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**AABNER**

ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL  
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**THREE CUNEIFORM TEXTS FROM THE  
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FINLAND:  
PROVENANCE, EDITIONS, AND  
COMMENTARY**

*Johannes Bach and Rick Bonnie*

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## Abstract

This paper offers provenance studies and editions of three hitherto unpublished texts stored in the National Museum of Finland collections. VK 5738:2 is another exemplar of a well attested clay cone of Gudea of Lagaš. The clay cone bears an M.K. signature in Arabic, indicating that it once was held in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. VK 6400:6 is a fragment of an octagonal prism of Sennacherib. Its text probably is a version of Sennacherib 17 with differing lineation, but other options remain possible. The object has been donated to the National Museum of Finland in 2004 after its re-discovery in the storerooms of the Finno-Ugrian Society. VK 6400:5 is a tablet fragment preserving text from a partially unknown royal inscription of Tiglath-pileser I. It has the same provenance as Sennacherib fragment VK 6400:6. The text on the obverse has its best parallel in the “Extended Five-Year-Annals” of Tiglath-pileser I (A.0.87.2). The reverse contains text that has its closest parallels in two inscriptions hitherto ascribed to Tiglath-pileser I’s son Aššur-bēl-kala. In 2020, Shibata proposed to rather attribute these two inscriptions to Tiglath-pileser I. The Helsinki fragment provides proof for this thesis, as the text on its reverse apparently also was part of at least some younger versions of the “Extended Five-Year-Annals”.



Dieser Aufsatz bietet Provenienzstudien und Editionen von drei bisher unveröffentlichten Texten, die in den Sammlungen des Finnischen Nationalmuseums aufbewahrt werden. VK 5738:2 ist ein weiteres Exemplar eines gut belegten Tonkegels des Gudea von Lagaš. Der Tonkegel trägt ein arabisches M.K.-Sigle, was darauf hinweist, dass er einst im Irak-Museum in Bagdad aufbewahrt wurde. VK 6400:6 ist ein Fragment eines achteckigen Prismas von Sanherib. Der Text ist wahrscheinlich eine Version von Sennacherib 17 mit abweichender Lineatur, andere Optionen sind jedoch weiterhin möglich. Das Objekt wurde 2004 dem Finnischen Nationalmuseum gespendet, nachdem es in den Lagerräumen der Finno-Ugrischen Gesellschaft wiederentdeckt wurde. VK 6400:5 ist ein Tafelfragment, das Text aus einer teilweise unbekanntem Königsinschrift von Tiglat-pileser I. trägt. Es hat die gleiche Herkunft wie das Sanherib-Fragment VK 6400:6. Der Text auf der Vorderseite hat seine beste Parallele in den „Erweiterten Fünf-Jahres-Annalen“ Tiglat-pilesers I. (A.0.87.2). Die Rückseite enthält Text, der seine größten Parallelen in zwei Inschriften aufweist, die bisher Tiglat-pilesers Sohn Aššur-bēl-kala zugeordnet wurden. Im Jahr 2020 schlug Shibata vor, diese beiden Inschriften eher Tiglat-pileser I. zuzuschreiben. Das Helsinki-Fragment liefert einen Beweis für diese These, da der Text auf seiner Rückseite offenbar ebenfalls Teil der „Erweiterten Fünf-Jahres-Annalen“ war.





Source: *Advances in Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research*  
3, no. 1 (Spring, 2023): 1-27

# THREE CUNEIFORM TEXTS FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FINLAND: PROVENANCE, EDITIONS, AND COMMENTARY<sup>1</sup>

*Johannes Bach and Rick Bonnie*



## Introduction

During preparations for the exhibition *Exploring the Ancient Near East* (Fin. *Tutkimusmatkoja muinaiseen Lähi-itään*),<sup>2</sup> three hitherto unpublished cuneiform texts kept in the Ethnographic Collection of the

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<sup>1</sup> Both authors have contributed equally to this study. We are grateful to Nadia Ait Said-Ghanem, Jacob Jawdat, Jaafar Jotheri, and Pilvi Vainonen for their efforts in providing us with information related to the objects, museums, and dealers discussed, and likewise to Jamie Novotny and Daisuke Shibata for their philological advice.

<sup>2</sup> The exhibition was held at the National Museum of Finland, Helsinki (May 18–September 4, 2022) and at the Museum of Central Finland, Jyväskylä (October 15, 2022 – January 1, 2023). The exhibition was developed and curated by researchers

National Museum of Finland in Helsinki were discovered. The three texts were brought to our attention by Pilvi Vainonen, the collection's curator. After a short contextualization, this article will provide a detailed account regarding the provenance of these three objects as well as a philological treatment of their texts.

Finland has had a long history related to the study of the ancient Near East,<sup>3</sup> including the first professorship in Assyriology in the Nordic countries. As a result, dozens of ancient Near Eastern archaeological objects, mostly cuneiform tablets, have found their way into Finnish museum collections (Bonnie 2022). The large majority of these objects are held by the Finnish Heritage Agency (Fin. *Museovirasto*), to which the National Museum of Finland also belongs.

Several dozens of cuneiform tablets are held in the Archaeological Collection of the Finnish Heritage Agency. These tablets were bought by the Finnish Assyriologist and later ambassador Harri Holma in Paris in 1913, and were almost certainly obtained from the Iraqi-French antiquities dealer Ibrahim Elias Gėjou (Bonnie 2022).<sup>4</sup> The cuneiform tablets have been published by Holma and others in the past.<sup>5</sup>

The three unpublished cuneiform texts discussed in this article, along with a few other objects, are instead held in the Ethnographic Collection of the National Museum of Finland. The difference in collection is due to the specifics of their provenance, as will be explained below.

### 3D Digitization and High-Resolution Photographs

The three cuneiform texts presented in this article first came to light during a study of ancient Near Eastern material held in Finnish collections, which was done in preparation for the above-mentioned recent exhibition. In light of this study, various objects, including these texts,

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from the Centre of Excellence in Ancient Near Eastern Empires at the University of Helsinki.

<sup>3</sup> Aro and Mattila 2007; Bonnie 2022.

<sup>4</sup> On Gėjou, see Dessagnes 2017, 76–119; Ait Said-Ghanem 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Holma 1914; Holma and Salonen 1940; Krecher 1971.



have been digitized in 3D using high-resolution photogrammetry, and they were incorporated into educational packages for Finnish high schools and in the popup exhibition *Baytuna*.<sup>6</sup>

A low-resolution (<100 mb) 3D digitization of the texts is available for viewing through the Sketchfab account of the Finnish Heritage Agency:

- Clay cone VK 5738:2: <https://skfb.ly/o7oEo>;
- Sennacherib prism fragment VK 6400:6: <https://skfb.ly/oqwQt>; and
- Royal inscription VK 6400:5: <https://skfb.ly/orxHs>.

A high-resolution 3D digital model of the three cuneiform texts is available for download via Debenjak-Ijäs, Bonnie, and Saari 2021. Click on the tab “Data,” then open the folder “Making Home Abroad: 3D Digitizations,” and then go to the specific inventory number (click on “Show more” at the bottom if you cannot find it directly):

- “VK5738\_2\_savinaula” (39,92 gb);
- “VK6400\_6\_saviprisma” (40,82 gb); and
- “VK6400\_5\_savitaulu” (38,42 gb).

A download button can be found on the righthand side. The 3D models can be downloaded in various formats, which can be opened in most 3D visualization programs. All photographs on which the 3D digital models are built can be downloaded from the links above. All files are shared under CC0 license.



## VK 5738:2–Gudea Clay Cone (= RIME 3/1.7.63)

### *Provenance*

Clay cone VK 5738:2 (Figures 1 to 4) is part of a collection of six objects (VK 5738:2–7) that were gifted in August 1977 by the Government

<sup>6</sup> For the high-resolution 3D digital models, see Debenjak-Ijäs, Bonnie, and Saari 2021. Lower resolution 3D models can be viewed on Sketchfab: <https://skfb.ly/owLZs>. For more about this project, see [www.makinghomeabroad.fi](http://www.makinghomeabroad.fi).



Figures 1–4: Clay cone VK 5738:2 from the Ethnographic Collection, The National Museum of Finland. Photos by Timo Ahola, reproduced under CC BY 4.0.

of Iraq to the President of Finland, Urho Kekkonen. A delegation of Iraqi officials visited the late President Kekkonen on the occasion of the opening of the *Kaksoisvirranmaan taidetta* (Eng. *Art of the Land of Two Rivers*) traveling exhibition at the Amos Anderson Art Museum in Helsinki.<sup>7</sup> The late President Kekkonen received the gift from this Iraqi delegation, which included the Minister of Information, Tariq Aziz, and the Chief State Archaeologist, during a visit at the President's residence. In autumn of that year, Kekkonen donated the six objects to the National Museum of Finland for safekeeping and conservation, which is how they became part of the Ethnographic Collection.

Aside from the clay cone, the gifted objects included a Syriac incantation bowl (VK 5738:3; see Harviainen 1978), a cylinder seal from Gudea's reign (VK 5738:4), an Abbasid golden *dinar* (VK 5738:5), an Abbasid silver *dirham* (VK 5738:6), and a Zengid copper coin (VK 5738:7).

Along the side of the clay cone, VK 5738:2, a museum inventory number in Arabic that spells "M.K. 2409/224" is handwritten in black pen (Figure 5). This presumably indicates the previous owner of this object, prior to it having been gifted to the late President Kekkonen. In the catalogue entry of the National Museum of Finland, it has been suggested that "M.K." stands for Kirkuk Museum. However, the number is actually used in the Iraq Museum, with M.K. being an abbreviation in Arabic for *mkerer*, meaning "repeated," as in "repeated object."<sup>8</sup>

In April 2013, the Iraqi Embassy in Helsinki requested that the National Museum of Finland returns VK 5738:2 and the other five objects gifted to the late President Kekkonen.<sup>9</sup> The Finnish Heritage Agency, which oversees the National Museum of Finland, ultimately



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<sup>7</sup> This traveling exhibition consisted of objects solely from the Iraq Museum and was shown at the Amos Anderson Art Museum from August 18 to November 13, 1977. It was the first exhibition on ancient Mesopotamia held in Finland. The traveling exhibition was organized by and its circulation fell under the responsibility of the Medelhavet Museum and the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm. The exhibition was first displayed in Stockholm and Oslo before opening in Helsinki, after which it moved to Geneva, Copenhagen, and Hildesheim. See further Styrenius 1977, 80.

<sup>8</sup> We are grateful to Jaafar Jotheri for sharing this information with us.

<sup>9</sup> Yle News 2013; Salminiitty 2020, 13–14.



Figure 5: Inventory number inscribed on clay cone VK 5738:2 from the Ethnographic Collection, The National Museum of Finland.

Photo by Annukka Debenjak-Ijäs, reproduced under CC0.



decided against returning the objects. The reasons given were that the request was deemed to be an unofficial one from the Iraqi government to the Finnish government, and that a review of the documents, laws, and regulations indicated that the objects were legally obtained. The Iraqi government has issued no further requests to return these objects to date.

### Literature

Edzard 1997, 155–56 (E3/1.7.63).

Steible 1991, 361–62 (no. 67).

De Genouillac 1936, 129 and pl. XLVI.

Online edition at ORACC's subproject Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Royal Inscriptions (Zólyomi et al.): <http://oracc.org/etsri/Q000920>.



## Measurements

Length	18.5 cm
Diameter top	7.3 cm
Diameter bottom	1.4 cm

## Edition

### *Transliteration*

1	<sup>d</sup> nin-ḡiš-zi-da
2	diḡir-ra-ni
3	gù-dé-a
4	énsi
5	lagaš <sup>KI</sup>
6	ur- <sup>d</sup> ḡá-tùm-du <sub>10</sub> -ke <sub>4</sub>
7	é-ḡír-su <sup>KI</sup> -ka-ni
8	mu-na-dù

### *Translation*

1–2	For Ningišzida, his (personal) god,
3–5	Gudea, the ruler of Lagaš,
6	man of Gatumdu,
7–8	built his house in Girsu.

### *Commentary*

The cone is in an almost perfect state of preservation, with only some minor damage mainly at the rim of the top knob. The signs are inscribed clearly and correctly, and the text exhibits no orthographic mistakes. Some stylus impressions are elongated. Each line of text is neatly separated by a line that regularly intersects with the top wedges directly below it. Nothing needs to be added to the philological commentaries given in the cited literature.





## VK 6400:6—A Fragment of a Sennacherib Prism Containing Accounts of the Third and Fifth Campaigns

### *Provenance*

The Sennacherib prism fragment VK 6400:6 (Figures 6–9), along with two other objects (including cuneiform text VK 6400:5; see below), was donated to the Ethnographic Collection of the National Museum of Finland in early 2004 by the Finno-Ugrian Society, a learned society in Finland.

The three objects were discovered when the society's storage room was being emptied, and it was decided in a meeting on February 20, 2004, that they, as well as some other objects, would be donated to the



Figures 6–9: Sennacherib prism fragment VK 6400:6 from the Ethnographic Collection, the National Museum of Finland.

Photos by Timo Ahola, reproduced under CC BY 4.0.

National Museum of Finland. A note from the Finno-Ugrian Society that came along with the objects states that the three objects in question were bought by Kai Donner in Paris. Kai Donner (1888–1935) was a Finnish anthropologist and linguist, and a friend of the Assyriologist Harri Holma. Donner’s father was the mentor of Karl Frederik Eneberg, the first Finnish Assyriologist, who in 1876 traveled along with George Smith to Nineveh and passed away there.<sup>10</sup> Donner’s mother, Minette Munck, was once Eneberg’s fiancée. There is no direct or specific information about the year in which Kai Donner bought the three objects in Paris, nor from whom. However, based on other sources it is likely that the objects were bought from the Iraqi-French antiquities dealer Ibrahim Elias Gėjou (1868–1942) in 1913.

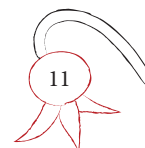
In Holma and Salonen’s publication (1940, 9–10) of some of the cuneiform tablets held in Helsinki, Holma writes: “Some time before the outbreak of the Great War my friend Kai Donner (d. 1935) ... and myself purchased from a Parisian dealer thirty-nine Babylonian cuneiform tablets.” As we noted in the introduction, these tablets are currently all held in the Archaeological Collection of the Finnish Heritage Agency. It can be presumed that the three objects that Kai Donner placed with the Finno-Ugrian Society were bought from that same Parisian dealer. This might have been around the same time, but it is equally possible that this was earlier or later.

Aside from cuneiform tablets, Holma also bought a complete Neo-Babylonian clay cylinder in Paris in 1913, which was specifically purchased for inclusion in the collections of the National Museum. Clay cylinder KM 6560 entered the museum’s collection in January 1914. Its description states specifically that it was bought for the sum of 750 Finnish marks from the antiquities dealer “I.E. Gėjou” in Paris (Bonnie 2022, 252). This clay cylinder is currently being prepared for publication (Debourse and Bonnie, Forthcoming). Based on this purchase, it is likely that the other cuneiform-inscribed objects bought in Paris also came from the same dealer.

During his career, Ibrahim Elias Gėjou came upon and sold several octagonal prisms inscribed with the annals of Sennacherib, both

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<sup>10</sup> On Eneberg, see Aro and Matilla 2007; Bonnie 2022.



complete and fragmentary. In 1909, Gėjou sold the British Museum the complete octagonal prism BM 103000 (see Ait Said-Ghanem, Forthcoming for a study of its provenance) as well as a small fragment of an octagonal prism (BM 102996). Both preserve Sennacherib 17 (see Grayson and Novotny 2012, 126). The following year, in 1910, Gėjou again sold several fragments inscribed with the *Annals of Sennacherib* on an octagonal prism to the British Museum (BM 103214, 103216, 103217, 103219, and 103220), which partially preserve Sennacherib 16 (Grayson and Novotny 2012, 107). An additional fragment to this latter text was purchased by the British Museum from Gėjou in 1913 (1913-4-16, 160a).

Although the exact acquisition date of Sennacherib fragment VK 6400:6 is unknown, it is likely that if it were purchased from Gėjou it would have been at some point between 1910 and 1913, when this antiquities dealer was selling numerous fragments of octagonal prisms inscribed with the *Annals of Sennacherib*. Considering the known circumstances around the acquisition of VK 6400:6, it is very likely that this fragment (as well as VK 6400:5; see below) was acquired by the antiquities dealer Gėjou and sold on further to Kai Donner in contravention of the Ottoman Antiquities Law of 1906.<sup>11</sup>



### Literature

Grayson and Novotny 2012, 88–164, 167–203 (with detailed bibliography).

### Measures

Height	5.6 cm
Width	6.9 cm
Thickness	2.9 cm
Angle	ca. 130°

<sup>11</sup> E.g., Shaw 2003, 126–30; Kersel 2010, 86; Al Khabour 2023, 96.

## Edition

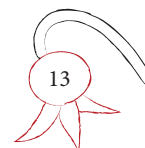
### Transliteration

#### col. I'

- 0' [ù<sup>m</sup>ha-za-qi-a-ú<sup>kur</sup>ia-ú-da-a-a]  
 1' [ša la ik-nu-šu a-na ni]-<sup>r</sup>ri<sup>1</sup>-ia  
 2' [46 URU<sup>MEŠ</sup>-šú É BÀ]D<sup>MEŠ</sup>-ni  
 3' [dan-nu-ti ù URU<sup>MEŠ</sup> TUR<sup>MEŠ</sup> ša li-me-ti]-šú-nu  
 4' [ša ni-ba la i-šu-ú i-na šuk-bu-u]s a-ram-me  
 5' [ù qit-ru-ub šu-pe-e mit-ḥu]-<sup>r</sup>šu<sup>1</sup> <sup>r</sup>zu<sup>1</sup>-uk GÌR<sub>II</sub>  
 6' [pil-ši nik-si ù kal-b]an-na-te al-me KUR-ud  
 7' [2 ME LIM 1 ME 50 UN<sup>M</sup>]EŠ TUR GAL NITA ù MUNUS  
 8' [ANŠE.KUR.RA<sup>MEŠ</sup> ANŠE.KUN]GA<sup>MEŠ</sup> ANŠE<sup>MEŠ</sup> ANŠE.GAM.MAL<sup>MEŠ</sup>  
 9' [GU<sub>4</sub><sup>MEŠ</sup> ù US<sub>5</sub>.UDU<sup>LA</sup> š]a la ni-bi ul-tu qer-bi-šú-un  
 10' [ú-še-ša-am-ma šal-la]-ti-iš am-nu  
 11' [šá-a-šú GIM MUŠEN qu-up-pi] <sup>r</sup>qé<sup>1</sup>-reb<sup>URU</sup> ur-sa-li-mu  
 12' [URU LUGAL-ti-šú e-sír-šú] <sup>URU</sup>ḥal-šu<sup>MEŠ</sup> UGU-[š]ú  
 13' [ú-rak-kis-ma a-šé]-<sup>r</sup>e<sup>r</sup> KÁ.GAL <sup>r</sup>URU<sup>r</sup>-<sup>r</sup>šú<sup>r</sup>  
 14' [ú-te-ra ik-ki-bu-u]š URU<sup>M</sup>[EŠ-šú ša aš-lu-la]

#### col. II'

- 1' <sup>r</sup>a<sup>r</sup>-na-ku <sup>r</sup>i<sup>r</sup>-<sup>r</sup>na<sup>r</sup> [GÌŠGU.ZA né-me-di it-ti ERIM<sup>MEŠ</sup>]  
 2' <sup>r</sup>ta<sup>r</sup>-ḥa-zi-<sup>r</sup>ia<sup>r</sup> [gít-ma-lu-ti i-na né-re-bi-šú-un]  
 3' <sup>r</sup>pi<sup>r</sup>-qu-ti š[u-nu-ḥi-iš e-ru-um-ma mar-ši-iš]  
 4' e-te-el-l[a-a ŠU-SI<sup>MEŠ</sup> KUR<sup>MEŠ</sup> pa-áš-qa-a-ti]  
 5' <sup>r</sup>šu<sup>r</sup>-ú<sup>1</sup>ma-ni-i[a-e tur-bu-u<sup>r</sup> GÌR<sub>II</sub> ERIM<sup>HL.A</sup>-ia]  
 6' <sup>r</sup>e<sup>r</sup>-mur-ma <sup>URU</sup><sup>r</sup>uk<sup>r</sup>-[ku URU LUGAL-ti-šú e-zib-ma]  
 7' <sup>r</sup>a<sup>r</sup>-na ru-qé-e-t[i in-na-bit <sup>URU</sup>uk-ku al-me KUR-ud]  
 8' <sup>r</sup>áš<sup>r</sup>-lu-la šal-la-s[u mim-ma šum-šú NÍG.ŠU NÍG.GA]  
 9' <sup>r</sup>ni<sup>r</sup>-šir-ti <sup>r</sup>É.GAL<sup>r</sup>-[šú ul-tu-qer-bi-šu]  
 10' <sup>r</sup>ú<sup>r</sup>-še-ša-am-ma šal-[la-tiš am-nu]  
 11' [ù 35 UR]U<sup>MEŠ</sup> ša pa-[a-ṭi li-me-ti-šú]  
 12' [ak-šud<sup>ud</sup>-ma UN<sup>MEŠ</sup>] <sup>r</sup>GU<sub>4</sub><sup>MEŠ</sup><sup>r</sup> [ù še-e-ni ANŠE.MEŠ]  
 13' [áš-lu-la ap-pu-ul aq-qur ina <sup>d</sup>GÌŠ.BAR aq-mu]



*Translation*

col. I'

[(Hezekiah ...) who had not submitted to my yo]ke—I surrounded (and) conquered [forty-six of his fortified wall]ed [cities and small(er) settlements in] their [environs, which were without number, by having] ramps [trodden dow]n [and battering rams brought up, the assault] of foot soldiers, [sapping, breaching, and siege] engines. [I brought] out of them [200,150 peopl]e, young (and) old, male and female, [horses, mul] es, donkeys, camels, [oxen, and sheep and goats, wh]ich were without number, and counted (them) a[s booty. As for him (Hezekiah), I confined him] inside the city of Jerusalem, [his royal city, like a bird in a cage. I set up] blockades against hi[m and made him dread exiting] his city gate. The citi[es of his that I had plundered...]



col. II'

(..., and) I myself, in [an armchair, with my crack] combat [troops, entered their] narrow [passes with great difficulty and] ascend[ed with struggle the steep mountain peaks.] He, Maniy[e,] saw [the dust cloud (stirred up) by the feet of my troops], then [he abandoned the city] Uk[ku, his royal city, and fled] afar. [I surrounded, conquered, (and)] plundered [the city Ukku. I brought out of it every kind of possession (and) property,] the treasures of his palace, and [I counted (it) as boo] ty. [Moreover, I conquered thirty-five cit]ies on the bor[ders of its out-skirts and carried off people], oxen, [and sheep and goats, (and) don- keys. (Then) I destroyed (them) devastated (them), (and) burned (them) with fire.]

*Commentary*

The text on this fragment has several parallels among Sennacherib's prism inscriptions. The account on the third campaign including the Siege of Jerusalem is also preserved in Senn. 4, 15–19, and 22–23; the report on the fifth campaign including the Maniye episode is attested in Senn. 16–19 and 22–23. Restorations and translation follow Senn. 17, iii 39–57 and iv 47–59; see Grayson and Novotny 2012, RINAP 3/1, 132–133 and 135. With all due caution in respect of the partially low numbers of preserved manuscripts, some orthographic features



support this choice: In col. i' 2', the Helsinki fragment uses the phonetic complement *-ni* after the logogram [... BÀ]D<sup>MEŠ</sup>, and in col. i' 6' it shows a gen. pl. fem. ending in *-āte*, [(*ina*) ... *kal-b*]an-na-te. This combination coincides only with the orthography displayed by Senn. 17; all other potentially related inscriptions exhibit either one of these two writings but never both together. The Helsinki fragment differs in some other orthographic aspects as well, for example in the use of *ù* and the spelling <sup>URU</sup>*ur-sa-li-mu* instead of <sup>URU</sup>*ur-sa-li-ma*.<sup>12</sup> Senn. 16 could be another potential text of comparison, as it is likewise recorded on an octagonal prism. Its only difference to the Helsinki fragment is using TE instead of TI as the final sign for writing the word *kalbanāti/e*. Likewise, Senn. 18 does not have these two particular words nor the Maniye episode preserved but would remain another potential candidate as it is the successor version to Senn. 17. Scores for the cited inscriptions are provided on the CD-ROMs accompanying the physical copies of RINAP 3/1 and RINAP 3/2, and on the corresponding homepages of the RINAP 3 subproject on ORACC.<sup>13</sup> The angle between the two preserved sides of the Helsinki fragment measures at ca. 130°, which points to it originally belonging to an octagonal prism.<sup>14</sup> The line arrangement of the Helsinki fragment is peculiar and does not match any of those given in the scores. Each sentence is written over two lines, which indicates that the prism had narrower columns than was customary in older prisms. The clay supports on which Senn. 17 is preserved are octagonal prisms, a shape that matches the Helsinki fragment. It therefore seems possible that the Helsinki fragment is a copy of Senn. 17 with differing linea-



<sup>12</sup> We thank Nadia Ait Said-Ghanem for this information. On textual criticism and royal texts, cf. Howard 2017; Howard 2020; Lauinger 2015; Worthington 2012.

<sup>13</sup> <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/scores/>.

<sup>14</sup> On the different types of clay supports inscribed with Sennacherib's royal inscriptions, see Grayson and Novotny 2012, 2–6; cf. the overview at ORACC's RINAP 3 sub-project (<http://oracc.org/rinap/rinap3/rinap3introduction/surveyoftheinscribedobjectsincludedinpart1/>). The measurement of the Helsinki fragment's angle was taken by the collection's curator Pilvi Vainonen on March 24, 2021. Ideally for an octagonal prism, the measurement for a single angle should be 135°, corresponding to an angle sum of 1080°.

tion, but other options remain valid as well (e.g., intermediate version between Senn. 17 and Senn. 18, or copy of Senn. 18 with deviating line arrangement).

## VK 6400:5—A Partially Unknown Royal Inscription of Tiglath-pileser I<sup>15</sup>

### *Provenance*

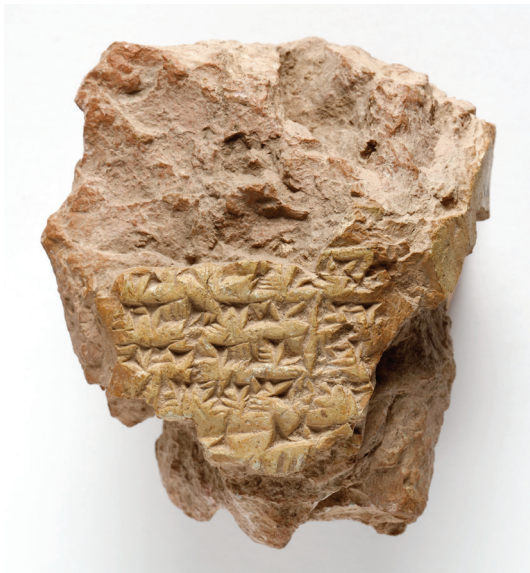
Royal inscription VK 6400:5 (Figures 10 and 11) has the same provenance information as Sennacherib prism fragment VK 6400:6. See further above.



### **Literature**

Grayson 1991, 31–35 (Tiglath-pileser I inscription A.0.87.2) and 86–112 (inscriptions of Aššur-bēl-kala).

Shibata 2022.



Figures 10–11: Royal inscription VK 6400:5 from the Ethnographic Collection, the National Museum of Finland. Photos by Timo Ahola, reproduced under CC BY 4.0.

<sup>15</sup> I (JB) thank Jamie Novotny, Daisuke Shibata, and the peer reviewer of this article for their philological advice and general help.



Online editions of the royal inscriptions of Aššur-bēl-kala and his father Tiglath-pileser I are available at the Royal Inscriptions of Assyria Online subproject at ORACC: <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/riao/>.

### Measurements

Height 7.3 cm

Width 6.1 cm

Thickness 5.1 cm

A striking feature of the Helsinki manuscript is its thickness of about 5 centimeters. Such thicknesses are known from other tablets attributed to the reign of Tiglath-pileser I. Judging from the photos provided online by the British Museum, some fragmentary manuscripts (K 2804; K 2806) of the “Extended Five-Year-Annals of Tiglath-pileser I” (A.0.87.2) have thicknesses comparable to that of the Helsinki fragment. The fragment’s thickness also implies that the original tablet was larger in size. Dominique Charpin (2010, 75) gives average measurements of 36 × 33 × 4–5 centimeters for large tablets. Jonathan Taylor (2011, 8) gives an average surface size of 30–40 square centimeters at a thickness of 4–8 centimeters. Two Middle Assyrian royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser I today housed in the Schøyen Collection in Oslo have thicknesses of 3.3 and 3.5 centimeters, respectively (CUSAS 17, no. 68 and no. 69). The former is completely preserved, with a surface measure of 19.7 × 14.5 centimeters, while the latter is only preserved as a fragment (the remaining surface measures 6.9 × 8.7 cm). For further comparison regarding surface sizes, some examples from the Neo-Assyrian period might be of interest: the tablet of “Sargon’s Eighth campaign,” carrying 430 lines of text, measures about 37 × 24 × 4 centimeters,<sup>16</sup> and K 3751, the surviving half of a tablet presumably from the 17th *palû* of Tiglath-pileser III, which carries a long summary inscription (86 lines preserved), is 23.4 centimeters wide<sup>17</sup> and must have once been about 40 centimeters in height (17.5 cm preserved) at a thickness of up to



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<sup>16</sup> <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010166028>.

<sup>17</sup> Tadmor and Yamada 2011, 115–25.

4 centimeters.<sup>18</sup> The cited evidence suggests that the Helsinki inscription was quite long, too.

## Edition

### Transliteration

#### Obverse

- 1' [KUR a-bé-eš-la-a-ia<sup>MEŠ</sup> ERIM<sup>MEŠ</sup> KUR ḥa-te-e la-a ka-ni-še al-qa-a a-na  
UN<sup>MEŠ</sup> KUR-ti-ia am-nu]-ú [(blank)]
- 
- 2' [... IdIŠKUR<sup>?</sup>-ER]ÍN.TÁḤ AD-ia [(MAN<sup>?</sup>)]
- 3' [(KUR a-šur<sup>?</sup>) ... KUR lu-lu-mi-i a]-<sup>7</sup>na<sup>7</sup> si-ḥír-ti-[ša]
- 4' [ak-šud 25 DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-ni-šu-nu ana ... d<sup>i</sup>š<sub>8</sub>-tár aš-šu-ri-te  
DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-ni ša URU-i]a<sup>d</sup>a-šur<sup>KI</sup>
- 5' [ù<sup>d</sup>INANNA<sup>MEŠ</sup>Ša<sup>1</sup> KUR-ti-ia a-qiš NÍG.GA-šu-nu a-na d<sup>i</sup>škur EN-ia  
á]š-ru-u[k]
- 
- 6' [i-na GIŠTUKUL-ti aš-šur EN-ia KUR.KUR na-i-ri DAGAL<sup>MEŠ</sup> iš-tu  
KURtum<sub>4</sub>-me a-di KUR da-ie-e-ni] ù A.AB.B[A]
- 7' [e-le-ni-te (ša SILIM-mu<sup>d</sup>UTU/šam-ši) ak-sud 30 LUGAL<sup>MEŠ</sup>-ni-šu-nu  
a-na GÌR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-ia ú-šék-niš ina ap-pi]-<sup>7</sup>šu-nu<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup>ki<sup>7</sup>-ma [GU<sub>4</sub>]
- 8' [šer-re-ta at-ta-di a-na URU-ia<sup>d</sup>a-šur<sup>(KI)</sup> al-qa-šu-nu li-tí-šu-nu  
aš-bat GUN u ta-mar-ta UGU]-<sup>7</sup>šu-nu<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup>ú-kín<sup>7</sup>
- 
- 9' [aḥ-la-mi ar-ma-ia<sup>MEŠ</sup> iš-tu tar-ši KURsu-ḥi a-di URUKar-ga-miš ša  
KURḥa-at-te ina 1 u<sub>4</sub>-me aḥ-bu-ut EGIR-šu-nu i-na GIŠMÁ<sup>ME</sup>Š]

#### Reverse

- [...]
- 1' [i-na siq-ir/ri<sup>d</sup>a-šur<sup>d</sup>IŠKUR ... EGIR<sup>KUR</sup>] Ḥa<sup>1</sup>-ri-me ša MU 1.KÁ[M]
- 2' [2<sup>?</sup>-šu<sup>id</sup>pu-rat-ta lu-ú e-te-bir iš-tu... ...-<sup>7</sup>a-da-i]a<sup>?</sup>MEŠ su-te<sub>9</sub>-e<sup>M</sup>[EŠ]
- 3' [KURna-<sup>7</sup>a-...<sup>?</sup> ...] Ḥa<sup>1</sup>-di DAM<sup>MEŠ</sup>-šu-nu DUMU<sup>M</sup>[EŠ-šu-nu...]
- 4' [URUPit-ru ... ša GÌR<sup>MEŠ</sup>] am<sup>!</sup>-ma-a-te ša UGU í<sup>d</sup>[sa-gu-ra]
- 5' [(...) lu-ú ak-šu-ud... ...-šu]-nu-ti [...]
- 6' (traces of the tops of signs) [...]

<sup>18</sup> Reade 2017, 176.

*Translation*

Obverse

[I subdued the rebellious and insubmissive Šubaru. I took 4,000 Urumu (and) Abešlu, insubmissive troops of Ḫatti, (and) regard]ed [them as people of my land].

[... Adad<sup>?</sup>]-nārārī (I), my (fore-)father, [(king of Aššur)<sup>?</sup>. I conquered t]he entire land [of the Lullumu. I gave 25 of their gods to the deities Ninlil, Anu, Adad, and the Assyrian Ištar, the gods of m]y [city] Aššur and the goddesses of my land. I] gav[e their property to the god Adad, my lord.]

[With the support of the god Aššur], my lord, I conquered the extensive lands Nairi from the land Tummū to the land Daiēnu] and the [Upper] Se[a] [in the west. I subdued 30 of their kings.] Like [oxen, to their noses I attached ropes (and) took them to my city Aššur. I took hostages from them]. I [imposed upon them tribute and impost.]

[I plundered [the Aḫlamû-Arameans from the edge of the land Sūḫu to the city Carchemish of the land Ḫatti in a single day. I crossed the Euphrates after them in rafts] (...).

Reverse

[By the command of Aššur and Adad ... in pursuit of the A]rameans, during which within one yea[r I did cross the Euphrates twice, from ... the ...-a'dai]u, the Sutu, [the Na'a-..., ...] besides their women and sons/children. [The city of *Pitru* which is on the opposite bank,] on the R[iver Sagurri I did conquer ... (I) ... t]heir [...].

*Commentary*

If the proposed reconstruction of the text is correct, the side containing the Lullumu episode must be the obverse, since in the inscription A.0.87.4 of Tiglath-pileser I the episode on the multiple Euphrates crossings in one year in pursuit of the Aḫlamû-Arameans is relayed only later (cf. A.0.87.4, 20–21 and 34–36).



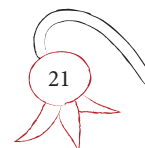
Obverse

For the obverse, the best parallel seems to be lines 21–28 of the Extended Five-Year-Annals of Tiglath-pileser I (A.0.87.2). I want to thank and give credit to the anonymous peer reviewer for their important comments on this part of the text, which I am following.

- 1’ The spacious arrangement of the signs of at least the last word in this line is indicated by the solitary appearance of the Ū-sign. There is only little space left toward the right edge of the tablet. It is therefore possible that the line’s single preserved sign is the end of a verbal form, either in 3rd pl or subordinated 3rd sg. However, in the proposed reconstruction this would result in a spelling *am-nu-ú* for *amnu* 1st preterite G of *manû* “to count.” Plene spellings of the 1st sg preterite of *manû* G are attested only in royal inscriptions since Tiglath-pileser III. Alternatively, and possibly less likely, one could propose that the wording of this line was slightly different from the assumed parallel line A.0.87.2, (21–)22. Instead of <sup>21</sup>4 *līm Urumaya Abešlaya ...* <sup>22</sup>... *ana nišē mātīya amnu* “4,000 Urumayu and Abešlayu ... I counted them to the / regarded them as people of my land,” the line could have ended in something along the lines of [... *ana mātīya / āliya Aššur*] *ú-[bil]* “([4,000 Urumayu and Abešlayu ...]) I [sent to my land / my city of Aššur]. The spelling *ú-bil* for the 1st sg preterite of (*w*)*abālu* G is attested twice in the corpus of Middle Assyrian royal inscriptions (A.0.76.21, 14’; A.0.78.1001, obv. 10’). However, the line as proposed here as an alternative reconstruction has no known parallel in the texts of Tiglath-pileser I. Yet another alternative would be to consider whether the line had an altogether different content than A.0.87.2, 21–22, or whether the single *ú* is the beginning of a verbal form *ú-te-er/ter*, which would match the end of A.0.87.2, 20 (here spelled *ú-te-er*). Lines A.0.87.2, 21–22 would have been elided then in the Helsinki manuscript, and its narrative would have continued with a modified version of the summary report on the conquest of Lullumu (A.0.87.2, 23–24).
- 2’ || - / A.0.87.2, 18’. No exact parallel to this line is attested. The mention of a royal predecessor at this point in the narrative,



assuming that the narrative in question is a military and not a building report, would be unexpected but not without precedent. Historical analepsis has been attested since the Old Assyrian period but before Adad-nārārī largely only in building reports (exceptions are A.0.39.1, 12–17; A.0.39.2, i 14–18; A.0.40.1001, 5). Since Adad-nārārī I, historical analepsis may also occur in the introductory section’s filiation (cf., e.g., A.0.76.1, 18–26). Another inscription of Adad-nārārī I contains a highly fragmentary attestation of a (probable) historical analepsis referencing his royal predecessor Enlil-nārārī within a military report (A.0.76.21, 5–8’). Only two more examples of historical-military analepsis are known from his successors’ inscriptions, one of which does not (A.0.77.1, 47–48) and one of which does (A.0.78.1, iii 30–34) reference events from the reign of a forefather. On the other hand, extensive analepsis with explicit recourse to the military deeds of the king’s predecessors is attested in the royal epics (cf., e.g., Tukulti-Ninurta Epic ii = A obv. 26’–37’). One additional example hails from that very Tiglath-pileser inscription proposed as being parallel to the Helsinki manuscript, A.0.87.2, line 18. It remains unclear how much of the beginning of the line is lost, but ex. 3 preserves *a-bi-ia* “... my (fore-)father” before the summary narrative of the victory over the Mušku ensues. The discussed line of A.0.87.2 does not connect to the Helsinki fragment. The beginning of the corresponding line 23 that would connect to the following line 3’ of the Helsinki fragment is not preserved for A.0.87.2 and is reconstructed based on the Lullumu episode of inscription A.0.87.4. Theoretically, this would allow the proposition of an initial analepsis for A.0.87.2, 23, which would (could) correspond to line 2’ of the Helsinki manuscript. If so, a reconstruction of the royal name as [ ... <sup>ld</sup>IŠKUR-ER]ÍN.TÁḪ = Adad-nārārī would be fitting. The episode under discussion reports on a military victory of Tiglath-pileser I over Lullumu, while Adad-nārārī I notably included a victory over Lullumu in his titulary (cf. A.0.76.1, 3–4). There is some damaged space left at the end of line 2’ that probably could have accommodated only one sign. If a sign were to follow, then it should probably belong



to a short apposition to the royal name, for example in the form of a title like “king (or: viceroy) of Aššur.” Line 2’ could have ended with a corresponding sign, likely ŠID (*iššiakku*) or MAN (*šarru*), but then the second element of the title, <sup>(KUR)</sup>Aššur, must have been shifted to the next line.

3’–5’ || A.0.87.2, 23–24. Tiglath-pileser I makes frequent use of the expression *ana siḫirtīšu* “in its totality” in the military narrative of his inscriptions.<sup>19</sup> Two further royal acts of donating to a deity constructed with *šarāku* “to gift, donate” are attested in another Tiglath-pileser I inscription.<sup>20</sup>

6’–8’ || A.0.87.2, 25–27. In 8’, only faint traces of the signs ŠU and NU are visible at the damaged lefthand side of the line; likewise, it is so regarding the sign KÍN at the righthand end of the line. After 8’, faint traces of a line ruling are preserved, which match the separation of the text into paragraphs by line rulings in obv. 1’ and 5’.

9’ || A.0.87.2, 28.



### Reverse

The text on the reverse of the tablet seems to be closely related to inscriptions which hitherto have been attributed to Aššur-bēl-kala (A.0.89.6; A.0.89.9). Recently, Daisuke Shibata (2022) could demonstrate that the so-called “Broken Obelisk” (A.0.89.7) as well as the two royal inscriptions just cited rather must be attributed to Aššur-bēl-kala’s father, Tiglath-pileser I. Shibata’s proposal is followed here. The report on the double Euphrates crossing also appears, in differing versions, in some other texts of Tiglath-pileser I (cf. A.0.87.3, 29–31; A.0.87.4, 34–36; A.0.87.31, 19–23).<sup>21</sup> The restorations of the Helsinki fragment offered here are based on these inscriptions. The line arrangement of

<sup>19</sup> A.0.87.1, *passim*. See further A.0.87.2–A.0.87.5; A.0.87.10; A.0.87.13.

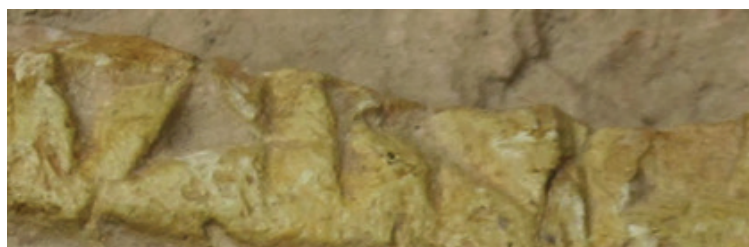
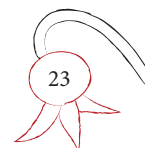
<sup>20</sup> A.0.87.1, ii 61–62: 60 (copper kettles “together with their gods” for Adad); iv 32–39: 25 (gods from the lands of the Paphu and Ḫabḫu to various deities and temples).

<sup>21</sup> This inscription can be found only on ORACC (cf. <http://oracc.iaas.upenn.edu/riao/ria3/Q006686/html>).



the obverse of the Helsinki manuscript is curious, since it seems to have covered considerably more text in a single line than the parallel version A.0.89.6. The Helsinki text appears to be also only roughly in sync with the lineation of A.0.89.9. It is most likely a summary inscription in the style of A.0.89.6 and A.0.89.9 without exactly duplicating their wording. As far as is discernible, the narrative of the Helsinki text is considerably closer to these inscriptions than to A.0.87.3; A.0.87.4; and A.0.87.10:

1' || A.0.89.6, 6'-7'; A.0.89.9, 3'-4'. A.0.89.6' spells  $[i-na\ si-qi]r$ , while A.0.89.9, 3' spells  $i-na\ siq-ri$ . The spelling <sup>KUR</sup> $a-ri-me$  "Arameans" is not attested in the cited parallels, which have <sup>KUR</sup> $a-ra-me$  and <sup>KUR</sup> $a-ri-mi^{MEŠ}$ , respectively. However, and notably, the spelling <sup>KUR</sup> $a-ri-me$  is attested abundantly in column iii of A.0.89.7, the "Broken Obelisk." Otherwise, it occurs also once in A.0.89.3, 6', an inscription of Aššur-bēl-kala. The signs RI and ME are not clearly visible on the officially issued photo of the Helsinki manuscript reproduced in this article (see below) but do come out better in a private photo taken by one of the authors of this essay on June 4, 2019. The sign ME is spaciouly written.



[... <sup>KUR</sup>] ṛa<sup>1</sup>      -ri      -me

That spelling <sup>KUR</sup> $a-ri-me$  might indicate a time of writing of the Helsinki text around the same period of Tiglath-pileser I's reign when the "Broken Obelisk" was created. According to Shibata, this happened in the fourth decade of Tiglath-pileser I's reign, after his calendar reform (cf. Shibata 2022, 109, 123). This would also indicate that the Helsinki text, or rather at least the text on the reverse of the Helsinki tablet, likewise is a late version of Tiglath-pileser's annals. However, the content of the Helsinki text, like A.0.89.6 and A.0.89.9, is not directly connectable with the Aramean episodes narrated in the text of the "Broken Obelisk" but is closer to that of A.0.89.6 and especially A.0.89.9.



2' || A.0.89.6, 10'; A.0.89.9, 5'; A.0.87.10, 94 (colophon). The spelling *su-te<sub>9</sub>-e* “Suteans,” which only occurs in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser I, is a weighty indicator for attributing the Helsinki fragment to this ruler.

3' || – ; –. The signs that follow <sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-di read as MUNUS<sup>MEŠ</sup>-šu-nu, which must be a mistake of incompleteness for an expected DAM<sup>MEŠ</sup>-šu-nu (on the error type of incomplete signs, see Worthington 2012, 106–7). The following DUMU<sup>M</sup>[<sup>ES</sup>-šu-nu] would suit well to an emended reading DAM, as a similar sequence “his wives (and) his natural sons” is attested in the Five-Year-Annals of Tiglath-pileser I (A.0.87.1, ii 28–29: ... DAM<sup>MEŠ</sup>-šu DUMU<sup>MEŠ</sup> nab-ni-it šà-bi-šu...). MUNUS = *sinništu* is rarely used in Assyrian royal inscriptions, and only appears in texts from the first millennium BCE.

4' || A.0.89.6, 13'; A.0.89.9, 8'. Although only the HI-element of an expected AM-sign is discernible while any horizontal wedges apparently are missing, the parallel A.0.89.6, 13' confirms this emendation.

5' || – ; –. The two preserved signs NU and TI probably form the end of a possessive suffix 3rd pl masc. acc. -šunūti “their.” The river name Sagura (NAss Sagurri) is restored after A.0.89.9, 8' (cf. Cancik-Kirschbaum and Hess 2016, 117). On suggestion by Daisuke Shibata, the name of the conquered place lost in the lacuna can be confidently restored as “Pitru,” where Tiglath-pileser I had built a fort.<sup>22</sup>

The Helsinki tablet provides a curious case. While the obverse is clearly connectable to early versions of Tiglath-pileser I's annals (A.0.87.2; A.0.87.3; A.0.87.4; A.0.87.31), the reverse resembles the fragmentary texts A.0.89.6 and A.0.89.9, and the spelling of the name of the Aramean lands as <sup>KUR</sup>a-ri-me connects the Helsinki tablet to the “Broken Obelisk.” The Helsinki tablet makes it appear possible that the Aramean episode of A.0.89.6 and A.0.89.9 was located on the broken reverses of the tablets making up inscription A.0.87.2. If so, one would assume that the Aramean episode references events from the first ten regnal years of Tiglath-pileser I, while the spelling <sup>KUR</sup>a-ri-me that connects the text

<sup>22</sup> cf. Cancik-Kirschbaum and Hess 2016, 14, s.v. *Ana-Aššur-utēr-ašbat*; Younger 2016, 138–39, 170, 172, 190; 2017, 210.



to the “Broken Obelisk” might indicate that the text itself was written much later, likely in chronological vicinity to the creation of the “Broken Obelisk” in the fourth decade of Tiglath-pileser I’s rule. Furthermore, if the proposed reconstruction is accepted (for which I once more want to give credit to the unnamed reviewer of this article), it would provide proof of the propositions made by Shibata (2020) regarding the attributions of A.0.89.6 and A.0.89.9. Together with the Helsinki tablet, there seems to have been at least four different versions of the text (A.0.87.2; A.0.89.6; A.0.89.9; Helsinki text), presumably the products of modifications over time.

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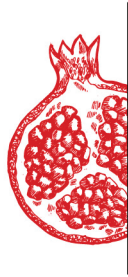
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**AABNER**

ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL  
AND NEAR EASTERN RESEARCH

## **EDITORIAL: CONSIDERING PUBLICATION ETHICS FOR AABNER**

***Izaak J. de Hulster, Valérie Nicolet,  
Ronit Nikolsky, and Jason M. Silverman***

Source: *Advances in Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research*  
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## Abstract

The inaugurating editors-in-chief of *AABNER* reflect on ethical practices when it comes to publishing, in dialogue with Dong Hyeon Jeong's reflection on diversity in academics and Leah Stanley's study of citational practices.

Les éditeurs-en-chef initiaux d'*AABNER* réfléchissent à des pratiques éthiques en matière d'édition, en dialogue avec la réflexion de Dong Hyeon Jeong sur la diversité dans le monde académique et l'étude de Leah Stanley à propos des habitudes de citation.



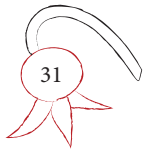




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## **EDITORIAL: CONSIDERING PUBLICATION ETHICS FOR AABNER**

*Izaak J. de Hulster, Valérie Nicolet,  
Ronit Nikolsky, and Jason M. Silverman*



### **Introduction**

We inaugurated the first issue of *AABNER* two-and-a-half years ago in July of 2021. We indicated our reasons for starting the journal in the editorial of the first issue (de Hulster et al. 2021a, 3–12). In that editorial, we also indicated that we were planning to discuss our position vis-à-vis several problems that plague the academic world (2021a, 9), such as questionable or unethical citational practices, a lack of diversity, and a decline in communal integrity. In this issue, we include a section about ethical practices in publishing. These reflections, which seek to open dialogue and shape guidelines for good publishing practice rather than propose a universal editorial policy, have been nourished by ongoing discussions among us four as the inaugural editors-in-chief of *AABNER*. They have been further stimulated by a meeting held before the start of EABS 2022 in Toulouse. Dong Hyeon Jeong and Leah Stanley presented papers that are now part of this issue. Andrew Mein

and Jorunn Økland responded to these papers during the session. The conversation that these contributions initiated has led to our efforts to define what we believe stands at the heart of *AABNER*'s good publishing practice guidelines. We editors view this very much as the beginning of a discussion about ethical practices as a community together with the field editors and contributors to the journal. Many more themes remain to be addressed than we have been able to include in this present section. We welcome reactions and/or submissions in various forms (research or opinion articles, letters to the editors) from fellow scholars on these and other ethical issues.

Dong Hyeon Jeong in his contribution reminds us that biblical studies have “recently been checked for its lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion.” Often, as Jeong also remarks, publishing houses and journals aim to breathe some diversity and inclusivity in their systems, “lest [they] be accused of racism, sexism, classism, and other-isms.” In these responses, fear of being singled out for bad practices acts as a motivator for policies that seem more inclusive on the surface. It is one thing to avoid the appearance of exclusivity, but it is another to find practical solutions for actual inclusivity. *AABNER* wants to develop guidelines that are not governed by virtue signaling but that actively improve the field. In its essence, *AABNER* aims to be diverse, to work toward equity and inclusion, and to play its part in changing the ethics of the field of ancient, Near Eastern, and biblical studies.

We, as inaugurating editors-in-chief, acknowledge that we can only play this role with humility, with genuine concern, and with diligent effort, and that we will fall short of our ideals. However, we also see the possibilities and opportunities provided by diamond open access and forum peer review to enable the execution of these ideas. Thus, we propose the following good practice guidelines to orient our publishing ethics.

## Promotion of Distinctive Scholarship

We recognize the need, as Jeong writes, to disrupt the Eurocentric/US-centric standards of good scholarship. We are also aware of the tensions



in Eurocentric/US-centric scholarship between what is considered “objective” or “neutral” scholarship (often the universalized standards of Enlightenment European scholarship) and what are deemed marginalized, contextualized, approaches or non-traditional perspectives.<sup>1</sup>

To disrupt Eurocentric/US-centric criteria of what is deemed good scholarship, *AABNER* will insist on publishing scholarship from a diverse set of authors using a diverse set of methodologies. To reach this goal, our forum-peer-review system aims to drive a wedge between the traditional peer-review system where older, more established scholars decide what is part of relevant scholarship in our field. *AABNER*’s form of peer review has a group of scholars under supervision of a field editor discuss an anonymized manuscript; the field editor summarizes the exchange and gets back to the author. It allows for innovative contributions to be published, because they use new methodologies, or map out new fields, or display interdisciplinarity.<sup>2</sup> It also helps scholars interact with each other, as they discuss scholarship and their criticisms of it in an unpretentious and constructive way.

The goal is to make louder and more visible the voices of scholars that enable new ways of looking at our texts or material, or present new material. We thus encourage scholars whose contributions have been rejected elsewhere because they were too daring, too different, or too innovative to submit their work to *AABNER* so it can undergo our forum-peer-review process. *AABNER* is built on the conviction that scholarly communities that interact with each other constructively are able to produce higher-quality work. We make this argument on both ethical and academic grounds.



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<sup>1</sup> See one of the editor-in-chief’s contribution to this discussion: Nicolet 2021, esp. 282–285.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. our editorial principles of methodological innovation, topical novelty, and editorial discretion on the *AABNER* website: <https://aabner.org/ojs/index.php/beabs/navigationMenu/view/Principles>.

## Reflection on Diversity

Diversity does not function the same for everyone. *AABNER* aims to be self-reflective on the kind of diversities it encourages and the boundaries it consciously or unconsciously (re-)establishes. Intersectionality provides a satisfying lens to reflect upon diversity. Taking into account multiple aspects of how humans are experiencing the world needs to impact scholarship at all levels: what are the ancient phenomena we study, what are the methodologies we champion, who are the authors we publish, and what are our blind spots?

As editors-in-chief, we all share a conviction that historical-critical methods have allowed scholars to detach themselves from religious authority. The tools of historical-critical methods provide scholars speaking from the margins of Eurocentric/US-centric scholarship with arguments to question the suppression of certain themes and characters in the field of biblical studies (Økland 2014, 222). Just as postmodernism showed the positionality of modernism, the post-postmodernism of the twenty-first century reaffirms the necessity of historically contextualizing the material. Historical approaches allow us to identify mental, material, social, and other facts and indications that can limit the multiplicity of interpretations. Post-postmodernism adds the need to be transparent about one's own positionality and one's criteria of evaluation, in order to limit bigotry and fundamentalist approaches and to promote self-critical reflection. This commitment to values often connected to the European Enlightenment is combined with the conviction that exclusive allegiance to Eurocentric/US-centric standards of scholarship leads to a depletion of the field and to its eventual irrelevance to our world.



## Citational Practice

Citations are a foundational element of how scholarship provides transparency and evidential support; and they also play a big role in determining how we view the history of scholarship. Citational practice is one that structures the distribution of prestige and thus power within

the academy. While we are accustomed to considering citations as part of the ethics of intellectual honesty—by preventing plagiarism, for example—we are less practiced in considering the wider structural ramifications of whom we cite.

Two recent events in particular made us think about our citational practices and about the publication of stolen and/or unprovenanced artifacts, and both featured men in powerful academic positions at renowned institutions.<sup>3</sup> We thought about the question of whether scholars who harm others and the profession ought to continue to be granted citations. Leah Stanley has offered us an evaluation of one particular publication's policy on this point, namely, that of the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies (JIBS)*.

At the core of the question is the relationship between the scholar's person and the scholar's work; this is similar in kind to the moral question of the relationship between an artist and their art. In the past, this issue was largely related to moralistic concerns, but today it is mainly connected with ethical and political concerns. Does research retain its value when one knows that the researcher has done illegal or unethical acts, whether related to the scholarship or not? The difference for citation practices is that often one is speaking of contemporary scholars, often in positions of power, whose status is bolstered by other scholars who deem their work essential—thereby having their positions of power reinforced. How do we fit ourselves into these sort of power dynamics, and what kind of community do we want to foster? One conviction that animates us at *AABNER* is to contribute to communities that resist creating the positions of power that make such problematic actions possible.

One way to go about it is to refuse to cite unethical scholars. This is the position that *JIBS* takes in relation to sexual predators, for example. One quickly runs into legal and ethical problems, however. As Stanley notes, if one restricts such a policy to only scholars with convictions,

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<sup>3</sup> The recent conviction for child pornography, subsequent jail sentence, and release of Jan Joosten (Bland and Henley 2020) and Dirk Obbink's arrest for selling stolen papyri (Moynihan 2021).



most predators will remain cited, as the rate of conviction for such crimes is negligible.

A similar question concerns the burden of proof in relation to unethical behavior. Accusations of misconduct without proof in print open the writer and the venue to charges of libel. Reliance on so-called “whisper networks” not only raises questions concerning hearsay, but it also has the potential of inscribing new, even less transparent networks of power among those in the know concerning the actions of certain scholars and those outside the whisper networks.

A third question is about what kinds of crimes one considers as meriting a blanket ban: are only sexual crimes such as harassment, rape, and child pornography deserving of such treatment? What about fraud, tax evasion, and bullying? Does this treatment apply only to living scholars, or does it apply retroactively to previous scholars now dead? What do we do with scholars who had been members of the Nazi Party, for example? Several well-known and oft-cited New Testament scholars and Assyriologists were active members of this party.<sup>4</sup> Others are known for having committed crimes, some of whom were never convicted. It is also clear that we cannot thoroughly vet the background of every person we ever cite. However, we can point out instances where problematic behavior is reflected in problematic scholarship, and we can point out cases where scholarship facilitates unethical behavior.<sup>5</sup>

However, even the most thorough scholar by necessity finds it impossible to cite everything ever written on a given topic; selections must be made. This opens an opportunity for a more positive approach to the issue of citation than focusing on whom not to cite: expanding the range of whom one could cite while supporting diversity. Given a choice of scholars to cite on a specific topic or opinion, one could choose to cite a scholar from a more marginal position in order to exemplify an innovative or hitherto little-known approach. *AABNER* is committed to including contributions displaying a wide array of methodologies



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<sup>4</sup> Heschel 2008; Gerdmar 2009; Schaller 2021.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the way antisemitic presuppositions impacted New Testament scholarship (see above, note 4), or the way Michel Foucault’s philosophical positions allowed for his alleged sexual abuse of young boys (Dearden 2020).



and perspectives, which will not only result in the use and quotation of more diverse scholarship, but it will also address the problem of power hierarchies. Given knowledge that a particular scholar was convicted of a crime or is known to be ethically problematic, are there other scholars one could cite instead of or in addition to said scholar? We believe that focusing on positive action opens up space for encouraging diversity while avoiding the pitfalls of a strict, editorially defined rule concerning citations.

## Setting Ethical Limits

Alongside positive solutions, *AABNER* recognizes the need to reject some practices, not only on ethical grounds, but also on the grounds that they promote scholarship that is detrimental to the field—practices that it does not want to endorse and see continued. Therefore, as stated in the ethics section of our website, we have two policies regarding material culture. First, the journal will not publish unprovenanced materials for the first time as stipulated in the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage (United Nations 1970, 1972). This is in line with both ASOR's and SBL's current citational policies, only without the cuneiform exception. Previously published unprovenanced materials, if cited, must be flagged as such. While a strict ethical view might argue this is tantamount to having our cake and eating it too, the latter are already within the scholarly discourse and can thus not just be ignored. Flagging such issues has the benefit of raising awareness around a common problem for the fields of ancient studies. Second, *AABNER* also has a policy of not publishing new materials from illegal excavations as outlined in the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (United Nations 1954).

Another ethical limit we have established is our method of forum review (see de Hulster et al. 2021b). By having reviewers and their





comments open to other reviewers and passing on a consensus view to the authors, the scope for unhelpful comments is minimized. We see our job and the job of the forum editors as encouraging rigorous but constructive reviews that improve an author's work.

## Conclusion: Quality, Respect, and Community

Our review process is based on academic principles (and knowing that they have a history, we are open to weighing them as well); it also includes criteria for diversity that are based on ethical standards. Without being moral judges and ruling by laws, we take positions guided by our ethical principles and academic standards. These positions include our hermeneutical restrictions against an “everything goes” attitude and our ethical standards that in the larger context serve peace at a macro level (e.g., against politically illegal excavations) as well as at a micro level (e.g., protecting the well-being of children). Despite our firm foundation, we continue to learn by doing. We are open to other voices, as this is a matter of respect, and we see our role as editors-in-chief as one that is performed in service to the community. Thus, we always want to encourage each other, the *AABNER* community, and the wider academic world to do better with a view to improving the guild as well as society as a whole around the globe.



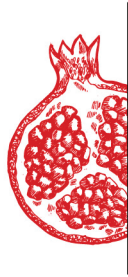
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**AABNER**

ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL  
AND NEAR EASTERN RESEARCH

**BREATHING EMBODIED “DIVERSITY”  
INTO THE BIBLICAL STUDIES MACHINE:  
ENVISIONING TRANSGRESSIVE AND  
DECOLONIZING CITATION PRACTICES**

***Dong Hyeon Jeong***

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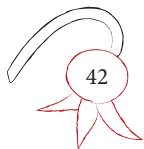
Keywords: Citation practice, activism, whiteness, diversity,  
de-colonialism

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## Abstract

This essay critically reflects upon the well-intended and yet unfortunately insufficient push for more diversity in citation practices within biblical studies. Such insufficiency occurs due to the perfunctory act of breathing diversity into biblical interpretation without disrupting the colonial legacies and currents of the field of biblical studies. Moreover, such perfunctory citation practice deliberately overexposes the inclusion of minoritized scholarship in order to control their place in the narrative of the field. By doing so, the stranglehold of “whiteness” in biblical studies is unchallenged. How does then one disrupt such insufficiency? I suggest that genuinely diverse citation practices transgress the borders or limits of the textual by embodying activism. If one truly cares about diversity, then the writing scholar should also be an activist scholar. Citation is not just about making a list; it is a socio-ethical commitment to engage holistically the lived realities of the oppressed and silenced.



Cet essai propose une réflexion critique sur l'effort bien intentionné, mais malheureusement insuffisant, pour favoriser une plus grande diversité dans les pratiques de citation au sein des sciences bibliques. Cette insuffisance est liée à la volonté d'insuffler de la diversité dans les interprétations bibliques mais en évitant de perturber les héritages et les impulsions coloniales à l'œuvre dans les sciences bibliques. En outre, cette pratique de citation superficielle surexpose délibérément l'inclusion des chercheurs et chercheuses minoritaires afin de contrôler leur place dans la mise en récit de la discipline. Ce faisant, la mainmise de la « blancheur » sur les sciences bibliques n'est pas remise en question. Comment perturber cette insuffisance et y remédier ? Je propose que pour être véritablement diversifiées, les pratiques de citation doivent transgresser les frontières ou les limites du textuel et incarner l'activisme. Si l'on se soucie vraiment de la diversité, alors l'auteur ou l'autrice doit également être un·e militant·e. La citation ne consiste pas seulement à dresser une liste ; il s'agit d'un engagement socio-éthique visant à prendre en compte de manière holistique les réalités vécues par les personnes opprimées et réduites au silence.



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# **BREATHING EMBODIED “DIVERSITY” INTO THE BIBLICAL STUDIES MACHINE: ENVISIONING TRANSGRESSIVE AND DECOLONIZING CITATION PRACTICES**

*Dong Hyeon Jeong*



## **Introduction**

Can a scientific machine such as spirometer (an apparatus that measures the volume of air inhaled and exhaled by the lungs) become a device of racism and oppression? Can publishing and citation practice in biblical studies, academic machinations based on “science and logic,” become tools of racism and other oppressive systems? Lundy Braun in *Breathing Race into the Machine* (2014, xiii–xv) chronicles how an insulation manufacturer in 1990s somewhat protected itself from paying disability claims (due to asbestos-induced problems) to their (former) black workers using pseudo-scientific research. This research, which is published by the American Thoracic Society (ATS), argues that different races have different lung capacities. That is why the spirometer has to be “race-corrected” in order to “accurately and objectively” measure

the lung capacity of an individual. This research argues that a race-based corrective of the spirometer has to be made on the assumption that black persons have higher lung capacities. Knowing and thereby manipulating this pseudo-science, the insulation manufacturer abused the research by establishing a more difficult standard in claiming disability compensation for black workers. In other words, compared to their white colleagues, the black workers had to demonstrate lower lung capacities and worse medical symptoms before they were compensated at all. Unbeknown to many and still a surprise even today, users of the spirometer are finding that machines deemed “scientific and objective” can become a tool of oppression.

In the same vein, the machine that publishes biblical interpretations has recently been checked for its lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion. To respond to this corrective, many publishing houses and journals have tried to breathe into this machine an additive to make it “run smoothly,” lest they be accused of racism, sexism, classism, and/or other “isms.” And yet, this “resonance [biblical interpretation] machine,” a machine that echoes the hegemony of its time, still cannot untangle itself from the “imperial, capitalist white supremacist, cisheteropatriarchal Christianity” (Hidalgo 2020, 630).

The journal *Advances in Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research* (AABNER) finds itself at an opportune moment in the history of biblical interpretation to fully live out its mission to showcase innovative, equal opportunity, non-discriminatory, academically rigorous, and accessible (no subscription needed) scholarship. Unlike certain journals that publish a “special forum” on diversity, equity, and inclusion only as a perfunctory nod to their blatant disregard for the same, AABNER has the possibility to become an international and intentional journal that truly responds to the needs of our time, liberating and empowering the voiceless within and without the confines of Europe. AABNER has the capacity and opportunity to heed Wil Gafney’s prophetic invitation to “look for those lives that are at risk, subject to oppression, relegated to the margins of the text, and/or discounted as disposable, particularly as a result of an intersecting element of identity” (2017, 206).

To respond to this prophetic invitation is to become a journal that embodies activism, where academic publication, which includes citation





practice, is attuned to the groanings of the world. I suggest this because the rise of Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) hatred during and after the COVID-19 pandemic made many AAPI (biblical) scholars, including me, realize that scholarship without even a modicum of desire to respond to the needs of the public should be questioned. Of course, I am not arguing that all scholarship should respond to the current news. Rather, I hope that personal interest and the needs of the public should at least overlap in ways that are flourishing. According to the Association of Theological Schools Faculty Development Study by Deborah H. C. Gin and Stacy Williams-Duncan (2017, 89), 80 percent of faculty members (in North American institutions) say that their research is based on “personal interest.” Only 11 percent of faculty members say that their primary motivation is the “needs of the public.” These faculty members are primarily non-Anglo/white faculty members. Here, as Cain Hope Felder stresses, we cannot minimize the need to “close the wide gap between those disciplines that focus only on the intrinsic value of merely acquiring knowledge for its own sake and those that are of immediate relevance to daily living” (2014, 10). In other words, I invite you all to become activist-scholars by delving into these four transgressions: engage existing network(s) of activism, hire and/or compensate minoritized persons, decolonize citation practices, and re-establish academic standards.



## **Engage Existing Network(s) of Activism**

Inviting a minoritized person (for a presentation or publication) should come about after the organizers have done their due diligence of understanding and navigating the existing networks of the invited person. This due diligence is needed in order to avoid the trauma of tokenism, which is a product of the extractive system of academia. When you receive a response that says “I am too busy or unavailable,” this response could mean a few things. First, this response stems from the trauma of being burned by conferences or panels where they were invited to become the token speaker just to be neglected, abused (straw-person), or used by the organizers to make themselves look “diverse.” Second,

this response is asking the organizers to invite other minoritized persons because those other persons have something to share or should be heard by many. This scholar is aware that their educational pedigree and visibility, which are based on their elite status, have an influence on their being invited to speak at events. They hope to change this toxic preferential treatment based on educational class and status by suggesting persons who are less heard. Third, this response is an invitation to the organizers to critically reflect upon their intentions, and even on the composition of the event itself or the sponsoring organization. One does this critical reflection by engaging existing networks of the minoritized.

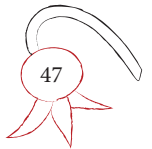
Here, engaging the existing networks of minoritized groups, which are predominantly activist in their own ways, is one of the first steps toward taking a humble, genuine, and diligent approach for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Engaging these networks assists one in learning the cultural sensitivities and sensibilities in embodied ways, something one cannot simply do from reading books and journals. Moreover, engaging these networks will prevent (hopefully) any inclination to “Columbus” ideas (i.e., assume that an existing idea is new or created by oneself) generated by and emanating from these groups. As Keeta Gladue,<sup>1</sup> a Cree and Métis graduate student and Indigenous student program advisor at the University of Calgary, teaches: “Indigenization can only be done by Indigenous people” (2020, 35:03), but “decolonization is the work of all people” (2020, 35:26). Of course, this decolonizing work is difficult because of the “numerous inequalities of power and resources [that] inevitably influence scholarly proceedings” (Brett 2021, 819). These inequalities keep minoritized voices “invisible,” particularly racially minoritized women in the academy (Kim 2021, 2–3). Recently, as Rhiannon Graybill noticed, several journals and groups have performatively included (trans/cis) women’s voices



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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful and indebted to Sarah Elaine Eaton for sharing her life-changing experiences with one of her students and co-workers, Keeta Gladue. This quote comes from Eaton’s article (2022). Eaton is the Educational Leader in Residence in Academic Integrity at the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning at the University of Calgary.

in their “project” (2021, 826–28)<sup>2</sup> without critically re-evaluating their missional trajectory and organizational power structure. The ensuing effect of this indifference is generally the continuation of the “manel” (all-male panels) or the “manthology” (all-male edited volume). And yet, journals such as AABNER have the opportunity to participate in this decolonizing work by breathing in the embodied activism air by engaging these networks. Out of the many groups I could mention here, I strongly endorse Pacific, Asian, and North American Asian Women in Theology and Ministry (PANAAWTM).<sup>3</sup> Since 1984, PANAAWTM has led the way in co-creating cutting-edge theologies, mentoring and supporting (trans/cis) women theologians and ministers, and sustaining transnational communities in the United States and beyond. They have demonstrated and proven time and time again *what* it means to be a networking initiative that truly cares for the other. PANAAWTM is a haven for activists, scholars, ministers, and educators from various fields, especially for trans/cis women of Asian descent. Cite them. Engage them.



## **Hire/Compensate Minoritized Persons**

Representation matters, especially when finance and politics are involved. Scholars in religious studies are squirmish when it comes openly discussing finance and politics because they unravel the hidden oppressive dynamics sustaining the academy. As Brett reveals, “individuals are scrupulous in awarding honor to predecessors in their own research tradition and strategically citing the younger scholars, or new perspectives, they want to promote” (2021, 820). A case in point is the time a famous biblical scholar, in his retirement speech, argued that one has to hire scholars based on academic excellence, not on diversity. This famous scholar clearly thinks that academic excellence and diversity are mutually exclusive. Unfortunately, this famous scholar’s assumption is prevalent or considered normative logic among many (biblical)

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<sup>2</sup> See also Ahmed 2012.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.panaawtm.org/>.

scholars. They wave the flag or hide under the veil of “objectivity and academic rigor” in order to sustain their perspective of acceptable biblical interpretation and interpreter(s). However, as many have already called out, one has to ask again: whose objectivity, whose rigor, based on what? As Wongi Park (2021, 441) points out, as of 2018 only 15 percent of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) are non-white. Women in the SBL represent only 25 percent of the total membership.<sup>4</sup> It goes without saying that the number of racially minoritized women is borderline invisible (see Tilford 2019). This lack of diversity in the biblical studies guild is a manifestation of white supremacy and preferential treatment of white-male European and American scholars. Unfortunately, the publication of books and journals on “diversity” here and there will not change the status quo. These are just band-aids to the cancer corrupting the guild from within.



Hiring and properly compensating minoritized persons are forms of embodied activism. This embodiment goes directly to the heart or the locus of change and power. I believe in grassroots movements and in change from below. I also believe that it does not hurt to have persons in power who could champion grassroots movements. To have someone who has access to resources as an ally will assist in expediting and efficiently implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Of course, not all minoritized persons are attuned to the needs of the other. Moreover, minoritized persons are not unicorns who could magically solve all of the problems of the guild and of academia. That is an unfair expectation and a Sisyphean task meant for minoritized persons to fail to complete. And yet for positive change to happen, one has to be honest with the organization of one’s group and directly recognize whose identities are represented and whose are not.

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<sup>4</sup> SBL, “Member Data Report, 2019,” <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/sblMemberProfile2019.pdf> (accessed on August 11, 2023),

## **Decolonize Citation Practices**

In South Korea, many Korean biblical scholars believe that Eurocentric and US-centric publications are the best expressions of biblical scholarship. Publishing one's scholarship in a European or US journal or with a European or US publisher is considered more prestigious than to do so with local Korean journals and publishers. Doing so is also thought to increase one's chances of eventually being promoted. Moreover, quoting Bultmann and Moltmann over Kim and Lee is considered more academically rigorous. Such colonial indoctrination that worships Europe and the United States while belittling Asian scholarship is deeply ingrained in many non-European and non-American scholars. Doctoral students in South Korea must pass German and French language requirements even if they barely need them in their dissertation, if at all. They must quote or refer to European publications written a hundred years ago for their work to be considered "valid." My uncle left his family in South Korea so that he could study the New Testament in Germany.

AABNER has the chance to decolonize this oppressive indoctrination by declaring that the marginalized voices around the world will be uplifted and supported. What is at stake here is whether or not AABNER will perpetuate, as Willie Jennings argues, the whiteness standard of the "self-sufficient toxic white man" of academia (2020, 1–22; 2021, 837). Will AABNER open its doors for collaborative work with journals from marginalized places (Stiebert 2020, 8–9)? Will AABNER accept, for example, art pieces as critical conversation partners in biblical studies (Havea 2021, 82–89)? Will AABNER become a panopticon (in the Foucauldian sense), where the journal will act as the all-seeing eye that monitors and decides through hyper-visualization which articles are worth "reading"?

Moreover, AABNER has the capacity to provide spaces for minoritized voices to (re-)create and redefine their academic lineage. Tat-siong Benny Liew calls this "referencing without referentiality," to create a new lineage of scholarship without petrifying any name(s) as unconditional. The conditionality relies on the trajectories or issues of the time (Liew 2007, 7). Angela Parker (2021, 98–99; 2022, 473–76) and Mitzi J. Smith (2018) have also created their own versions of academic lineage



by focusing on womanist publications. These lineages, though, are not myopic or atomized; rather, they intersectionally and cross-racially support and cite other minoritized groups (Liew 2017, 243). Park insists on this “multiracial coalition of scholars,” because it combats whiteness and “provide justifications for moving from monoracial to multiracial biblical studies” (2021, 438).

## Re-Establish Standard(s) of “Good” Scholarship

Activism is transgressive, even physically and emotionally taxing. As Sarah Elaine Eaton puts it, “academic work is advocacy work. Every day we are called upon to make ethical decisions in our daily lives and professional practices” (2022, 6). One of the most difficult struggles within the academy is formulating the standard of “good” scholarship. What is harder is transgressing the formulated standard of “good” scholarship by contradicting the gatekeepers and dismantling their “rubric towers.” This transgression is taxing and even dangerous for those who are still in their early career. Kwok Pui-lan voiced her concern about this transgression with the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion (JFSR)*. Inasmuch as the *JFSR* is liberating, decolonizing, and championing the cause of (trans/cis) women, they still have to face the difficulty of formulating the standards of acceptability to their journal. Kwok is concerned that the *JFSR* might become an “incubator of whiteness with a feminist twist” (2022, 20–21). Her concern stems from the dilemma of encouraging international submissions to the journal and the perceived sub-par nature of these submissions. This concern becomes exacerbated, as the editorial board has to determine the barometer of acceptability of these submissions with their European and American audiences in mind. Kwok invites the editorial board of the *JFSR* to critically reflect upon decolonizing the journal’s publishing standards, a difficult but necessary task that would hopefully transform it further as one of the most liberating and decolonizing journals today.

All this makes me ask: what if intersectionality could also be applied in deciding the standard of good scholarship? What if intersectionality is not just a transgressive “method” in interpreting the Bible and

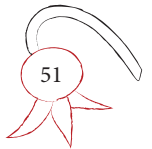




other Ancient Near Eastern texts? As Gale Yee writes, intersectionality “impels us toward disrupting dominance and challenging systemic inequality in today’s world” (2020, 12). Could we imagine new standards of good scholarship in which the Eurocentric/US-centric standard(s) intersect or work with other standards from various communities of the world? If we, (biblical) scholars, insist on the production of knowledge from various communities (also known as contextualization), then we should also insist on decolonizing and transgressing the machines that measure the acceptability of a submission. Are intersectional academic standards a path forward?

## **Publishing as Activism**

I am a board member of the Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice (CLBSJ).<sup>5</sup> It is a network hub for (biblical) scholars and activists who seek to bridge the gap between scholarship and activism. The CLBSJ’s synergistic efforts organize webinars and events that critically channel the Bible (and other sacred texts) in enacting and empowering social justice today. For networks such as the CLBSJ, biblical studies as activism is a given. AABNER is in a critical position to choose to become one of the catalysts for social justice. Here, I am not asking AABNER to fall into the trap of (white) saviorism or to develop a messianic complex. Rather, a relatively new journal has the capacity to bring about not just intellectual rigor but also societal healing. Smith shares that her book, *Womanist Sass and Talk Back: Social (In)Justice, Intersectionality, and Biblical Interpretation*, is written as an “act of self-care, of political resistance to contemporary and ancient (con)texts that threaten, oppose, or are antithetical to the self-care and wholeness of the oppressed” (2018, 3). Could AABNER also become a journal where its readers, through its publications, are healed, empowered, and encouraged to resist oppressive structures?



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<sup>5</sup> <https://clbsj.org/>.

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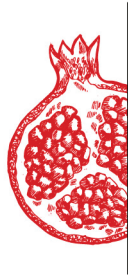
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**AABNER**

ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL  
AND NEAR EASTERN RESEARCH

**TO CITE OR NOT TO CITE? AN EXPLORATION  
OF THE CITATIONAL ETHICS POLICY OF THE  
*JOURNAL FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY BIBLICAL  
STUDIES***

***Leah Stanley***

Source: *Advances in Ancient, Biblical, and Near Eastern Research*  
3, no. 1 (Spring, 2023): 55–77

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## Abstract

The ethics of citations are more frequently becoming a part of what constitutes publication ethics. This article explores the ambiguities of citation ethics and the possibility of proposing an umbrella policy for all academic journals. It argues that such a policy facilitates citational ethics practices without penalizing authors or making citation choices a subjective, individual decision. Through exploring the policy of the *Journal for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies (JIBS)*, which demonstrates its inclusive practices and is indicative of its stance on citation ethics, this article analyzes what it means to cite an author critically while acknowledging the inevitable nuances and subjectivities which that entails. To contrast *JIBS*'s forward-thinking policy with those of other journals and their ethical practices, it uses the reactions and responses to the 2020 conviction of Jan Joosten to explore the need for a universal policy. Joosten's conviction, explicitly mentioned in the *JIBS*'s policy, illustrates the necessity for our citational practices to be ethical and critical. The responses of the *Journal for Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics* and *Vetus Testamentum* are analyzed. Finally, this article uses a hypothetical case study to put *JIBS*'s policy into practice and seeks to show the potential for further discussion and development of citational ethical practices. It suggests that, for citational ethics to work in practice, they should be implemented throughout the discipline as an umbrella policy.



Réfléchir à la façon dont on cite fait plus souvent partie de ce qui constitue l'éthique de la publication aujourd'hui. Cet article explore les ambiguïtés liées à l'éthique de la citation et la possibilité de proposer une politique générale pour toutes les revues universitaires. Une telle politique encouragerait les pratiques éthiques concernant les citations sans pénaliser les auteurs ou faire du choix de citer une décision subjective et individuelle. En explorant la politique du *Journal for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies (JIBS)*, qui est inclusive et représentative de sa position concernant l'éthique de la citation, cet article analyse ce que signifie citer un auteur de manière critique, tout en reconnaissant les nuances et les subjectivités inévitables que cela implique. En contrastant la politique avant-gardiste de *JIBS* avec celles d'autres revues et leurs pratiques éthiques, cette contribution revient sur les réactions et les réponses à la condamnation de Jan Joosten en 2020 pour explorer le besoin d'une politique universelle. La condamnation de Joosten, explicitement mentionnée dans la politique de *JIBS*, montre qu'il est nécessaire que nos pratiques de citations soient éthiques et critiques. Les réponses du *Journal for Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics* et de *Vetus Testamentum* sont analysées. Enfin, cet article propose une étude de cas hypothétique pour tester la politique de *JIBS* et cherche à identifier le potentiel pour développer des pratiques éthiques en matière de citation. L'autrice suggère que, pour que l'éthique de la citation fonctionne dans la pratique, elle doit être mise en œuvre dans l'ensemble de la discipline comme une politique générale.





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## TO CITE OR NOT TO CITE? AN EXPLORATION OF THE CITATIONAL ETHICS POLICY OF THE *JOURNAL FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY BIBLICAL STUDIES*

*Leah Stanley*



### Introduction

Citational ethics, this article argues, should be at the heart of ethical publication practices. An exploration of the *Journal for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies's* (*JIBS*) policy can be used to both influence and inform future ethical citation choices, especially for new journals, such as *AABNER*, that are in the process of creating such policies. First, this article explores the citational ethics policy of *JIBS*, a journal committed to publishing inclusive and interdisciplinary work in the traditional discipline of biblical studies. Their webpage testifies to this:

*JIBS* is a peer-reviewed, open access journal dedicated to publishing cutting edge articles that embody interdisciplinary, social justice-oriented, feminist, queer, and innovative biblical scholarship. We welcome

submissions that challenge canonical and/or disciplinary norms and boundaries or that query the field of biblical studies' relationship to the broader investigation of human religion, culture, and literature.<sup>1</sup>

Social justice, they claim, is fundamental to the journal's publishing and policymaking ethos. Not only do their submissions "challenge canonical and/or disciplinary norms," their stance regarding citing sexual predators breaks the norm too. Owing to its inclusive and noncanonical focus, *JIBS* is not representative of all journals, let alone biblical journals, which is something worth addressing in and of itself.

*JIBS*'s policy for citational ethics states:

Sexual violence of any kind is a scourge, and when it is allowed a place at any table, it works against the seeking of justice. Papers and submissions that *insist* on *uncritically* citing the publications of known sexual predators will not be considered for publication in *JIBS*. This includes but is not limited to the work of Jan Joosten, Richard Pervo and C. T. R. Hayward.<sup>2</sup>



Second, this article uses this policy to explore what critical citations are and how they can be actualized in articles, analyzing the bold stance taken by the editors of *JIBS* against unethical and immoral behavior. Since the implementation of this policy is not common practice, it will explore how other journals, including the *Journal for Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics (JALL)* and *Vetus Testamentum (VT)*, navigate citational ethics in response to Jan Joosten's conviction.<sup>3</sup> As he is specifically named in *JIBS*'s policy, it is useful to examine how their approaches differ and analyze whether an umbrella policy is required.

Finally, this article uses a hypothetical case study to explore the complexities of formulating a citational ethics policy, important among

<sup>1</sup> *JIBS* 2018a.

<sup>2</sup> *JIBS* 2018b.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Joosten's conviction, see Bland and Henley 2020. This article does not comment on the sentence Joosten faced; rather it looks at the way academia navigates citing (or not citing) his work and uses his example as a means to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about shaping future approaches to citational ethics.

which are questions of hierarchy in the discipline of biblical studies and the unlikelihood of convictions for academics accused of sexual violence. It then goes on to suggest that for citational ethics to work in practice, they need to be implemented throughout the discipline as an umbrella policy.

## ***JIBS's Policy***

It is important to look at just how *JIBS's* policy is attentive to being critical, since it states that “[p]apers and submissions that *insist* on *uncritically* citing the publications of known sexual predators will not be considered for publication in *JIBS*” (*JIBS* 2018b). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), being critical can be understood in the sense of one’s methodological practice and in the sense of one’s judgment. The *OED* (2022a) first, however, defines the term “uncritically” in the context of “the scholarly analysis or evaluation of texts: in a way which is not in accordance with critical methods, or which lacks critical exactness.” The mention of “scholarly analysis” draws attention to the fact that scholarship includes thorough research, evaluation, and “critical exactness.” Thus, citational ethics should also be included. Being critical of the sources (and the authors) used in our work encourages us as scholars to evaluate the validity of the research we use and quote. This is similar to writing a literature review and discerning the usefulness of a source. *JIBS's* policy extends the review practice when it asks of scholars that they critically consider the author as a subject of merit along with their work. There is value in what *JIBS* demands. Why should one be critical of the sources and not their authors? Being critical, they argue, should extend to citation practices. For *JIBS*, being critical can manifest itself in the form of non-citation or in the acknowledgment of the immoral behavior of someone, should one choose to cite them. Consequently, *JIBS* brings the definition of “uncritically” to the forefront of their citational ethics policy, which requires an analysis and evaluation of the author as well as the source.

The *OED's* (2002b) second definition says that “uncritically” means “[i]n a way which does not judge harshly or censoriously; (also) in a



way which lacks good judgement or discernment.” This definition adds another layer to the practice of critical analysis, bringing judgment into the equation. This indicates that in research and in citational ethics, scholars should use (good) judgment when they find fault with a source or an argument or a behavior. It bears mentioning, however, that judging and finding fault are two subjective endeavors in which the ambiguity inherent in being critical, which controls *JIBS*’s citation ethics policy, is particularly apparent. Because of the subjectivity involved in the act of judgment, it is difficult to bring uniformity to the way different publications monitor critical citations and to the standards they uphold to do so. One must acknowledge this challenge when formulating policy, as this ambiguity in critical thought controls to what extent citations can be ethical. Arguably, the policy’s demand for a process of being critical, with various levels of harshness, is a promising start for citational ethics practices. Both definitions found in the *OED* underline the ambiguity of criticalness; this ambiguity will impede the ability to standardize citations, which renders the creation of a policy even more challenging. For this reason, *JIBS*’s policy is analyzed, so that we may see how it functions in a hypothetical case study in comparison to real-life examples of citation ethics (or a lack thereof). While standardization would make for a more cohesive and simpler citation ethics practice, it is unfortunately not realistic. Therefore, a kind of critical awareness is better than nothing.

Respecting critical citation necessarily requires implementation. In *JIBS*, when an author has unknowingly cited a sexual predator, the editors have an informal conversation with them to discuss how to be critical. Crucially, this may be the first time an author learns of the behavior; therefore, this conversation allows for a new approach to scholarship to be undertaken, and new possibilities can be forged for ethical scholarship that begins with citations. The conversation differs depending on the scholarly position (i.e., status) of the author. Inevitably, a post-graduate student will cite critically in a different manner than a tenured professor (I will return to the importance of positionality in my analysis of the hypothetical case study). One approach for the author is to recognize that they have cited a sexual predator and remove the citation, replacing it with another author and not giving the predator “a place at



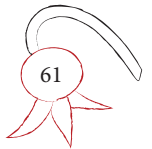
any table,” to quote *JIBS*’s submission guidelines (*JIBS* 2018b). By not engaging with a predator’s work, the author is refusing to promote them as a scholar; in theory, no one would be aware of this decision. In this case, the decision not to cite is hidden, since one cannot know whether the non-citation was deliberate. To some extent, this is best, as it does not draw further attention to the scholar and does not give them any space.

If a blanket ban on citing the work of sexual predators were implemented, one positive consequence would be that the work of less-prominent scholars could be brought to the forefront. This would help alleviate a situation in which predators are cited “by default,” because of the importance of network affiliations which favor scholarly prominence over ethics (Meredith Warren [Editor in Chief of *JIBS*] cited in *Urbs and Polis* 2021). As Mark G. Brett (2021, 819–820) highlights, in post-pandemic biblical scholarship, “minoritized voices need to be amplified, and more ‘partial’ scholarly traditions built from below.” Minoritized voices run the risk of being stifled through the repetitive citation of the “big” names in a discipline. Therefore, when one learns that these big names are accused, for instance, of pedophilia, one can search beyond their scholarship (while also acknowledging their influence) and cite newer or forgotten scholars. Putting pressure on authors to reflect on who they are citing begins the process of making citations more inclusive, and it directly impacts “scholarly traditions,” engaging them in necessary ethical debates.

Diversifying footnotes can only be positive for the discipline since it develops the inclusivity of scholarship. When you engage with new voices, the experience “changes your work for the better” (cited in *Urbs and Polis* 2021).<sup>4</sup> In *Living a Feminist Life*, Sara Ahmed (2017, 15) acknowledges the difficulty of her own citational practices, since “[the] paths (of non-white male scholars) might have become fainter from not being traveled upon; so we might work harder to find them.” However, just because something is difficult does not mean it should not be done,

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<sup>4</sup> As an example of citational ethics, Young has set himself the challenge to write articles where at least 50 percent of the scholars named are non-white males, which he says will improve his work for the better.



especially when it promotes more inclusive, and inevitably more critical, diverse scholarship. Ahmed's descriptions of the challenges involved in citing other scholars mirror Brett's allusion to the building of "partial scholarly traditions" (Brett 2021). These traditions must be built from somewhere. Implementing a policy for citational ethics begins this process and reduces the challenge that individual authors can face.

However, with the practice of non-citation, a difficulty can appear if one, in choosing not to cite, ignores crucial scholarship in the discipline, especially in cases when a predator is known only through the "whisper network" (women sharing their experiences concerning certain predators with each other and warning female colleagues about men whose behavior is dangerous, inappropriate, or unethical) (Urbs and Polis 2021). Because one cannot properly explain or justify a non-citation, it is likely that some predators will only be known to the whisper network. The whisper network functions in the shadows, unofficially, which makes it more difficult to be explicitly critical. Additionally, one should consider that in the whisper network a rumor can be incorrect, which raises the question of whether and how critical citations should be informed by the network. Because convictions of sexual predators are unlikely (an issue to which I will return), the whisper network is a place where allegations frequently exist without a conviction. This is a mighty barrier to implementing a policy concerning citation ethics (Barr and Topping 2021).

Alongside the whisper network, it is also essential to consider networks of (predominantly) male colleagues who continuously cite each other and support a hierarchy that favors a select few authors. Understandably, people may not want to disrupt or upset the powerful networks that cite problematic scholars, which translates into a reluctance to be critical. Consequently, within the language of "networks", there are multiple networks at play that impact how critical an author can be, depending on the networks in which they are involved and that can control them. For example, Jan Reedijk states that "[a] well-known practice is to send one's own recently published paper to many colleagues, stressing its importance, in the hope they will cite it" (2012, 829). Consequently, if an academic chooses to not cite someone, and this decision is obvious, it will restrict the likelihood of their own paper





being cited. It contributes to the cycle of voices being repressed because the established standard is the repeated citations of the same important names.

Sarah Scullin (2016), a classicist, describes the absence “where citation would otherwise be natural” as potentially “an equally ominous presence” in an author’s article. The idea of this absence as inauspicious highlights the problem/transgression without acknowledging it. It demonstrates the author’s critical awareness of the above-mentioned networks while leaving the author vulnerable through the action of non-citation. The author finds themselves vulnerable when they stand up against academic hierarchies and the standard practices they represent. However, when one must choose between being faced with an “ominous” threat or being ethical, the latter should be prioritized to prevent further complicity, which would be embodied by an author avoiding non-citation, despite the existence of a transgression. It would be more “ominous” to cite the work of a convicted pedophile, without being critical, than to remove their work. Hierarchical networks are what define what counts as “ominous,” demonstrating that the possibility of going against standard citation practices is limited for those outside the hierarchies.

Another approach that can be adopted by an author who wants to cite critically is to cite sexual predators and acknowledge their actions and/or convictions in the footnotes. To some extent, this is not critical enough, as it gives predators space and power in the body of the paper because their names are cited. Consequently, there is the option to not name them explicitly in the paper, and rather present the idea while moving their name to the footnotes. This decreases the promotion of their ideas but still cites their scholarship. The option of a partial citation or a qualified citation explains the decision and confronts the ethical issue instead of avoiding the conversation.

Two elements need to be considered when discussing the author: the awareness of their biography in relation to their work and the relationship between the scholar and their scholarship. First, evaluating a scholar’s work and acknowledging their transgressions is necessary, as this engages openly with their crimes and precludes one from being complicit by “uncritically” citing them. Scullin (2016) highlights the



necessity of engaging with an author's biography in the classroom. Logically, the critical dimension of scholarship should start in how one cites. This engagement reduces potential complicity and, when it is taught in the classroom, it encourages ethical citation practices for future scholars. Positively, scholars who are aware of these issues will be more careful in their choices and adopt critical citation practices. If the critical process starts with citations, it can be mirrored in the classroom and other scholars can take note and learn. As authors become more critical, more barriers in the established networks will be taken down. At the same time, the policy facilitates discussion of the biography of scholars in order to foster a "social-justice-oriented" journal, because it does not ignore or silence ethical questions and begins addressing them in a critical policy for citations (*JIBS* 2018a). A scholar's violent crimes are an integral part of their biography; thus they should also form an equally important part of one's critical analysis. Because critical citations expose ethical questions, they play a role in "social-justice-oriented" conversations—conversations in which academic journals have a duty to participate.



In a different sphere of academia and the arts, a British museum, the Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft, highlights the immoral actions of "20th century sculptor, typeface designer and printmaker, Eric Gill," whose "life as a serial sexual abuser of his two pubescent daughters was first documented in Fiona MacCarthy's 1989 biography of the artist, as was his incestuous relationship with his sister" (Güner 2017). Importantly, a distinction should be made in connection with the fact that his crimes are public knowledge, unlike the actions of those mentioned in the whisper network. Publicity facilitates critical discussion when it continues to engage with his work. However, the Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft's "radical invention" of their exhibition encourages visitors to question "how knowledge of Gill's abusive behavior affects our impressions of his work, some of which is sexually and anatomically explicit. When organizing the exhibition, the museum took advice from several charities who work with sexual abuse survivors" (Güner 2017). By posing these questions, the exhibition can contribute to educating the public about the impact of Gill's biography and ask them whether one should still engage with his work. It can also focus

on the victims by asking survivors for advice. This is a practical example that concentrates on social justice. It should be considered as an alternative approach to a critical citation, educating readers about the wrongdoings of sexual predators in a footnote.

One can add Stephen Young's (2020) significant argument to the discussion concerning the (im)possibility of separating a scholar from their scholarship. His argument is informed by the events surrounding Joosten's prosecution and his subsequent statement thereon. Young states that "the instinct to protect the reputation of an abuser's scholarship is a form of Himpathy," and that this draws attention to the inextricable link between the scholar and their scholarship, which means that citing them is akin to ignoring the scholar's sin. A scholar's work is a part of them, and the scholar's person is undoubtedly part of their work. Exemplifying the unity between the scholar and their words, Elaine Scarry's (1987, 33) notion of "voice" can be extended to an author's written "voice" as a "final source of self-extension" and suggests that the scholar's work is an extension of their person. Consequently, it does not make sense to separate the scholar's work from their personal wrongdoings. Indeed, were we to talk about a scholar's achievement(s), their work would be praised as a form of "self-extension" (Scarry 1987, 33).

Young is influenced by Kate Manne's (cited in Young 2020) definition of "himpathy" as "the excessive sympathy sometimes shown toward male perpetrators of sexual violence," which reduces the prioritization of the victims when discussing, for example, Joosten's crimes. This also contributes to the fact that it remains legitimate to cite his work. Unironically, Joosten himself (in a highly criticized statement) appears unable to separate himself from his scholarship. Joosten (2021) uses scripture to absolve himself from his wrongdoings. He writes: "Taking my inspiration from Ezekiel 33:11, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live.'" Yet two sentences later, he claims: "I have changed, but my professional interests, training, and abilities are still with me" (Joosten 2021).<sup>5</sup> Joosten



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<sup>5</sup> See Johanna Stiebert's (2021) discussion of Joosten's inadequate and privileged statement.

argues that his changed behavior allows him to separate himself from his sin, and he reinforces the permanence of his scholarly interests. By using scripture to demonstrate this change of self, however, he actually reinforces the very link he seeks to disprove: man and scholar are one and the same (Joosten 2021).

## Citational Ethics in Relation to Jan Joosten

*JIBS*'s policy does not reflect common practice in biblical studies, or in academia in general, and other journals have had to navigate publishing and citing Joosten without a public policy about citational ethics. It should be noted, however, that journals may have implicit policies regarding such matters like violent crimes, even if they are not openly stated. Yet because these policies are often implicit, it creates a situation where individuals are responsible for putting citational ethics into practice. Leaving citational policy unarticulated creates far too much room for subjective interpretation. The Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), after an initial tweet regarding Joosten's "stepping down," which was considered an "insensitive response," issued a second statement, highlighting the wider issue of "more frequent abuses of power, such as sexual harassment" (SBL Council 2020). As the "oldest and largest learned society devoted to the critical investigation of the Bible from a variety of academic disciplines," with over 8,000 members, the SBL, when it alludes to abuses of power in the discipline and expresses its desire to "build a strongly ethical" society, inadvertently brings the question of citation ethics to the forefront, since its statement about ethics is tied to its reaction to Joosten's conviction (HarperCollins Publishers 2022). It remains true, as will be shown, that individual journals approach the question of ethics in various ways.

In the case of *JALL*, their policy about citational ethics (or lack thereof) contrasts with *JIBS*'s policy, since the journal focuses on publication ethics. On June 8, 2020, the journal published an online article by Joosten. Following his conviction, on June 18, 2020, the journal released a "Publisher's Notice" detailing how it was dealing with this news: "The publisher considered initiating retraction proceedings, but concluded



that this would not be possible, as the only permissible grounds for retracting an academic article are research misconduct and/or breach of publication ethics” (Brill 2021). Besides mentioning Joosten’s conviction, the *JALL* does not express an ethical stance about it. On the one hand, this notice is a critical acknowledgment of Joosten’s actions, because it bears witness to what he has done; on the other hand, its language neither condemns his actions nor apologizes for publishing the article. This is too uncritical. To quote Desmond Tutu: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor” (Tutu 2017).

The journal’s neutrality on the subject appears to favor Joosten, and not the victims of his crimes. This emphasizes the need for critical citations to redress the balance in favor of the victims. In addition, with Joosten, one is not in a gray situation, since he has been convicted by the legal system, and his actions are morally repugnant. Brill’s refusal to take a moral stance about the actions of a convicted pedophile does not reflect the responsibility that comes with citational ethics; if Brill was truly responsible for their citational ethics, they would have taken a clearer stand and condemned Joosten’s actions unequivocally. The publishing house “considered initiating retraction proceedings” rather than engaging in a thorough critical process. As a result, the notice seems linguistically uncritical. The verb “considered” lacks strength and resembles a thought process; it is not an action. An action would have involved an evaluation or analysis. Unlike *JIBS*, Brill believes that “research misconduct and/or [...] publication ethics” are the only reasons to moderate publication. For Brill, publication ethics focuses on actions such as plagiarism, “failure to meet legal and professional obligations,” “segmented publication,” and “unprovenanced artefacts.” It does not mention convictions or an author’s wrongdoings in their guide about publication ethics (Brill 2023).<sup>6</sup> This allows people like Joosten to stay



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<sup>6</sup> Brill’s guide does refer to actions of “honorary authorship,” “gift authorship,” and “guest authorship,” which demonstrates their understanding of the power imbalances in academia that impact one’s citation practices. However, this still does not allude to non-citation or critical citations due to a scholar’s crimes or actions.

at the “table” and be a part of academic discussion. It is an insufficient response to his crimes.

Citation ethics need to be included in publication ethics. Publishing houses have a responsibility to be aware of the actions of those they publish, since publications serve as a platform and give abusers a “place” at the “table” (JIBS 2018b). Understandably, retracting an article is not a simple thing to do. Yet, in this particular case, as the article is online, it would have been possible to do so without affecting print. In their absence of action, Brill effectively separated the scholar from their scholarship, which allowed them to continue to have Joosten published on their site while choosing to ignore that citation ethics are as important as publication ethics. In promoting Joosten’s work, Brill discounts his actions. There is also irony in the fact that the publisher goes out of its way to show that it has upheld one set of ethical standards but does not explain why they do not hold the author accountable for a breach of another, one might say more fundamental, set of ethical standards. While an article may be sound in terms of research ethics and in terms of Brill’s—or anyone else’s—understanding of publication ethics, this ought to be moot if one fails to consider the actions of the scholar being published.

*VT*, a journal where Joosten held the position of editor-in-chief, addressed the ethical question, in the context of this case, in a statement that sought to underline their awareness of the power of publication. The remaining editors presented Joosten as “our former colleague,” deliberately separating themselves (and the journal) from him. This is further emphasized through the use of the past tense: he “was not the person we thought he was” (*VT* 2020). The editors’ view of Joosten has changed, and crucially they refer to him as a “person,” which implies that his scholarship is irrelevant in this case. They state:

As an editorial board we understand our mandate to be vetting and publishing the finest biblical studies scholarship. But we recognize that our responsibility to highlight and promote excellent biblical scholarship is part of our larger responsibility to protect and nurture our fellow human beings. For this reason, we have acted quickly to remove Joosten from any and all activities affiliated with *Vetus Testamentum*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *VT* 2020.





The use of “vetting” demonstrates the editors’ rigorous publishing practice; in addition, the recognition of a “larger responsibility” points to an understanding of citation ethics. In order to “highlight and promote excellent biblical scholarship,” the journal cannot be associated with Joosten, nor can it cite or publish his work. If the journal adopts this stance regarding their dealings with Joosten, ideally a similar approach should be reflected in citation practice as well. Additionally, their public statement could function as a deterrent for authors who cite Joosten’s work, and it could encourage reflection about citational practices. Part of the journal’s responsibility when publishing scholarship is to be aware of whose ideas are being cited, which facilitates the publication of ethical material. If we return to Ahmed again, who displays a thoughtful awareness of citation ethics, she argues that “citation is feminist memory” and draws our attention to the significance of honoring the feminists of previous generations (Ahmed 2017, 15). Something similar can be said concerning victims of sexual harassment and sexual assault: it is essential that papers honor them by not uncritically citing predators. Adopting ethical citation practices respects the voices of victims, something that is demonstrated in *VT*’s statement, which also refutes the notion of “himpathy” (Manne cited in Young 2020). The way in which *VT* has removed Joosten from his role suggests that their citation policy is ethically more conscious than that of Brill’s *JALL*.<sup>8</sup>



## Hypothetical Case Study<sup>9</sup>

The above analysis of *JIBS*’s policy has highlighted the complexities of putting a policy into practice. When implementing a policy, several challenges arise: separating the scholar from their scholarship; the

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<sup>8</sup> *VT*’s “Instructions for Authors” section does not make reference to a citation ethics policy; see [https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads\\_products/Author\\_Instructions/VT.pdf](https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads_products/Author_Instructions/VT.pdf) (accessed 21 February 2023).

<sup>9</sup> While this hypothetical case study deals with the actions of sexual predators, the levels of criticism that *JIBS*’s policy encourages should be extended to convictions beyond the remit of this article. Our citational ethical practices should be evolving,

repetition of the same authors as a result of hierarchies in academia; and the fact that citation ethics should address what to do regarding people's actions, so that one can inform and educate readers concerning the authors being cited, with whom the latter engage through citations. I will now present a hypothetical case study to test the abilities and limitations of *JIBS's* policy: a sexual predator is known through the whisper network (and is known to the editors of *JIBS*), but there is no official and public conviction of the person. Should one critically cite them and follow the policy? This is a rather plausible case, as seen for example in Elaine Pagels's (2020, 25) book *Why Religion?*, which narrates how Helmut Koester, Pagel's senior professor at the time, groped her breasts. Before the publication of this book, Koester's actions were known only through the whisper network. He died in 2016, two years before the publication of Pagels's book and was thus never convicted. The possibility that such misbehavior is only known in the whisper network, as was the case with Koester, is something that Pagels describes as an unfairness, which is something early career researchers are all too familiar with as they navigate the whisper networks and hierarchies of their academic circles.



Issues surrounding hierarchical positions are made more complex when Pagels indicates that she had “learned that therapists at the Harvard Health Services, themselves bound to confidentiality about what distressed students reported, called him Koester the Molester” (Pagels 2020, 26–27). The notion of medical confidentiality to which Pagels refers shows the complexities of the Harvard whisper network that contribute to controlling how a student can or cannot interact with Koester's scholarship.

Following *JIBS's* policy and not “uncritically” citing a predator thus manifests itself differently depending on each author's positionality, and it has to take into account the insecurities of academic careers, especially as the University and College Union's (UCU) March 2022 report states that there has been “a rapid rise in insecure employment” in higher education (UCU 2022: 2). Consequently, a tenured, published

and even with an umbrella policy we should acknowledge the potential of discrepancies or errors that require reworking to encourage a high level of ethics.

academic has greater freedom in their decision compared to a graduate student or an early career researcher, who rely on journal publication for employment. The privilege to be critical of a predator known only through the whisper network, a privilege gained through job security, can be embodied in a footnote similar to this one: “This person has been accused of x and this paper does not condone their actions by citing them.” As experienced academics, these voices are already respected, and their critical language about citations draws attention to a problem. Alternatively, choosing to not cite predators may go unnoticed, since the focus will be on the scholar’s ideas.

Unfortunately, being critical is not so easy for graduate students, who are of a lower status than their doctoral peers and therefore much more vulnerable. Navigating how to cite a predator known through the whisper network is challenging (Emily Schmidt cited in Urbs and Polis 2021). Pagels herself illuminates the uneven power dynamic and fragility of graduate students’ positions in relation to their superiors, demonstrating the difficulty for early career scholars to engage in critical citational practices (Pagels 2020, 24–25). One way to overcome this challenge is to not cite and to choose somebody else’s work. However, this creates an issue since, by doing so, one might depart from the norms of scholarship. Willie James Jennings (2021) discusses biblical scholarship’s nature as a “white masculinist self-sufficient intellectual form”; any attempt to disrupt this hierarchical “form” is significant, especially for a new scholar. For a graduate student, positionality shapes what it means to critically cite, and it demonstrates the power issues at work in making ethical citational decisions. Publications shape the professional reputation of early career academics, and without them more junior scholars will be less able to be critical. This imbalance of power demonstrates the need for a broader policy that protects the ethical choices of all academics.

Ethically, when scholars become aware of a predator’s transgressions, they are in a difficult situation (even more so if a journal does not have a citational ethics policy) because the choice of how to be critical is essentially their own. The options available to an author, as discussed above, are not to cite, to cite partially, or to cite in a qualified manner. The academic position of an author, and the power that goes with it,



impacts whether one can choose a non-citation (with the attendant risk that it could disrupt hierarchies and affect the likelihood of the author's article being cited) and the level of detail or critique possible in a qualified citation. Because one might need to protect oneself as a scholar, it may not be possible to be as critical as one would ideally like or to avoid giving predators a platform by citing them. In the absence of an umbrella policy, this is an inevitable compromise. Consequently, each author must interpret to what extent they can be critical and adhere to *JIBS's* policy, which makes them vulnerable to external criticism. In this context, such criticism could emanate from the established networks or from more experienced scholars (who themselves do not practice citational ethics). Additionally, scholars who engage in critical citation can be liable to legal criticism, a fear to which we will return.

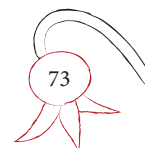


The question of the potential conviction of a predator adds another layer of complexity to the practice of citational ethics. The complexity and frustration which accompany the threat of libel action in such cases are connected to the fact that, in these cases, the legal burden favors the perpetrator rather than the victim. Having a conviction for every predator is impossible, especially since convictions remain improbable, particularly when they concern someone accused through the whisper network. Without a conviction, it is impossible to cite critically without fear. Thus, the option of non-citation is a more likely action when one considers the risks that accompany exposing someone in the absence of a legal conviction. A 2021 study shows that “fewer than one in 60 rape cases lead to charges in England and Wales.” This statistic hints at the unlikelihood of conviction, which contributes to the pain that victims experience when testifying about their assault (Barr and Topping 2021). Because of the weaknesses in the system that is supposed to convict sexual abusers and because of the persistence of rape culture in academia and higher education, implementing a citational ethics policy that relies on convictions is compromised from the very start (Topping 2021).

In our hypothetical case, the predator, just like Koester, has not been convicted. Thus, citing them critically renders any scholar liable to accusations of libel when such a citation appears in print. To avoid this scenario, it may be best not to use their work, which may not reflect the

scholar's own ethical stance on citation ethics. This may be the preferable option for early career academics. Not mentioning a predator's scholarship avoids discussing the issue and drawing attention to their wrongdoings, but it also means that one is not creating a platform where the victim's voice could be heard. Similarly, it does not initiate a conversation about ethical citations, even though they are essential for meeting ethical standards. Furthermore, even when not citing a *renowned* scholar, citation can still pose a risk to the author, depending on their position in the academic hierarchy. In a more vulnerable position, a qualified citation could be even more damaging to their career.

For a tenured professor, a qualified citation is less risky, and a non-citation allows them to augment the voices of other scholars who may have been silenced, because of the standard practice of always citing the same names. This does not mean that more senior scholars are protected from criticism and that they are sheltered from a negative impact on their career if they choose to be critical. It should be noted, however, that *JIBS's* policy asks for scholars to not be 'uncritical'; thus, a non-citation is still critical, but it ensures the protection of the scholar who chooses to not cite. Due to the complexities and differences in how crimes of sexual violence and pedophilia are dealt with in various regions of the world, it will be difficult to implement a "one size fits all" citational ethics policy. Consequently, it is crucial to take steps that facilitate awareness and being critical. This article has shown the difficulties related to the creation of an umbrella policy for citational ethics, even if that remains the ideal goal. If there are differences in how countries punish the above-mentioned crimes, continuity in citation policies should support victims rather than perpetrators and aim to be more inclusive.



## Conclusion

This article has shown the complexities of putting *JIBS's* policy into practice. More significantly, it has demonstrated that the policy would be more effective and critical if it was not minoritized by the guild in the way it prioritizes citational ethics. In concrete situations, the burden of

being critical relies too heavily on each individual and is affected by the individual's positionality and subjectivity. It also depends on the risks that each individual is willing to take when it comes to their career. Consequently, an umbrella policy would help to protect individuals, especially early career researchers, so they are not negatively impacted when they choose to not cite a predator. This article has shown that ethical standards are generally incongruent with academic standards, and it seeks to encourage a desire to question the latter and to diminish the gap between the latter and the former. The nuances related to these ethical situations limit the answers that can be given; however, challenging the norms of citation practices should be pursued, despite the impossibility of a clear-cut solution.

Beyond suggesting a discipline-wide policy, one can consider how this policy would work and whether a practical guide would be required. The first section has underscored the nuances of *JIBS's* policy: it is not bulletproof; indeed, “*uncritically*” manifests itself differently in each scholar's citations. It would be productive to explore whether there is a way of facilitating citational ethics practices. A policy that guides an individual scholar's citational practices provides tools to be critical, which facilitates the ethical citational process. Example footnotes could be used as a template, removing the fear of using the wrong language when accusing someone or acknowledging that they are a predator, for instance: “X is/has been accused/convicted of y, and this article/book does not support this person or their behavior beyond their scholarship.” It remains true that a template highlights issues from the very start, particularly because it reduces various transgressions to one inadequate sentence.

Ahmed's critical citations could be used as an example. In the “Notes” section of her book, she indicates who she will not cite, and states that this is because she finds their “work so violent and reductive that I have not wished to bring it into the body of my own text” (Ahmed 2017, 269). This reduces the prominence of the discussion yet pursues the debate productively by suggesting recommended reading that counters the work and ideas with which she disagrees and which she chooses not to endorse. The views of these authors are ones that differ from Ahmed's, in the sense that they are “violent” and harmful; therefore, she





does not want to give them a voice in her own work, which questions white patriarchal citational traditions. Ahmed's "Notes" could be replicated in a scholar's explanatory footnotes when justifying non-citation. They would enable the choice to be active in citational ethical debates, especially when forging new paths of scholarship in recommending the work of infrequently cited scholars. When a scholar needs to find other works, it recenters the conversation on social justice and scholarship, thus embodying *JIBS's* aims.

While one could argue that an author does not have to agree with the scholar they cite, when the discussion concerns the ethical transgressions of that scholar, the author has every right to exclude the scholar from their work. By doing so, the author's work can be published and still meet their own ethical practices of citation. One needs to be aware though that, just as knowledge about predators is shared through the whisper network, there are other networks that promote or denigrate scholars' work in the very same academic circles. The dangers from being rejected in these circles is clearer for, and more detrimental to, scholars belonging to racial minorities. Amanda Heidt (2023) discusses a study that demonstrates the undeniable fact that "discrimination against members of under-represented groups in academic publishing leads to lower citation rates, fewer editorial-board positions and longer manuscript-review periods." In this context, simply stating that it is a right for an author to exclude a predator's work is an illusion, and it reveals an idealistic practice of ethical citation that minimizes or ignores the barriers and biases encountered by underrepresented academics, even before citational ethics become a topic of conversation. This is an additional argument concerning the value and the necessity of an umbrella policy that limits the risks of negative consequences for those courageous enough to take a stand and exercise their right to practice citational ethics.



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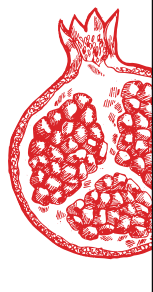
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