *intersect* with humans at temples"; (2) "temples *recapitulate* the stories of deities" (this mode refers to the way the temple structures symbolize narratives associated in the ancient Near East with divine conquest and enthronement); (3) "temples *participate* in the features of deity" (by reflecting its power and holiness); and (4) "deities and temples *correspond*" (insofar as the temples express characteristics of deity such as enormous size and

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8. The book's final reflection on natural and revealed religion also appeals to a modern conceptualization of religion developed most clearly during the Protestant Reformation.

9. See Mark S. Smith, "The Three Bodies of God in the Hebrew Bible," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 134/3 (2015): 471–88; Smith, "Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People)," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 3–27.

aesthetic attractiveness).[10] Temples, in other words, not only demarcated sacred space where the divine and the human overlapped but also represented the deity and, in their appearance and structure, stored important semantic content about the deities.

The main focus of the first chapter in part 2 is the way Ugaritic and biblical authors expressed the comparability of deity and humanity. Expanding on his discussion in *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism* regarding the way "characteristics of deity ultimately relate to human characteristics, actions, capacities and incapacities" without being reducible to "humanity writ large,"[11] Smith divides these humanlike traits into two categories: identical predications and similes. The former constitutes all those instances where Ugaritic and even biblical authors describe deity and its functioning in explicitly anthropomorphic terms, such as seeing, eating, sleeping, sitting, standing, and so forth. The latter constitutes the comparisons of (1) deity to humanity, (2) humanity to deity, and (a somewhat novel category) (3) deity to animals. As Smith notes, discussions of anthropomorphism have rarely addressed the use of simile to compare deity to humanity/animals, though the category has the potential to deepen our understanding of the contours and extent of anthropomorphism in the ancient Near East. Here Smith briefly brings the cognitive sciences back into frame, discussing the way analogy functions to facilitate problem solving and discovery; these similes "provide a form of exploration of divine nature beyond predications and intersections" (p. 52).

The second chapter of part 2 addresses the calves of Dan and Bethel. Smith evaluates the various linguistic representations of the calves, both in terms of their number and representation, as well as calf and bull iconography in the material records of the Levant. Highlighting the various possible meanings of the "multiple grammatical forms for bovines at Bethel" (p. 66), Smith concludes that the different forms represent a pluriform cultic reality wherein the bulls likely functioned not just as

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10. The emphases are in the original.

11. Smith, *Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 102–3.

divine pedestals but as emblem-animals that represented and presenced the deities themselves.

"Gods and Their City Sites" is the longest and most technical chapter of the volume, and it treats the question of the relationship of deities to particular cities and regions. Smith begins by listing the various formulas found throughout the ancient Near East incorporating a divine name (DN) and a geographic name (GN) and by arguing that these formulas witness to an archaic identification of particular cultic locales with deities whose presence had been manifested there. Smith then goes on to contend against recent cases made by Benjamin D. Sommer and Spencer L. Allen to the effect that different local manifestations represent different deities, or at least individual deities simultaneously inhabiting multiple bodies.[12] For Smith, the same deity is in view with each manifestation. Turning his attention specifically to YHWH, Smith favorably cites Jeremy Hutton's conclusion that the "Yahweh of Teman" inscription at Kuntillet ʿAjrud reflected the location's officially sanctioned manifestation of YHWH over and against the upstart "YHWH of Samaria" manifestation (which was found only once on a piece of pottery). Such competition between manifestations appears to be reflected also in Deuteronomy 12's centralizing rhetoric. Smith suggests it may constitute "a religious—and perhaps political—manifesto for ongoing supersessionism of cult sites" (p. 95). This is not the case with Deuteronomy 6:4, however, as chapter 6 "stands at a considerable textual and thematic distance from Deuteronomy 12" (p. 96) and is responding to a different concern. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the Song of Songs as a metaphorical celebration of God's love for the land of Jerusalem, personified as spouse.

"The Royal City and Its Gods," the final chapter before the epilogue, uses the discussion on the Song of Songs from the end of the previous chapter as a springboard into a more detailed discussion of the ways ancient royal cities were conceptualized, specifically how their

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12. Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 13–14, 25–27, 55, 67, 75; Spencer L. Allen, *The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015), 203–21.

relationships to their patron deities were reflected through the cities' personification. The two most important conceptualizations were of the city as temple and the city as consort. Regarding the former, Smith writes, "In a sense, cities were temples writ large" (p. 103). The king occupied his city as the deity would its temple, appropriating ritual imagery in a variety of royal functions and presenting the city's structure and divine inhabitation as parallel to the temple's. While the Ugaritic literature distinguished the royal city from the divine mountain, they were conflated in the Hebrew Bible's representation of Jerusalem. This unique relationship may have facilitated the personification of Jerusalem as mother and female counterpart (the latter conceptualization). Jerusalem's inhabitants were conceptualized as the city's offspring, with the city itself viewed as queen to YHWH's king. This personification of the city was salient enough to endure well beyond Jerusalem's destruction in 70 CE.

Smith's epilogue offers some summary observations about the relationship of ancient anthropomorphism to materiality and space. The main insights of each chapter are discussed, with a final reflection added on the way space and place frame the conceptualization of divinity in the Hebrew Bible. Because deity is given shape and expression by human frameworks and initiatives, while also being irreducible to humanity, Smith argues for "(at least) two theories of religion" (p. 112) in the Hebrew Bible: "natural religion," found in humanity's own initiative toward the divine, and "revealed religion," catalyzed by divine command. The tension between these two categories of religion, Smith concludes, has shaped our concepts of deity from the most ancient sources down to today.

On a critical note, the discussion in *Where the Gods Are* feels somewhat cursory and even reductive at times. This is clearest in the first chapter, where the complex and pluriform anthropomorphic expressions of the Hebrew Bible are reduced to three generalized concepts of the divine body that presuppose quite a bit of theological and conceptual consistency, as if the numerous different ways the biblical authors thought about and represented the deity constituted only

slight variations on a small number of cognitively constrained canonical forms.[13] Smith's theory that ritual settings influenced early conceptualizations of God's body plausibly links the broader concept of anthropomorphism to spatiality and certainly merits further consideration, but it also paints with a very broad brush. I was also expecting a more detailed discussion on the center/periphery framework as it relates to cities and their reflection of the divine, as is found in Smith's earlier *Memoirs of God*.[14]

Some methodological issues related to the engagement with the cognitive sciences also seem to have been sidestepped in the interest of the book's rhetorical goals. As an example, the most important contributions that the Cognitive Science of Religion (CSR) has made to understanding the development of anthropomorphic concepts of deity are overlooked even as Smith cites pivotal scholars like Stewart E. Guthrie, Justin L. Barrett, Rebekah A. Richert, and Pascal Boyer.[15] CSR scholarship is cited only insofar as it suggests how anthropomorphism may be beneficial as a means of textually or materially *representing* deity, but the ways in which human cognition is thought to be responsible for the very *origins* of deity concepts are not discussed. A possible reason

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13. Smith cites Knafl's *Forming God*, but he does not engage her discussion of the lack of theological consistency between and even within biblical sources.

14. Smith discusses the way the conceptualizations of cities, temples, and deities reflected ancient cosmology and the opposition of civilization and chaos in Smith, *Memoirs of God*, 88–101. The center/periphery framework is discussed in pp. 88–91.

15. Smith cites Stewart E. Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Justin L. Barrett and Rebekah A. Richert, "Anthropomorphism or Preparedness? Exploring Children's God Concepts," *Review of Religious Research* 44/3 (2003): 300–312; Pascal Boyer, "What Makes Anthropomorphism Natural: Intuitive Ontology and Cultural Representations," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological* Institute 2/1 (1996): 83–97. Smith does not cite any scholarship from the Cognitive Science of Religion published within the last decade—for instance, Ilka Pyysiäinen, *Supernatural Agents: Why We Believe in Souls, Gods, and Buddhas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)—although he does cite recent publications incorporating insights from Cognitive Linguistics, such as Ellen Van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), and Job Y. Jindo, *Biblical Metaphor Reconsidered: A Cognitive Approach to Poetic Prophecy in Jeremiah 1–24* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010).

for this neglect may be reticence to reduce deity entirely to human cognition (see the epilogue).

Despite these concerns, Smith offers a novel and informed approach to the study of the conceptualization of deity in *Where the Gods Are*, and we need more of it. The book engages a number of important issues related to the study of ancient conceptualizations of the God of Israel, and Smith forwards a compelling theory regarding the relationship of the deity's representation to its ritual, material, and political embeddedness. Future inquiry into that relationship will hopefully be catalyzed by this book. The engagement with spatiality and the cognitive sciences also represents a significant step forward among popular books in promoting a more multidisciplinary approach to biblical studies.[16]

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Peter Brown. *The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015.

Reviewed by Daniel Becerra

IN *THE RANSOM OF THE SOUL*, Peter Brown explores how early Christians conceptualized the relationship between wealth and the afterlife. He limits his study primarily to the writings of Christian authors living

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16. Scholarly publications with more thorough integrations of the two fields are available, such as István Czachesz and Risto Uro, eds., *Mind, Morality and Magic: Cognitive Science Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Durham: Acumen, 2013), but none so far with the reach of Mark S. Smith or the Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library.