Life after Death: Post-Mortem Mutilation in Ancient Israel & Judah

Thesis and Scope

The increased literary production of post-mortem mutilation (henceforth PMM) in the Hebrew Bible (henceforth HB), during Iron Age II, is interrelated to three other cultural phenomena that begin in the Iron Age as well. These four phenomena are themselves constitutive of what I would call *Judahite necropolitics*.[1] One feature of this necropolitics *was* the literary production of punitive treatments enacted on individual bodies (human and divine) and kin groups (human, but possibly divine[2]) via PMM. These four phenomena, (1) an increased literary production of PMM texts, (2) the popularity of family bench-tombs *and* the creation of individual bench-tombs, (3) Israelite aniconism, and (4) anti-chthonic Yahwism, then, comprise *part of* the new repertoire of Judahite necropolitics.[3] Thus, much of the work that has been done by scholars of HB and its ancient Near Eastern context related to death, burial, the cult of dead kin, and afterlife

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[1]The term 'necropolitics' comes from the work of Mbembe, specifically his work on colonialism and neo-colonialism. Mbeme's conception of necropolitics stems from the work of Michel Foucault on biopower and biopolitics, which is the work of governments to control the bodies of entire populations, not just individual bodies through discipline (commonly via acts of punitive violence). While Mbembe has outlined necropolitics in terms of modernity, I suggest that the basis of his theorization – that necropolitics is about 'who may live and who must die' – can be translated into Iron Age Israel and Judah related to the sovereignty of Yahweh, especially as it relates to covenant Yahwism that became popular in the late Iron Age II among certain groups. This particular theology is reflected in the ideas of the so-called Deuteronomic movement that became popular in 7th century BCE in Jerusalem. One outcome of ancient, Judahite necropolitics is the creation of a distinction between loyal Yahwists who may live and receive proper burial *and* idolaters who must dies and experience PMM; J.-A. Mbembe and Libby Meintjes, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15 no. 1 (2003): 11-40; Michel Foucault, *An Introduction: Volume 1 of The History of Sexuality* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); idem, *The Birth of Biopolitics* (New York: Picador, 2010); For a more emic definition, we could call this *pagro*politics (from Hebrew *peger*/*pagr* 'corpse') in the economy of death.

[2]If Baal and Asherah are considered kin, or if the 'host of heaven' in 2 Kings 23 are considered a family unit, then their PMM in certain biblical texts would represent this trend in terms of a divine kin group experiencing PMM.

[3]While Judahite necropolitics has everything to do with a certain type of sovereignty for a deity called Yahweh, I emphasize the Judahite nature of this ideological formation to center the human (and not divine) aspect of its material production. This Judahite necropolitics may well see its culmination in conceptions of resurrection and eternal life found in some forms of Second Temple Judaism. For example, see the connections Spronk makes with later, Jewish and Christian conceptions; Klaus Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (Neukirchen-Vluyn : Neukirchener Verlag,1986).

beliefs informs my proposal for connecting a number of archeological and literary phenomena as a drastic change in conceptions about life after death in Iron Age II Judah.[4]

As the focus of this dissertation, then, the increased emphasis during Iron Age II on PMM in HB relates to, and is itself witnesses of, Judahite necropolitics.

First, from a diachronic perspective, Israelite and Judahite aniconism is attested throughout the Iron Age, and was a trait that was shared among some of its neighbors.[5] Judahite aniconism, though, took a particularly aggressive position, something witness by the polemics (and possibly actions) against cults that rivaled Yahweh of Jerusalem/Judah.[6] Second, during Iron Age II there was a shift in burial practices among

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[4]This new, Judahite necropolitics that emerged in Iron Age II may be one reason why a significant rift between those who re-create Judahite necropolitics based upon comparative material as well as material culture and those who favor the narrative of HB has emerged. This may especially be the case given that the elites were responsible for this change, suggesting that the majority of the population may not have followed this program much at all.

[5]For example, Phoenicians also created aniconic materials; Brian Doak, *Phoenician Aniconism in Its Mediterranean and ancient Near Eastern Contexts* (Archeology and Biblical Studies 21; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015).

[6]So-called Israelite aniconism is the larger context for such narratives of cultic-reforms under kings Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah, for example, reforms that include the killing and PMM of cult icons (that is, divine bodies). What is missing from the discussions about aniconism on the one hand, and discussions of divine embodiment on the other hand (e.g., Sommer [2004]), is bringing in icon destruction texts in HB (e.g., 2 Kgs 23). The battle between rival deities (e.g., Yahweh versus Yam) is usually discussed in biblical studies via the mythology of Chaoskampf, but these texts have also been unconnected with 'historical' narratives about cult-reforms that include PMM. In general, my suggestion is that while the mythology of Yahweh battling chaos-monsters like Rahab has gone almost un-recorded in Iron Age II traditions that made their way into HB, the rivalry between Yahweh and other deities has resurfaced in killing and PMM texts related to divine bodies of Baal, Asherah, Shamash, etc. *Yahweh does not engage in mythic-cosmic battles, but instead his cultic leaders (the kings of Judah), kill and PMM the divine bodies of rival deities.* Thus, aniconism and Chaoskampf serve as a dual background for understanding the killing and PMM of divine bodies that was produced literarily in Iron Age II, something that Second Isaiah's anti-icon polemic continue in the exilic period (see Holter); Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Knut Holter, *Second Isaiah's Idol Fabrication Passages* (Frankfurt and Main: Lang, 1995); in terms of literary production, some advocates of Judahite aniconism produced narratives about mutilating the dead, divine bodies of rival deities. While Exodus 32 is the most well-known example, the PMM of Dagan (1 Sam 5), Philistine deities (1 Chronicles 14), and Baal (2 Kings 11; 2 Chronicles 23) are similarly, or more, destructive. The inclusion of the Ark Saga in dtrH and Deuteronomy's Name-theology are indicative of a particular kind of Judahite aniconism that both seeks to eradicate rival divine bodies and re-place Yahweh's body with an immaterial name that inhabits the Jerusalem Temple.

the Judahite upper-class towards family-style bench-tombs.[7] This trend emerged as an attempt to strengthen social bonds among extended families.[8] Along with this, a few non-royal, ultra-elites constructed single-burial bench-tombs for themselves just outside of Jerusalem. This shift for ultra-elites, who themselves were part of the royal court, to individual burials demonstrates a simultaneous focus on the individuality (not familial nature) of death.[9] The literary use of PMM to punish entire dynastic houses (for example, Ahab) as well as individuals (for example, Sheba), then, can be correlated with the popularity of both forms of bench-tombs (family-style and individual) that became popular in Iron Age II. Thus, the burials practices of the elites are reflected in the depiction of PMM in 7th-6th century BCE HB texts. And, third, the Jerusalem elite's production of a new type sovereignty for Yahweh, one that reimagined Yahweh's relation to the dead began, probably in the mid-8th century BCE.[10] This anti-chthonic Yahwism

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[7]This drastic change was popularized in the work of Bloch-Smith. In sum, while diverse burial practices continued in the coastal plain and southern Cisjordan, during Iron Age I family-style, rock-cut, bench-tombs grew in popularity. During the early Iron Age II, however, this burial type far outpaced any other style in the southern highlands of the Cisjordan, leading archeologists to correlate this burial typology with the emergence of Judahite political and cultural dominance. However, even the large amount of bench-tomb burials (more than 187), hardly accounts for the estimated population. Thus, this particular burial type was a feature of the elites, extended families who resided in urban areas, as they were the ones with enough resources to pay for such elaborate burial structures. The majority of the Iron Age populations in Judah, the non-elites, as well as what seems like most of the population of Israel (both elite and non-elite), chose simple, inhumation, as very few burials have been located for the northern highlands in the Iron Age; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JSOTSupp 123; Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992.

[8]Avraham Faust and Shlomo Bunimovitz, "The Judahite Rock-Cut Tomb: Family Response in a Time of Social Chagne," *IEJ* 58 no 2 (2008): 150-70.

[9]For the most exhaustive survey of Iron Age burial practices see Bloch-Smith, Hallote, and, most recently, Yezerski; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JSOTSupp 123; Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992); Irit Yezerski, "Typology and Chronology of the Iron Age II-III Judahite Rock-cut Tombs," *IEJ 63 no. 1 (2013): 50-77;* Rachel S. Hallote, *Death, Burial, and Afterlife in the Biblical World: How the Israelites and Their Neighbors Treated the Dead* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001); For an argument for the shift toward individuality in Iron Age II see Halpern; Baruch Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages in the Seventh Century BCE: Kinship and the Rise of Individual Moral Liability," in *Law and Ideology in Monarchic Israel* (Baruch Halpern and Deborah W. Hobson, eds.; Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991).

[10]Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (2nd Ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 165.

distanced Yahweh from dead bodies and the traditional ancestor cults.[11] This is related to the increased emphasis during the same period on PMM. The new way that Jerusalem elites described Yahweh's relationship to dead bodies, while keeping Yahweh materially distant, was either by his giving of peace as well as proper burial or enacting punitive damages on the physical body via literary PMM. Yahweh remained the sovereign over life after death, but used prophecy-fulfillment and human agents to affect the dead bodies (and probably their afterlives). In this way, PMM of human and divine bodies, as described in HB, which itself is a production of the elites of Judah and Jerusalem, became an integral part of the new, Judahite necropolitics.

Turning to terminology, for this project "post-mortem mutilation (PMM)" refers to the mutilation of deceased bodies (but not mutilation of the mourners' bodies and/or other living persons). Further, PMM can take many forms.[12] Because interaction with dead bodies can fall along such a wide spectrum, from positive to negative, and to delimit the scope of this project, I will be focusing on negative instances of PMM. [13]

The chronological scope of my project will span from the Iron Age (beginning *ca.* 1200 BCE) into the early Second Temple Period when the traditions about ancient Israel took a traceable written form (roughly the middle of the Persian Period, *ca.* 400 BCE). More specifically, my research will focus on Iron Age II (1000-550 BCE) and the

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[11]This is usually attributed to Priestly circles, for example, by Smith. I am considering such priests of Judah and Jerusalem as part of the elite; Smith, *Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel*, 163-66; *idem*, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 96-97.

[12]In the ancient Near East, for example, embalming was a positive form of PMM in Egypt. On the other hand, the Neo-Assyrians forced Elamites to grind the bones of their ancestors, which is a negative form of PMM; Pictured in Zainab Bahrani, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2008), 30 fig. 1.5.

[13]Thus, for example, mummification of Jacob and Joseph (Genesis 50) and the cremation of Saul and his sons' bodies (1 Sam 31) do not constitute PMM because these actions seem to be done for the benefit of the dead, and because the narrators do not suggest these are punitive actions.

southern highlands of the Cisjordan.[14] While ancient Israel, ancient Judah, and Yehud certainly have their peculiarities culturally, to assume at the outset a significant difference between this region and its neighbors seems to be a misstep. Looking at evidence from Ugarit, Egypt, Syria, Aram, Turkey, and Mesopotamia can help in determining possible reasons for and significances of post-mortem mutilation.[15]

The two questions that have informed my research are: *What are some of the reasons ancient Israelites, Judahites, and their descendants wrote about PMM? And, how did they use these literary practices of PMM to produce new meanings for themselves and their communities about life after death, and especially as this relates to Yahweh?*

Methodology

The main theory by which I will carry out my proposed dissertation is New Historicism.[16] New Historicism explains how cultural energies and debates have become concretized in texts, allowing me to excavate ancient realities in the present.[17] In particular, I will emphasize the idea that both forms of material production, the literature of HB and the material culture from the archeological record, must be placed on equal footing in reconstructing Iron Age Israel and Judah's conceptions of life after death. In addition, while HB may be helpful, in certain instances, in reconstructing actual perspectives about, and practices related to, life after death in Iron Age Israel and

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[14]I will limit the main body of my research to the Cisjordan, but will pay attention to the ancient Near Eastern context in which ancient Israel is situated.

[15] Much of this data has recently been collected by Chris Hayes; Hayes, *A Covenant with Death: Death in Iron Age II and Its Rhetorical Use in Proto-Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015).

[16]I will use New Historicism in order to emphasize the non-linear nature of history (e.g., Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism,* 2000).

[17] New Historicism emphasizes the way that literature represents cultural formations beyond that of the author(s) in a way that scholars can access distant social energies, allowing for literature to be connected to real bodies in the past. For example: "We wanted to recover in our literary criticism a confident conviction of reality, without giving up the power of literature to sidestep or evade quotidian, without giving up a minimally sophisticated understanding that any text depends upon the absence of the bodies and voices that it represents. We wanted a touch of the real in the way that in an earlier period people wanted the touch of the transcendent"; Gallagher, *New Historicism*, 30-31.

Judahite, HB is definitely useful for understanding various ideologies about life after death in the Second Temple Period about 'ancient Israel.'[18] Thus, utilizing New Historicism, I seek an approach to HB that tries to reconstruct an intellectual history of PMM in Iron Age Israel and Judah.

Significance of Research

The discussion in Biblical Studies about interactions with the dead centered on issues of funerary cult, mortuary cult, and necromancy in the 1980-1990's, where a heated debate about whether or not ancient Israelites believed their dead were beneficent and powerful as well as the chronological appearance of necromancy fulminated. While many scholars including Spronk, Smith, Bloch-Smith, Lewis, and Johnston suggested that there was a common belief in the powers of dead to affect the living in ancient Israel (as there was in the rest of the ancient Near East),[19] Schmidt suggested that necromancy was a foreign practice.[20] More recently a handful of scholars have treated mutilation and

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[18] By 'ancient Israel' I mean the difference between the narratives (or cultural memory) about ancient Israel and Judah presented in the Hebrew Bible and the modern historical reconstructions of scholars drawn from critical approaches to the Hebrew Bible, archeological, sociological, and anthropological methods. Similar approaches to using the Hebrew Bible's accounts of Iron Age Levantine cultures has been carried out, for example, by Daniel Fleming; Daniel E. Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[19] For example, see Spurlock; JoAnn Scurlock, "Ghosts in the Ancient Near East: Weak or Powerful?," *HUCA* 68 (1997): 77-96.

[20] Klaus Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East*; Mark S. Smith and Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "Death and Afterlife in Ugarit and Israel," Review of *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, by Klaus Spronk, *JOAS* 108 no. 2 (1988): 277-84; Theodore J. Lewis, *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit* (HSM 39; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1989); Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead*; idem, "Life in Judah from the Perspective of the Dead," *NEA* 65 no. 2 (2002): 120-130; Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996); idem, "Afterlife Beliefs: Memory as Immortality," *NEA* 63 no. 4 (2000): 236-239; Philip Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 2002). The notion that ancient Mesopotamians believed in the power of the dead was also being established by Scurlock *circa* 1988; Jo Ann Scurlock, "Magical Means of Dealing with Ghosts in Ancient Mesopotamia" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1988); more recently the topic of the cult of dead kin has been treated by Suriano and Sonia; Matthew Suriano, *The Politics of Dead Kings: Dynastic Ancestors in the Book of Kings and Ancient Israel* (FzAT II/42; New York: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); idem, "Breaking Bread with the

PMM in the Hebrew Bible dealing with numerous aspects of this practice.

Saul Olyan has produced a number of essays that deal with the dead.[21] Olyan has concluded that the interruption and/or disturbance of burial were believed to have negative effects on the deceased. That same year, T. M. Lemos notes that the mutilation of enemies brought "shame upon the victim and their community" and established a new, always unbalanced, "power dynamic."[22] Later, in 2010, Francesca Stavrakopoulou suggests that the corpse abuse of Gog in Ezek 39 marks boundaries, symbolizes social abandonment, and serves as a foil for the return of exiles in Ezekiel 37.[23]

Even more recent discussion about death and post-mortem mutilation in the Hebrew Bible, ancient Israel, and the ancient Near East have also been published. Christopher Hayes has recently produced a monograph about conceptions of the afterlife in Iron Age II Judah related to Proto-Isaiah (Isa 1-40).[24] In his dissertation, Carl Pace seeks to look at the desecration or ill treatment of dead bodies, the names of deceased people and/or the memories of the dead. His goal is investigate the various ways that the dead could be negatively acted upon and the meanings of such acts.[25] In 2016, Olyan looks at four decapitation texts in Samuel and Kings, concluding that the act of decapitation may communicate the continuation or discontinuation of a political

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Dead: Katumuwa's Stele, Hosea 9:4, and the Early History of the Soul." *JOAS* 134 (2014): 385–405; idem, "Sheol, the Tomb, and the Problem of Postmortem Existence." *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 16 (2016); Kerry Sonia, "The Enduring Dead: The Cult of Dead Kin in Ancient Israel" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 2017).

[21] Saul M. Olyan, "Some Neglected Aspects of Israelite Internment Ideology," *JBL* 124 no. 4 (2006): 601-16.

[22] T. M. Lemos, "Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible," *JBL* 125 no. 2 (2006): 225-241.

[23] Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Gog's Grave and the Use and Abuse of Corpses in Ezekiel 39:11-20," *JBL* 129 no. 1 (2010): 67-84.

[24] Christopher Hayes, *A Covenant with Death: Death in the Iron Age II and Its Rhetorical Uses in Proto-Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015).

[25] Carl Pace, "Over my Dead Body: Desecration of the Dead and the Afterlife in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 2015).

relationship and that the protection of corpses symbolized social bonds between the dead and living.[26] And, most recently, in 2018, Rita Dolce has published a study about decapitation in the ancient Near East, arguing that decapitation has a special symbolic meaning in the ancient Near East.[27]

These scholars have begun a discussion about PMM in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East, they have focused their research on literature and to a lesser extent on archaeology. There even seems to be the beginnings of cataloguing all the instances of PMM in ancient Israel and its Near Eastern context. I will utilize their research as the foundation for my own work about the literary production of PMM in Iron Age Israel and Judah, and specifically to begin describing the various elements of ancient, Judahite necropolitics.

In terms of methodology, by combining both disciplines, literature and material culture, I hope a picture can emerge presenting a panoramic view of PMM ancient Israel and Judah's literature. What I hope to add to the above conversations is (1) a demonstration that New Historicism is a workable methodology for utilizing HB to write histories for Iron Age Israel and Judah, (2) a careful survey of HB texts that deal with PMM, (3) a reframing of icon destruction towards PMM, flattening the distinction often made between divine bodies and human bodies, (4) and a correlation of a number of diverse phenomena in HB and Iron Age archeology related to life after death towards a more concrete ideology about Yahweh's relationship to dead bodies that I am calling

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[26]Saul Olyan, "The Instrumental Dimensions of Ritual Violence against Corpses in Biblical Texts," in *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible: New Perspectives* (Saul Olyan, ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[27]Rita Dolce, *"Losing One's Head" in the Ancient Near East: Interpretation and Meaning of Decapitation* (Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East; New York: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2018).

ancient, Judahite necropolitics.

Chapter Outlines

In Chapter 1 ("Life after Death") I will (1) set some expected parameters for the meaning of PMM in HB, (2) state my thesis, (3) re-conceptualize Mbembe's "necropolitics" into an ancient necropolitics specifically related to literary production and burial practices, and (4) outline how I will be using New Historicism to analyze both HB and material culture in order to write a history of PMM in ancient Israel and Judah. In Chapter 2 ("I Have a Story to Tell"), I will (1) argue that PMM texts in HB as a whole communicate the perspectives of elites, both during the Iron Age, but also later in the exilic and post-exilic eras, (2) provide a synchronic analysis of PMM texts in HB related to actions, actors, victims, explanations, group versus individual dynamics, and human versus divine dynamics, demonstrating that PMM is focused on elites as well as rival deities to Yahweh, and (3) provide a diachronic analysis of PMM texts in HB demonstrating that their peculiarities are related to (a) elite burial practices, (b) the general aniconism of Judahites and specific cult reforms, and (c) the shift toward an anti-chthonic Yahwism. In Chapter 3 ("More Money, More Problems"), I will correlate two features of elite burial practice in Iron Age II Judah – the immense popularity among elites of family-style, rock-cut, bench-tombs and the creation of a few individual bench-tombs by ultra-elites – with the prevalence of PPM texts that focus on entire families and of individual usurpers, anti-Davidides, Baal worshippers, and Asherah adherents. In Chapter 4, ("The Sky Is the Limit"), I will argue that (1) Iron Age Israelite and Judahite aniconism is peculiar, especially when we view the vehement critique in the literature of HB with its ANE

context,[28] (2) from a diachronic perspective, Israelite and Judahite aniconism via interaction with divine bodies changes over time, beginning with claims of icon kidnapping (for example, in Hosea), moving into icon killing and PMM (in dtrH), and culminating in the claims that other deities did not exist, only being composed of wood and stone (for example, in Second Isaiah[29]), and (3) PMM of divine bodies is higher in Iron Age II literature in HB, as compared with exilic and post-exilic literature, suggesting that the elite's production of aniconism during this period was still concerned with the existence of divine bodies, conceptualizing their destruction similar to that of human bodies, through killing and PMM. In Chapter 5 ("Someone Must Die"), I will argue (1) pre-8th century BCE Yahwism was tolerant of most common ANE mortuary and funerary practices, (2) during the 8th century BCE some religious leaders began to distance Yahweh from the cult of the dead and contact with dead bodies, (3) the trend toward anti-chthonic Yahwism becomes more evident in HB texts from the late Iron Age II, exilic, and early Persian Period, (4) Iron Age II PMM texts can be correlated with the emergence of a new, non-material and non-chthonic relationship of Yahweh with the dead and their bodies, thus making PMM via human agents one half of Yahweh's new role in life after death, and (5) the combination of increased Iron Age II PMM textual production, increased bench-tomb burial construction, vehement aniconism, and anti-

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[28]The idea of ancient Israelite aniconism has been popularized by Mettinger. However, Lewis and Uehlinger have noted numerous drawbacks of his work, setting the topic on firmer archeological and theoretical grounds; Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image? Israelite Aniconism in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995); Theodore J. Lewis, "Review: Divine Images and Aniconism in Ancient Israel," *JAOS* 118 no. 1 (1998): 36-53; Christopher Uehlinger, "Israelite Aniconism in Contexte," *Biblica* 77 no. 4 (1996): 540-9*;* see also van der Toorn; K. van der Toorn, *Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Leuven: Peeters, 1997).

[29] Holter, *Second Isaiah's Idol Fabrication Passages*; Nathaniel B. Levtow, *Images of Others Iconic: Politics in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008); Jill Anne Middlemas*, The Divine Image: Prophetic Aniconic Rhetoric and Its Contribution to the Aniconism Debate* (Goettingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

chthonic Yahwism constitutes part of a new cultural formation that I am calling 'new, Judahite necropolitics.' And, in Chapter 6 ("Conclusion"), I will summarize my arguments in the previous chapters, highlighting the contributions to the larger discussion about death, post-mortem mutilation, and the historiography of ancient Israel. I will add a brief discussion about the implications of my research as it relates to the beliefs about the afterlife by ancient Israelites, connecting my work with the discussions of bench-tombs as ritual space by Osborne and Suriano.[30] Finally, I will make some suggestions for further research on the topics of the historiography of life after death in ancient Israel and Judah. In an appendix I will include charts of PMM in HB, organized in terms of actions, actors, victims, group/individual, and chronology. I will also include a list of instances of PMM in ancient Near Eastern literature and art used in this dissertation.

Statement of Bibliographic Method

The research on this topic begain in Dr. Amy Erickson's The Body and Sexuality in Spring 2013 where I wrote what would become "Head Hunting in 1 Samuel: Dagan, the Philistine, Saul."[31] I have been discussing this topic, PMM in HB, with colleagues at various meeting and via email since Spring 2014. Besides consulting the works mentioned in the Significance of Research section (above), mining their bibliographies for further primary and secondary sources, I have focused my research on nine topics: (1) mutilation, (2) decapitation, (3) cannibalism, (4) dismemberment, (5) the archeology of death, (6) ancient Israelite and Judahite religions, (7) the historiography of ancient Israel and Judah, (8) mortuary and funerary archeology of the Levant during Late Bronze Age and Iron Age, (9) the ancient Near East, focusing on life after death, (10) aniconism, and

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[30] Osborne, *Secondary Mortuary Practices*; Suriano, "Sheol, the Tomb, and the Problem of Postmortem Existence."

[31] I presented this essay at the Rocky-Mountain Regional AAR/SBL in 2014.

(11) New Historicism. I have used JSTOR, Worldcat.org, the Iliff Library Database, specifically EBSCOHost's ATLA database, and the dissertation database at DU's library. I have found a broad range of resources about PMM ranging from the third millennium BCE to the present day.

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