

Gendering Revealed Knowledge? Prophecy, Positionality, and Perspective in Ancient Jewish Apocalyptic and Related Literatures

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Are women *included* or *excluded* in our ancient sources? And when they are included are they depicted *positively* or *negatively*? Much of the discussion of gender in scholarship on Second Temple Judaism has revolved around questions of this sort. In this, specialist studies in this area have followed the bulk of historical research on antiquity more generally. When scholars of antiquity first turned their attention to gender in the late twentieth century, it was initially with an aim of recovering the role of women in the history of religions, cultures, etc., countering and correcting the earlier scholarly tendency to ignore altogether even those references to women that were present within commonly-studied ancient writings.¹ To the degree that this initial task of recovery revealed the gap between [1] modern scholarly assumptions of a male-centered normative past as the presumed proper subject of “History” and [2] ancient material and literary data that destabilize this assumption, its results prompted intensive reassessment of the degree to which some ancient sources might contain positive representations of women that could provide resources for constructive critique, even as others might contain negative representations of women that reveal part of the intellectual genealogy of modern misogyny, in general, and the systematic neglect of women in modern scholarship, in particular.²

¹ Perhaps foremost is the tirelessly pioneering work of Tal Ilan in this regard; see *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995) as well as her essays reprinted in *Integrating Women into Second Temple History* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1999); as Maxine Grossman notes in her review of the latter for the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* (4.4. [2003]), Ilan’s work powerfully reflects the broader progression in scholarship on gender in historical scholarship more broadly, that is “from an uncritical focus on ‘women,’ to a concern for feminist critical awareness... to an argument for an integrated feminist historiography that transcends rather than merely complementing earlier masculinist histories.” With respect to Second Temple Judaism, other landmark works include Eileen Schuller, “Women of the Exodus in Biblical Retellings of the Second Temple Period,” in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, ed. Peggy Lynne Day (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), 195-202; Schuller, “Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet of Qumran Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects*, ed. M. O. Wise, N. Golb, J. J. Collins and D. G. Pardee (Annals of the New York Academy of Science 722; New York: 1993), 115–131; Betsy Halpern-Amaru, *The Empowerment of Women in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Amy-Jill Levine, ed., “*Women Like This*”: *New Perspectives on Jewish Women in The Greco-Roman World* (Atlanta: SBL, 1991). Notable also are studies that treat the end of the Second Temple period alongside Rabbinic Judaism, the Jesus movement, early Christianity, and/or Late Antiquity; e.g., Bernadette Broton, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (Atlanta: SBL, 1982); Ross Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions Among Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (Oxford UP, 1992); Carol Meyers, Toni Craven, and Ross Kraemer, eds., *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books and the New Testament* (NY: Houghton-Mifflin, 2000). Consistent with the greater availability of epigraphical and material data for Jewish life in Late Antiquity, and thus the potential to use such data to situate and counterbalance literary representations, the discussion of gender in Rabbinic literature and post-70 Judaism has been richer; recent examples include Cynthia Baker, *Rebuilding the House of Israel: Architectures of Gender in Jewish Antiquity* (Stanford UP 2002); Mika Ahuvia and Sarit Kattan Gribetz, “The Daughters of Israel: An Analysis of the Term in Late Ancient Jewish Sources,” *JQR* 108 (2018): 1-27.

² E.g., as especially in studies from the 1980s and 1990s like Charles W. Trenchard, *Ben Sira's View on Women* (Chico, CA: SBL, 1982); Dorothy Sly, *Philo's Perceptions of Women* (Atlanta: SBL, 1990).

Here as elsewhere, however, the very success of such efforts has also exposed their explanatory limits. Once we have successfully reconfigured our vision of what of the past is worthy to be studied as “History” so as to include people who are not *men*, for instance, it becomes misleading to consider “gender” as a topic to be analyzed only (or even mainly) with attention to *women*.³ To do so, in fact, can risk reinscribing the very assumption that lead earlier historians to ignore women in the first place—that is: the assumption that maleness is a neutral state whereas femaleness is a position of marked particularity (which, notably, remains naturalized enough in our broader culture that is commonplace, still, to call a male academic, etc., simply an “academic,” even while specifying a female one, etc., as a “female academic”).⁴

To be sure, it has long been taken as an axiom of critical feminist theory that—as Donna Haraway famous put it—“gender is a concept developed to contest the naturalization of sexual difference.”⁵ Within the study of Jewish history, however, much still remains of what Miriam Peskowitz terms the “misnomer of engendering,” whereby “masculinity is still assumed as the universal, and femininity continues to function as the mark of difference.”⁶ And perhaps all the more so for periods, such as the Second Temple period, for which the surviving source materials are almost wholly by and about men.⁷ Even as recently as 2004,

³ I focus below on women, consistent with my interest here in the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, but my emphasis here on expanding our analytical inclusivity vis-à-vis gender is here meant also as a reminder of the range of other non-male positions that traditional scholarly epistemologies exclude *both* by virtue of presuming men as the proper object of the historical study of the religious, literary, political, etc., past *and* by projecting a cis-male, heterosexual, white/European/Western, etc., gaze as the purportedly “neutral” and “objective” position from which the very enterprise of scholarship extends.

⁴ What Richard Dyer notes of whiteness in America, for instance, could be no less said of maleness in the modern West: “There is no more powerful position than that of being ‘just’ human. The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity” (“The Matter of Whiteness,” in *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism*, ed. Paula Rothberg [2nd edition; NY: Worth Publishing, 2005], 10). For applications of this and other insights from critical race theory to ancient identification and knowledge-claims related to Jewishness and Christianness, see A. Y. Reed, “After ‘Origins,’ Beyond ‘Identity,’ and Before ‘Religion(s),’” in *Jewish-Christianity and the History of Judaism* (TSAJ 171; Tübingen: Mohr, 2018), 389-428, and see below for efforts to experiment along similar lines with respect to gender.

⁵ Donna Haraway, “‘Gender’ for a Marxist Dictionary: The Sexual Politics of a Word,” in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), 131. Haraway elsewhere explains that “gender is a field of structured and structuring difference, in which the tones of extreme localization, of the intimately personal and individualized body, vibrate in the same field with global high-tension emissions” (“Situated Knowledges,” *Feminist Studies* 14 [1988]: 575-97 at 588). Anticipating more recent theoretical discussions of materiality and the social lives of things, she further stresses there how gendered bodies, like other objects, “materialize in social interaction,” even as bodies are also simultaneously agents whose “boundaries shift from within” (p. 595). In her view, thus, “feminist embodiment, then, is not about fixed location in a reified body, female or otherwise, but about nodes in fields, inflections in orientations, and responsibility for difference” (p. 588).

⁶ Miriam Peskowitz, “Engendering Jewish Religious History,” in *Judaism Since Gender*, ed. M. Peskowitz and L. Levitt (New York: Routledge, 1997), 30.

⁷ I should stress that the trajectories that I am here describing are meant narrowly in relation to this one subfield. Although sharing the cultural catalyst of twentieth-century socio-political concerns for gender equity as well as the theoretical catalyst of feminist critical theory, the trajectories of research even in different sectors of Religious Studies have progressed quite differently from one another, not least because those concerned with contemporary phenomena have evidentiary and analytical challenges that differ from the challenges of considering gender within historical research. I thus deliberately avoid here the imposition of

for instance, Maxine Grossman notes how "there is a tendency among historians to elide the concepts of 'gender' and 'women,' so that a gendered reading of the [Dead Sea] Scrolls is one that asks (literarily) how *women* are imagined in a given text or (historically) whether *women* were present in the covenant community."⁸ In this, Grossman suggests that specialists have missed an analytical opportunity: inasmuch as "the building-blocks of gender—the detailed elements defining what makes people masculine or feminine—vary from culture to culture and ideologically within cultures," and "gender is not the same thing as 'natural' sexual difference, nor is it the same thing as 'women,'" she calls for attention to "gender" in the sense of "the culturally-constructed and socially-specific knowledge of sexual difference"—even when interpreting sources, like the *Damascus Document*, that do not themselves focus upon women.⁹

To this, I would add the need for further attention to the ways in which we as scholars can unintentionally impose *our own* "culturally-constructed and socially-specific knowledge of sexual difference" upon the ancient sources we interpret, especially by virtue of deeply-ingrained disciplinary habits that shape how we frame out questions and interpret our sources. In a recent article, "Gendering Heavenly Secrets," I suggested that this can often be the case even when we seek to recover the place of women in ancient literature. Inasmuch as such efforts habitually focus on the question of whether this-or-that text or author is positive or negative to women, they can risk the anachronistic retrojection of our own senses of what counts as "positive" or "negative" as if they were stable poles in some natural or universal sense of sexed difference.¹⁰ The anachronism therefore remains a danger when we judge representations from the past as empowering to women in a sense that is proto-feminist, no less than when we judge representations as misogynistic—precisely because the danger is embedded in *our own* act of judging and the analytical frames that *we* bring to it.¹¹

There, as my test-case, I looked to ancient traditions about fallen angels and their wives that have often been read as if self-evidently linked to the denigration of women's wisdom as "magic." There has been a scholarly habit of "inferring that ambivalent ritual knowledge is 'magic' whenever associated with women," and to the degree that this habit forms part of a broader pattern of the "imposition of modern values and categories of knowledge upon ancient ones," I suggested that it might be useful to look to the different way in which such knowledge is variously framed and presented within the relevant sources in relation to *their*

labels like "second-wave," "third-wave," etc., not just because of their problematic centering of the experiences of white women in the United States, but also because I personally find them misleadingly unilinear and teleological. For a thoughtful discussion of these labels and their limits, see Nyasha Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 3-18.

⁸ Maxine Grossman, "Reading for Gender in the Damascus Document," *DSD* 11 (2004): 212–39 at 213.

⁹ Grossman, "Reading for Gender," 213.

¹⁰ A. Y. Reed, "Gendering Heavenly Secrets? Women, Angels, and the Problem of Misogyny and 'Magic,'" in *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, ed. Kimberly Stratton and Dayna S. Kalleres (Oxford UP, 2014), esp. p. 110, etc., on "the modern habit of judging ancient writings as more or less misogynous, as if such judgments had some universal, normativizing force that exempts from the dangers of anachronism." In other words: our ancient sources reflect the values of patriarchal societies, and the heritage of the modern West is patriarchal as well, but this does not mean that gender functions the same therein, or that images of women are stable across time.

¹¹ Especially when such frames are binary; after all, as Judith Butler reminds us, "power... operates in the production of that very binary frame for thinking about gender"; *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1990), xxviii.

own theorizing about knowledge.¹² Rather than presuming that those types of knowledge associated with women were always and everywhere devalued, I thus attempted to map some of the variegated range of ways in which knowledge is gendered in the depictions of fallen angels teaching their wives in the *Book of the Watchers* in the third century BCE, the Greek translations thereof, and their rich reception in patristic, alchemical, and midrashic sources across the first millennium CE.

Attention to the variegation within our ancient sources, in turn, helps to highlight (and relativize and historicize) the gendering of knowledge within modern scholarship as well. It is not just that many scholars—both women and men—have tended “to read the relevant ancient sources through the lens of the assumption that any association of women with knowledge must imply the condemnation of that knowledge as witchcraft, and to adopt the circular reasoning whereby sources read in this fashion are then used to support arguments about the purportedly universal idea of women as witches”;¹³ our own enculturated habits of gendered knowing can shape even our interpretations on a microlevel. Consistent with modern senses of the power of the “male gaze,” for instance, scholars have often taken for granted that any ancient reference to men seeing women is meant to convey male agency and female passivity. But as a result—I there suggested—scholars have overlooked some cases in which ancient sources frame the agency of seen women and seeing men in precisely the opposite terms, consistent with ancient optic theories of intromission; the *Testament of Reuben*, for instance, makes much more sense when read through the lens of intromission and its impact on the literary poetics of erotic desire in the Roman Empire in first two centuries CE than through the lens of the contemporary cinematic trope of the “male gaze.”¹⁴

¹² On the importance of attending to “native theories” see Jacqueline Vayntrub, “Proverbs and the Limits of Poetry” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2015), esp. 370; Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford UP 2016), 117-18 and *passim*.

¹³ Reed, “Gendering Heavenly Secrets,” 118, there engaging as representative of that broader trend, e.g., William R. G. Loader, *Enoch, Levi and Jubilees on Sexuality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 15–16; Rebecca Lesses, “They Revealed Secrets to Their Wives: The Transmission of Magical Knowledge in 1 Enoch,” in *With Letters of Light—Otiyot Shel Or: Studies in Early Jewish Apocalypticism and Mysticism in Honour of Rachel Eilior*, ed. D. Arbel and A. Orlov, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 196–222; cf. Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine*, 221–25; Ilan, *Silencing the Queen: The Literary Histories of Shelamzion and Other Jewish Women* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006), 229–31; Ilan, “Woman in the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha,” in *A Question of Sex? Gender and Difference in the Hebrew Bible and Beyond*, ed. D. W. Rooke (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 126–44.

¹⁴ The theory of the “male gaze” was developed with reference to film and Cinema Studies in Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6–18. On the limits of its universalized application even to eighteenth-century sources was noted already by Rivka Swenson, “Optics, Gender, and the Eighteenth-Century Gaze: Looking at Eliza Haywood’s *Anti-Pamela*,” *The Eighteenth-Century* 51.1–2 (2010): 27–43, stressing that “her important thesis... makes spectating and agency into synonymous, as well as masculinized, conditions,” but “potential problems are that the theory stabilizes subject/object binaries and threatens to offer a monolithic view of sexual difference and gendered experience” such that “the original and circular construct of gazer-as-agent needs another look” (p. 29). In Swenson’s view, “critics have tended to invariably privilege the role of the spectator, reconstructing female spectators within or against the terms of Walter Benjamin’s observant flâneur, Michel Foucault’s Panoptic surveyor, or Jacques Lacan’s (or Jean-Paul Sartre’s) spectacle-turned-spectator,” but what remains necessary is to “confront the circular logic that must be unpacked if we are to reconstruct the historicized position of the (female) spectacle as either symbol or reality” (p. 29). I take up the latter task in a provisional sense at the end of Reed, “Gendering Heavenly Secrets” (see esp. pp. 133-38), in response to Ishay Rosen-Zvi’s use of the Mulveyan meme of the “male gaze” to interpret *T. Reuben* 5:1–6:1 in “Bilhah the Temptress: The *Testament of Reuben* and the Making of Rabbinic

In what follows, I would like to extend this inquiry into seeing, knowing, and gender in ancient apocalypses and related literatures, albeit by shifting my focus from the ambivalent ritual domains of so-called “magic” to the elevated epistemological domains of prophesy. The Second Temple period has long been studied as a key era for the transformation of earlier biblical prophesy, typically with a focus on the emergence of apocalyptic literature beginning in the third and second centuries BCE. Yet it is also from this time that we find the emergence of the only surviving tradition of Second Temple Jewish literary production that uses a female voice and persona to convey textualized claims of revealed knowledge and prophetic truth—namely, the *Sibylline Oracles*.

Within modern scholarly narratives about the transformation of earlier biblical prophesy in the Second Temple period, however, the *Sibylline Oracles* have been largely peripheral and marginalized. Nor is it merely because of their “non-canonical” status or eventual transmission by Christians. The *Book of the Watchers* and other Enochic writings, for instance, have attracted intensive scholarly interest, both in relation to the origins of apocalyptic literature and also in their own right, as Hellenistic-era writings that inaugurate an Enochic discourse that continues throughout the Second Temple period and well beyond—both through the production of texts by Jews (e.g., *Book of Dreams*, *Epistle of Enoch*, and *Book of Giants* in the second century BCE; *Similitudes* and *2 Enoch* in the first century BCE/CE; *Sefer Hekhalot/3 Enoch* in Late Antiquity) and through the continued redactional and anthological work surrounding them by Jews and Christians (e.g., 4QEnoch^C; *Mashafa Henok Nabi/1 Enoch*).¹⁵ The *Third Sibylline Oracle* began to take shape in the second century BCE,¹⁶ and it marks a similarly important inauguratory moment—articulating a new form and vision of revealed knowledge that extends and transforms earlier models from biblical prophecy with enduringly influential results through the Second Temple period and beyond, first among Jews and later among Christians: it inaugurates a Sibylline discourse¹⁷ within Jewish literary tradition that continues for centuries thereafter, both through the production of new texts (e.g., the *Fourth* and *Fifth Sibylline Oracles* in the first century CE; *Tiburtine Sibyl* in Late Antiquity) and through continued redactional and anthological work surrounding them.¹⁸ Yet, even by comparison with the *Book of the*

Anthropology,” *JQR* 96 (2006): 65–94 at 75–76. The present essay attempts further to extend that task to other native theories of seeing, in this case in relation to revelation and knowledge.

¹⁵ On this literary, redactional, and anthological activity see discussion and further references in A. Y. Reed, “Categorization, Collection, and the Construction of Continuity: *1 Enoch* and *3 Enoch* in and beyond ‘Apocalypticism’ and ‘Mysticism,’” *MTSR* 29 (2017): 268–311.

¹⁶ On the second century BCE date of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, see now Ashley Bacchi, “Uncovering Jewish Creativity: Gender and Intertextuality in Book III of the *Sibylline Oracles*” (PhD dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 2015), 42–50—there making a case to place much of this work in the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (ca. 186–145 BCE).

¹⁷ The term “Sibylline discourse” is innovated and richly developed by Olivia Stewart Lester in *Prophetic Rivalry, Gender, and Economics: A Study in Revelation and Sibylline Oracles 4–5* (WUNT2; Tübingen: Mohr, forthcoming), esp. 151–66—to whom I am grateful for sharing with me pre-publication proofs of her groundbreaking and important work.

¹⁸ On the *Fourth* and *Fifth Sibylline Oracles* see now Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*. On the Tiburtine Sibyl, see Stephen Shoemaker, “The Tiburtine Sibyl, the Last Emperor, and the Early Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition,” in *Forbidden Texts from the Western Frontier*, ed. Tony Burke (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015). 218–44. On the early Christian repurposing of Sibylline discourse in the *First* and *Second Sibylline Oracles* see Jane L. Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and*

Watchers and other early Enochic literature, the *Third Sibylline Oracle* has suffered notable scholarly neglect.

Especially given the notable fascination with *Sibylline Oracles* from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages into the Renaissance and well beyond,¹⁹ its neglect by modern scholars is somewhat puzzling, and we might well wonder whether this neglect roots, at least in part, in a distinctively *modern* discomfort with the association of a female figure of this sort with revealed knowledge. It is certainly quite striking, as Ashley Bacchi notes, that even specialist research on these writings has tended to focus on the choice of a “pagan” figure rather than on her gender.²⁰ When we do turn our attention to gender, however, this corpus gives a somewhat unique opportunity to explore ancient Jewish examples of the framing of prophecy in terms of a female positionality.²¹ To be sure, there is much to be gained by asking how women or men are narratively represented in relation to prophesy and/or how revelation is rhetorically presented in relation to women or men within the various “native theories” of knowledge within our ancient sources. Yet the female persona and positioning of the *Sibylline Oracles* also offers an opportunity to pose different types of questions—not just about rhetoric and representation from a presumed neutral-qua-male gaze, but also about vision, perspective, and the very possibility of a female gaze: Through whose eyes is the reader of revealed literature permitted to see history, the future, and the heavens? From whose embodied perspective do we learn about the experience of receiving divine knowledge? Through whose senses and sensations is this knowledge located, situated, and mediated, in its microdynamics and materiality? Whose voice conveys the resultant knowledge, and what are the epistemological ramifications of the framing of prophetic knowledge from the perspective of authorizing figure who bears gendered as well as other embodied particularities? In what follows, I would first like to reflect upon the potential value of posing and pushing such questions, then provisionally experiment with exploring them through an analysis of the different ways that gendered positioning functions to inflect epistemological claims both within different strata of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* and in relation to early Enochic apocalypses like the *Astronomical Book* and *Book of Watchers*.

Second Books (Oxford UP, 2007).

¹⁹ See further, e.g., Jessica Malay, *Prophecy and Sibylline Imagery in the Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 2010).

²⁰ This point has been deftly and decisively demonstrated by Bacchi in her survey of the history of scholarship in “Uncovering Jewish Creativity,” stressing how “the scholarly attempt to find a suitable rationale for the Jewish author’s choice of a Sibyl reflects a discomfort that is rooted in preconceived notions of what are and are not acceptable conduits for Jewish transmission, appropriation, and innovation” (p. 11). See further below on her corrective to this tendency, to which my insights here and throughout are deeply indebted.

²¹ For this, the main precedent is Huldah, and it notable that we see a similar pattern in her reception: within the narrative world of 2 Kings 22, notes, the king, priests, and scribes seem to find it perfectly natural to consult a woman so as to determine the will of God; if anything, as Wilda Gafney notes, her gender is matter of “nonchalant presentation”; *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel* (Fortress, 2008), 97-98. Modern scholars, however, have found the king’s consultation of her endlessly puzzling—to the degree that much research on this figure has focused on the question of why Josiah did not consult Jeremiah or Zephaniah instead (a pattern traced and noted, e.g., by Lowell Handy, “The Role of Huldah in Josiah’s Cult Reforms,” *ZAW* 106 [1994]: 40-53 at 40). Yet as Esther Hamori notes, “The inclination of scholars—from the rabbis to now—to ask why Josiah consulted a female prophet reflects the issue of interpreters, not the text itself”; *Women’s Divination in Biblical Literature* (Yale UP 2015), 154. What I suggest here is something similar for the *Sibylline Oracles*: her gender has been a problem for modern scholars in a manner that it was not for ancient authors/redactors, tradents, readers, etc.

1. From Pseudepigraphy to Positionality

In experimenting with shifting my analytical focus from the representation of knowledge to its positioning, I here take inspiration from two recent trends—one in the specialist study of so-called “OT pseudepigrapha” and the other in the contemporary theoretical discussions about identity and difference.

It was long common, as Martha Himmelfarb notes, for modern scholarly studies on ancient Jewish and Christian apocalypses to “strip away the narrative ‘frame’ to get to the revelatory core.”²² More recent research, however, has newly attended to these frames and the claims therein made about authority and textuality alike. Rather than reduce the pseudepigraphy of apocalyptic and related literatures to modern notions of forgery or fictive authorial self-concealment, Himmelfarb, Hindy Najman, Eva Mroczek, and others have attended to the particular personae of the authorizing figures through whom claims to revealed knowledge are thereby voiced.²³ What has become clear, in the process, is that the choices of authorizing figures in works like the *Book of the Watchers*, *Jubilees*, and *4 Ezra* are not arbitrary but rather participate in a discourse surrounding these figures (e.g., Enoch, Moses, Ezra) that creatively shapes the meanings of the knowledge thereby framed. In some cases, in fact, the modulation of positionalities and perspectives can serve *both* as an orchestrating principle for the redactional interweaving of earlier sources or traditions *and* also as an engine of literary artistry in its own right—such as, for instance, in the retelling of angelic descent from distinctively human, angelic, and divine perspectives within the *Book of the Watchers*, or in the modulation in *Jubilees* of perspectives from heaven with perspectives on earth.²⁴

It is now newly possible to bring similar questions to bear on the *Sibylline Oracles*, due to two recent dissertations that explore the gendering of Sibylline discourse in rich and sophisticated terms: Ashley Bacchi’s 2015 GTU dissertation, which focuses on the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, and Olivia Stewart Lester’s 2017 Yale dissertation, which considers the *Fourth* and *Fifth Sibylline Oracles* in conversation with the Book of Revelation (now forthcoming in revised form as a monograph).²⁵ Bacchi and Lester both show how the choice of the Sibyl is not just empty artifice or arbitrary frame but conveys meaning both in its own right and in relation to the content of these works. Bacchi shows how modern scholars have long explored this choice of figure almost solely in relation to the choice of a speaker well

²² Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford UP, 1993) 102.

²³ Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*; Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Najman, *Past Renewals* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Najman, *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future* (Cambridge UP 2014). Note also my treatment of Enochic discourse in A. Y. Reed, “Pseudepigraphy and/as Prophecy: Continuity and Transformation in the Formation and Reception of Early Enochic Writings,” in *Revelation, Literature, and Community in Late Antiquity*, ed. P. Townsend and M. Vidas (TSAJ 146; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 25–42.

²⁴ For the former, see further A. Y. Reed, “Heavenly Ascent, Angelic Descent, and the Transmission of Knowledge in 1 Enoch 6–16,” in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, ed. R. S. Boustani and A. Y. Reed (Cambridge UP, 2004), 47–66, and for the latter, Reed, *Demons, Angels, and Writing in Ancient Judaism* (Cambridge UP, forthcoming). On this multiplication and literary play with positions also in Hellenistic literature of the time—including with respect to gender—see, e.g., Peter Bing, “Impersonation of Voice in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo*,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 123 (1993): 181–98.

²⁵ I.e., Bacchi, “Uncovering”; Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*.

known to “pagans,”²⁶ and she argues for the importance of considering also the choice of a woman, not least as a marked choice within a Jewish literary tradition of textualizing prophecy that is otherwise almost wholly dominated by men.²⁷ Whereas Bacchi focuses on the inauguration of this literary tradition and its relation to broader trends in Greek literature, especially under early Ptolemies in Alexandria, during the early Hellenistic age, Lester looks also to later examples to sketch out what she terms a “Sibylline discourse,” exploring the gendered character of the prophetic acts here associated with the Sibyl by situating them in relation to women and prophecy throughout the Mediterranean world in the early Roman period.²⁸

My own expertise is not in the study of women in the ancient world, nor in feminist historiography or gender theory; indeed, if anything, I have perhaps resisted the conventionalized social practice and enculturated expectations of modern scholarship whereby *all* women are typically expected to perform such expertise. I do, however, have a longstanding interest in both ancient Jewish and modern scholarly approaches to knowledge, especially as pertaining to questions of identity and difference within, before, and beyond “religion(s).” If I can contribute something to our conversations here, then, it is perhaps to draw out some of the ramifications of recent research on the *Sibylline Oracles* for our study of ancient apocalyptic and related approaches to ordering knowledge, but also to help to bring insights from recent theoretical discussions of identity and difference further into conversation with historical research on Second Temple Judaism and gender alike.

In my view, here as elsewhere, the postmodern theoretical project of critiquing Western modernity can often provide critical resources for the historian interested in avoiding anachronism. In the Epilogue to a forthcoming volume reprinting my essays on “Jewish-Christianity,” for instance, I proposed that much might be gained by reorienting our discussions of ancient identities, moving beyond the mapping of “diversity” and the enumeration of differences within our own *modern* taxonomic system of “religion(s),” and experimenting instead with reorienting our purview to account for some of the multiplicity of different *ancient* perspectives articulated from different ancient positions (e.g., within, between, and beyond “Jewish” and “Christian,” but also from different locales).²⁹ Rather than assuming different identities are analogous and thus organizing our own knowledge on the basis of the taxonomies of those sources and voices that we now center as retrospectively normative, I there suggested that we might wish to take seriously how different the same

²⁶ Bacchi, “Uncovering,” esp. 53-87. Among the results, Bacchi shows, is a focus on source-critical distinctions between what is “Jewish” vs. “Greek” therein; conversely, she shows how attention to the Sibyl’s gender enables a recovery of her position as “a complex persona which fits the needs and creative capacity of Hellenistic Judaism, rather than a fragmented persona that embodies the bifurcation of Greek and Jewish identity” (p. 7).

²⁷ To be sure, biblical literature does include references to some women as prophetesses (e.g., Miriam in Exodus 15:20-21; Deborah in Judges 4:4-5; Huldah in 2 Kings 22:14; Noadiah in Neh 6:14; cf. the unnamed women in Isa 8:3; Ezek 13:17-23). For a comparison of the types of knowledge associated with these figures to that associated with the Sibyl see Bacchi, “Uncovering,” 72-76. What I would add to her excellent analysis there is the *Sibylline Oracles* stands out as a *textualized* collection of oracular speech associated with a prophetess—a phenomenon wholly reserved for men (i.e., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, et al.) within biblical and other ancient Jewish literary cultures.

²⁸ Lester also richly discusses this case as an example of the limits of modern notions of authorship and “forgery” to fit ancient practices of “pseudepigraphy,” not least because the depiction of prophecy in Sibylline discourse distinguishes prophet and scribe; *Prophetic Rivalry*, esp. 141-61.

²⁹ Reed, “After ‘Origins,’ Beyond ‘Identity,’ and Before ‘Religion(s).’”

socio-historical realities can look from different positions and perspectives—for which, moreover, it can be especially illuminating to labor to see the past through the lens of more marginalized sources, not least because they can sometimes expose what more hegemonic sources most naturalize and hide.³⁰ In this, I took inspiration especially from bell hook's classic 1989 essay "Choosing the Margin as a Space for Radical Openness" and its continued rich reception in critical race theory.³¹ Here, I would here like to experiment with a similar shift with respect to gender, not least by attending to parallel points about vision, position, and location made in Haraway's classic 1988 essay on "Situated Knowledges" and its continued rich reception in feminist theory and new materialism.³²

"Vision is always a question of the power to see," as Haraway there reminds us,³³ and if this has been easy to forget, it is perhaps because scholarly and other modern Western epistemologies have been predicated on the naturalization of certain types of vision as neutral, disembodied, and thus "objective": the "unmarked positions of Man and White" have been treated as if universal rather than partial in their capacity for vision, in the sense that it is "the gaze... that makes unmarked category claim the power to see and not be seen, to

³⁰ Writing of race in America, George Lipsitz suggests that "the significance of marginalized peoples to cultural studies does not lie in their marginality, but rather in the role that marginalization (not to mention oppression and suppression) plays in shaping intellectual and cultural categories that affect everyone" (*The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* [Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998], 180)—much the same point might be made for gender. Haraway similar notes, for instance, that "there is good reason to believe that vision is better from below the brilliant space platforms of the powerful" ("Situated Knowledges," 583) even as she also already cautions of the "serious danger of romanticizing and/or appropriating the vision of the less powerful while claiming to see from their position" and stresses that "the positionings of the subjugated are not exempt from critical reexamination, decoding, deconstruction, and interpretation" (p. 584).

³¹ bell hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Space for Radical Openness," *Framework* 36 (1989): 15–23. There, hooks points to what is hidden by the common approach of just "talking about the 'other'" or "even describing how important it is to be able to speak about difference": "Often this speech about the 'other' annihilates, erases. No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself... I am still author, authority, the speaking subject" (pp. 22–23). She thus stresses the importance of embracing a perspectival shift, whereby one cedes the presumed right to speak for the "Other" to the "Other." Note especially the extensions of her insights there in the critique of multiculturalism and the unmasking of the tacit power of whiteness at play in its ostensibly celebratory inclusive rhetoric of racial and ethnic "diversity," e.g., Hazel V. Carby, "The Multicultural Wars," *Radical History Review* 54 (1992): 7–18; Saidiya V. Hartman and Frank B. Wilderson III, "The Position of the Unthought," *Qui Parle* 13 (2003): 183–201; Wilderson, *Red, White, & Black* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Sara Ahmed, "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism," *Borderlands* 3 (2004).

³² Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," and on its reception and continued relevance, see e.g. Peta Hinton, "'Situated Knowledges' and New Materialism(s): Rethinking a Politics of Location," *Women: A Cultural Review* 25:1 (2014): 99–113. Notably, Nancy Hartsock made a similar point, albeit in less epistemologically-inflected terms, in her "Rethinking Modernism: Minority vs. Majority Theories," *Cultural Critique* 1 (1987): 187–206: "We need to develop our understanding of difference by creating a situation in which hitherto marginalized groups can name themselves, speak for themselves, and participate in defining the terms of interaction, a situation in which we can construct an understanding of the world that is sensitive to difference. Clearly, this is a task for academics and activists alike."

³³ Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 585. Notably, she also stresses that the power of this "conquering gaze" is not just metaphorical or even epistemological: in the modern West, "the eyes have been used to signify a perverse capacity—honed to perfection in the history of science tied to militarism, capitalism, colonialism, and male supremacy—to distance the knowing subject from everybody and everything in the interests of unfettered power" (p. 581).

represent while escaping representation.”³⁴ As a result, however, much can be gained from attending anew to vision and its vistas from different positions, locations, and embodied perspectives, not least “to reclaim the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into a conquering gaze from nowhere.”³⁵

In this, Haraway critiques the modern Western epistemological elevation of the disembodiment of scientific and other scholarly “objectivity” so as to be able to make visible (and to begin to able to correct) its inherent structural exclusion of women and other “embodied others who are not allowed *not* to have a body.”³⁶ I would suggest that a similar move—attending anew to different senses and positions of seeing and thereby relativizing the modern scholarly idealization of an ostensibly disembodied stance—can also help us further to avoid the anachronism of unintentionally imposing conventionalized *modern* epistemological assumptions upon our *ancient* sources, not least by enabling us better to attend to *their* assumptions about knowing, seeing, and gender alike. The importance of “insisting metaphorically on the particularity and embodiment of all vision... and not giving in to the tempting myths of vision as a route to disembodiment”—which Haraway outlines as a feminist project³⁷—is perhaps promising as a corrective, not just with respect to a *male* gaze upon the present, but also with respect to a *modern* gaze upon the past.

To be sure, the surviving corpus of Second Temple Jewish literature does not appear to offer us any “real” chances to see the Jewish past, or hear the story of ancient Israel, from the perspective of a non-male author.³⁸ The *Sibylline Oracles*, however, are the closest that we have to such an opportunity, and their very choice of a female authorizing figure stands as an important reminder *both* of the partiality of the perspectives that survive *and* of our modern scholarly tendency to treat those partial perspectives as if simply and neutrally representative of “Second Temple Judaism,” not least in the tacit elision of maleness with Jewishness. By bringing questions of gender to bear anew on the *Sibylline Oracles*, then, Bacchi and Lester do not just enhance our knowledge of this particular set of influential but understudied texts: they offer us resources to recover the embodiment of revealed knowledge and its processes also in other revealed literature from the Second Temple period, especially but not only with respect to gender. The masculinity of the positioning and personae of most apocalypses, for instance, is so widespread that it can seem as if invisible—at least to scholars operating in a modern disciplinary setting and contemporary cultural context in which the equation of expert knowledge with maleness now feels simply “natural.” But the juxtaposition with the female positioning and persona of the *Sibylline Oracles* brings this male gendering of knowledge into sharper relief and makes its workings visible even to a modern scholarly

³⁴ Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 581.

³⁵ Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 581.

³⁶ Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 575.

³⁷ Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 582.

³⁸ Whereas many feminist discussions along these lines emphasize making the space for women to speak, it is notable that similar interventions from postcolonial studies have tended to stress that there will always be those who cannot speak—e.g., as most famously in Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (London: Macmillan, 1988). So too with majority of ancients—including but not limited to Second Temple Jewish women—whom we do not and will never hear in their own voices, let alone see the world through their eyes. Even if such voices and vistas are unrecoverable, however, the very acknowledgement of this lack enables us to notice the partiality of all perspectives, not least as a corrective to the conventionalized modern Western treatment of some perspectives (i.e., male, white, European) as if uniquely capable of impartiality and totalizing understanding.

gaze that has naturalized the masculinity of truth arguably to a far greater degree than even the ancient sources that we study. (I personally, for instance, have worked on the *Book of the Watchers* for almost two decades, but it was only after re-reading the *Sibylline Oracles*, with these two brilliant new studies in hand, that it even occurred to me to consider the scribal voice and exemplar in this and other Enochic literature as marked masculine!)

In what follows, I would like to build on the findings of both Bacchi and Lester so as to draw out the ramifications of gendered positioning within the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in particular. I shall begin by reflecting upon the different meanings made by this positioning within different strata of this work (i.e., the Roman-era opening verses [ca. 1st c. CE] VS. the rest of the work and its Hellenistic-era context [ca. 2nd c. BCE]), especially in relation to its depictions of the microdynamics of prophesy as an embodied act and the implication for gendering knowledge. Then, I shall juxtapose the gendering of revealed knowledge in the earlier strata to what one finds within contemporaneous works like the Enochic *Astronomical Book* and the *Book of the Watchers*, especially with respect to the theorization of revelation vis-à-vis voice and vision. Although my analysis will be brief and provisional, I would like to suggest that our understanding of the transformation of biblical prophecy in the early Hellenistic age may be sorely incomplete without attending to the *Sibylline Oracles* no less than early Enochic literature, and to gender and voice no less than textuality and knowledge.

2. *Gendered Positionality, Prophetic Truth, and Divine Violence in Roman Strata of the Third Sibylline Oracle (ca. 1st c. CE)*

Lester suggests that “Sibylline discourse” is marked by an intensification of Israelite and Greco-Roman notions of true prophesy as an involuntary act, whereby the female body of the Sibyl (like the female bodies of other prophetesses in the ancient Mediterranean world) becomes a site of divine violence in the service of vouchsafing the truly divine origins of the knowledge that she speaks (i.e., precisely because she is a vehicle for divine knowledge rather than merely its “author” or interpreter).³⁹ Within the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, this can be seen in what is now the first 96 verses of the work, which represent a discrete unit of later date than the rest.

In its received form, this material (i.e., 3.1–96) serves as the introductory frame the work as a whole. It begins with the first-person voice of the Sibyl entreating God for rest from the prophecy that tires her heart (3.1-2).⁴⁰ Far from receiving such rest, however, she

³⁹ Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, esp. 18-25, 168-87. Lester notes how the *Sibylline Oracles*—like Revelation and Greco-Roman traditions surrounding the Delphic Oracle—“appeal to, and sometimes manipulate, culturally specific constructions of gender in portrayals of prophets, including the gendered nature of the prophet’s interaction with a deity,” whereby “masculinized divine dominance of emasculated male prophets and even more vulnerable female prophets is a means of ensuring the legitimacy of the prophetic message” (p. 18). She argues that “both male and female prophets can be victims of divine violence, but the violence tends to be more graphic and severe when the prophet is female” (p. 180). Notably, Lester focuses on the first century CE Roman Empire, building a case that this dynamic makes sense within this cultural context, whereby domination and control are associated with masculinity (and masculine deities), sometimes in a sliding scale with the passivity associated with femininity (pp. 19-21).

⁴⁰ This weariness is also a recurrent theme in other *Sibylline Oracles*, e.g., *Sib.or.* 5.52-53; see further Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 173-75—there noting how this sense of divine inspiration as physically exhausting also resonates with Virgil’s depiction of the Cumaean Sibyl (*Aeneid* 6) as well as Lucan’s depiction of the Delphic Pythia (*Civil War* 5).

immediately launches into another act of prophesying—a process that is vividly and viscerally described as a bodily experience of involuntary compulsion:

But why does my heart shake again? And why is my spirit [θυμὸς]⁴¹ lashed by a whip,⁴² compelled from within to proclaim a speech to all? [ἀλλὰ τί μοι κραδίη πάλι πάλλεται ἡδέ γε θυμὸς τυπτόμενος μάλιστα βιάζεται ἔνδοθεν αὐδὴν ἀγγέλλειν πᾶσιν] (*Sib.or.* 3.4-6)⁴³

Nevertheless, she consents that "I will speak everything again, as much as God commands me to speak to humankind" (αὐτὰρ πάλι πάντ' ἀγορεύσω, ὅσσα θεὸς κέλεται μ' ἀγορευέμεν ἀνθρώποισιν).⁴⁴ From the outset, it is her embodied experience that vouchsafes the truth of her words: her body and soul are exhausted because she is the one who "prophesies all-true" (παναληθεῖα φημίξασαν, 3:2), yet she continues to serve as a channel for the earthly communication of divine truths from the "high-thundering, blessed, heavenly One, who has the cherubim, enthroned" (3.1)—and the introductory framing suggests that this bridging of heaven and earth is not despite her embodiment but rather because of it.

The speech that follows is addressed generally to humankind (3.8: ἄνθρωποι...), not specifying Jews or non-Jews, women or men, but rather stressing the common form of humankind as created in the image of God (3.8; cf. Gen 1:26–28). Even as humankind has "the form which God molded in his image" (θεόπλαστον ἔχοντες ἐν εἰκόνι μορφῆν), however, it is asserted that knowledge of God does not come through sight or images. The divine is the locus of the power of sight: God is said to be all-seeing (ὀρώμενος αὐτὸς ἅπαντα) but also invisible (ἀόρατος) and not perceptible by human organs of sight ("Who that is mortal is able to see God with eyes [τίς γὰρ θνητὸς ἐὼν κατιδεῖν δύναται θεὸν ὅσσοις;]?; 3.11-16). In this, moreover, He is contrasted with idols, made by a sculptor's hand, but He is also elevated above the visible cosmos that He created "with a word" (i.e., "heaven and sea, untiring sun, full moon, shining stars... springs and rivers, imperishable fire, days, nights"; 3.20-23). To "speechless idols" (εἰδώλοις τ' ἀλάλοις; 3.31) is thus contrasted both God's cosmogonic speech and also the true prophetic speech of the Sibyl.

In the first section of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in its present form (i.e., 3.1-96), the embodiment of the prophetic voice of the Sibyl marks her a privileged agent of divine revelation of the invisible God, as one who speaks the truth. In this, the truth-telling Sibyl is contrasted with "false deceitful [lit. double-tongued] people" (ψευδῶν διγλώσσων ἀνθρώπων; 3.37) among the idol-worshippers. She is positioned as a woman speaking, moreover, to and about both women and men. The addressees of her speech are consistently described with gender-inclusive terms like like ἄνθρωπος and βρότος, as in the vocative of her opening address (3.8), in her predictions of the wickedness and faithlessness that will

⁴¹ Here θυμὸς—i.e., soul or spirit in the sense of a seat of feeling, passion, thought, anger, etc., rather than the more metaphysical sense of ψυχή. Here and below, translations follow J. J. Collins in *OTP* (1.317-472). but are revised therefrom with reference to the Greek in J. Geffcken, *Die Oracula Sibyllina* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).

⁴² This imagery of a whip is also present in *Sib.or.* 4.18-23; for the comparison see Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 172-73, there emphasizing its connections to the depiction of divine inspiration in terms of "compulsion, exhaustion, and pain" within Sibylline discourse,

⁴³ Lester notes the physicality of prophesy for male prophets in the Hebrew Bible as well, to which we might also add that Enoch similar describes revelation (esp. ascent) as a process that causes him to tremble, etc., in the *Book of the Watchers*.

⁴⁴ On the similarly totalizing claims to complete knowledge associated with Enoch in the *Book of the Watchers*, see further below. Notably, both depart from earlier biblical works like Job that emphasize the limitations of the human capacity to understand divine knowledge.

spread upon all mortals (πάντεσσι βροτοῖσιν; 3.42), and in her warning that "it will come, when the smell of sulphur spreads among all humankind (παῖσιν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν); I will tell all, in how many cities humankind (μέρορες [sc. ἀνθρώπους]) will endure evils" (3.61-62).

In her predications, both men and women are given agency (including, e.g., singling out female transgressions such as when "many widowed women will love other men secretly for gain, and those who have husbands will not keep hold of the rope of life"; 3.44-45). Likewise, both male and female leaders feature in the predicted conflagration that will lead to God's eschatological un-creation of the cosmos. After the rise of Rome and coming of Beliar (3.46-74), it is when "then indeed the world will be ruled in the palm of the hand (i.e., through the artifice) of a woman and will be persuaded in everything" (καὶ τότε δὴ κόσμος ὑπὸ ταῖς παλάμησι γυναικός ἔσσεται ἀρχόμενος καὶ πειθόμενος περὶ παντός; 3.75)⁴⁵ that "God who dwells in the sky... rolls up the heaven as a scroll is rolled" (ὅποταν θεὸς αἰθέρι ναίων οὐρανὸν εἰλίξει, καθ' ἅπερ βιβλίον εἰλεῖται; 3.82)—leading to judgment whereupon God "enters the world again" and His power will be recognized, not just by his Sibyl,⁴⁶ but by everyone (3.95-96).

In this opening section, then, we see a poignant example what Lester posits as the appeal to a feminine persona and positioning in Sibylline discourse so as to exemplify and intensify the correlation of claims to prophetic truth with a prophet's "vulnerability to violence."⁴⁷ On the one hand, this correlation serves to invert the often-cited biblical trope of the association of women with duplicity and deception.⁴⁸ On the other hand, her female positioning may function as means of highlighting the power and meaning of (masculinized) divine violence: the body of the prophetess suffers for truth, but so too shall the material cosmos for judgement, and her first-person pleas of embodied suffering thus serve to ground the prediction and warning of the eschatological suffering of humankind and the cosmos alike.⁴⁹ She may feel as if whipped, but what she predicts from that pain is a future whereupon "the whole variegated vault of heaven falls on the wondrous earth and ocean" and an "undying cataract of raging fire will flow, and burn earth, burn sea, and melt the heavenly vault and days and creation itself into one" such that "there will no longer be twinkling spheres of luminaries, no night, no dawn, no numerous days of care, no spring, no summer, no winter, no autumn" (3.81-91). The gendering of knowledge in this initial section of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* is thus inflected through a sense of female embodiment as a position of vulnerability to male violence that provides a perspective from which to speak all the more persuasively and powerfully to the eschatological prediction of divine violence.

This pattern in *Third Sibylline Oracle* 3.1–96 dovetails with what Lester shows to be the gendered component of "Sibylline discourse" that we find in the *Fourth* and *Fifth Sibylline*

⁴⁵ Typically associated with Cleopatra VII; Bacchi, "Uncovering Jewish Creativity," 44.

⁴⁶ *Sib.or.* 3.69 seems to imply that even (some? all?) "chosen, faithful Hebrews" have been led astray at that point by Beliar.

⁴⁷ Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 29. Lester notes how "the Sibyl speaks with authority to rulers and nations, but she is vulnerable to violent divine domination" (p. 169). On this violence as masculine, see there pp. 169 and passim.

⁴⁸ On this inversion see references and discussion in Bacchi, "Uncovering," 71.

⁴⁹ Lester makes a parallel point for the *Fourth Sibylline Oracle*: "The writers and editors construct their prophecy in *Sibylline Oracle* 4 so that the predictions of violent judgment are proclaimed by a messenger who is herself a victim of divine violence" (*Prophetic Rivalry*, 176). In effect, "a borrowed trope of violence against sibyls during inspiration takes on new life in these Jewish texts, with the result that the threat of divine violence becomes more acute" (p. 178).

Oracles. What is less clear, however, is whether this is meaning made by the choice of persona throughout the *Third Sibylline Oracle*. As noted above, this particular section (i.e., 3.1–96) is widely recognized to be a separate section later added to the rest, usually dated to the early first century CE. It thus makes sense that the gendered force of its voicing by the Sibyl might fit what Lester has shown for the representation of prophetesses in first-century Jewish apocalypses like Revelation no less than in contemporaneous Roman depictions of the Pythia. Such first-century framings of prophecy, eschatology, gender, and violence clearly come to shape the reception of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* by virtue of the anthological acts that resulted in the appending of these verses as its opening. What this anthological act has perhaps made more difficult to notice, however, are the different ways in which the positioning of prophesy makes knowledge and meaning in the rest of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, which is much earlier in date, shaped in a Hellenistic rather than Roman context.⁵⁰

3. *Gendered Positionality, Divine Voice, and Embodied Knowledge in Hellenistic Strata of the Third Sibylline Oracle (ca. 2nd c. BCE)*

When we survey the first-person framing notices in the rest of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, we notice that they are marked less by an emphasis on compulsion and embodied suffering and more by a concern for the microdynamics of inspired prophetic speech and knowledge. Central, in this regard, is an interest in the body of the Sibyl as a receptacle for the divine voice. The term φάτις, for instance, is used four times in the *Third Sibylline Oracle* (i.e., 3.162, 246, 297, 490), and three of these occur in first-person framing notices that signal the specific mechanics of how she experiences the implanting of the revealed knowledge that she thereafter speaks:

Then the voice [φάτις] of the great God was put [ἵστατο]⁵¹ in my chest [ἐν στήθεσσι] and commanded me to prophesy [ἐκέλευσε προφητεῦσαι] concerning every land... And God first placed this in my mind [καί μοι τοῦτο θεὸς πρῶτον νόφ ἐγγυάλιζεν]: How many kingdoms of humankind will be raised up? (*Sib.or.* 3.162-64)

When indeed my spirit [θυμὸς] ceased the inspired hymn [ἔνθεον ὕμνον], and I entreated the Great Begetter that I might have respite from compulsion, the voice of the Great God [μεγάλιο θεοῦ φάτις] again was put in my chest [ἐν στήθεσσι ἵστατο] and commanded me to prophesy concerning every land [καί μ' ἐκέλευσε προφητεῦσαι κατὰ πᾶσαν γαῖαν] and remind kings of the things that are to be. And God placed it in my mind to say this first [καί μοι τοῦτο θεὸς πρῶτον νόφ ἔνθετο λέξαι]: How many grievous woes the Immortal devised for Babylon... (*Sib.or.* 3.297ff)

When indeed my spirit stopped its inspired hymn [ἤνικα δὴ μοι θυμὸς ἐπαύσατο ἔνθεον ὕμνον], the voice of the Great God was put in my chest and commanded me to prophesy

⁵⁰ See further Bacchi, “Uncovering Jewish Creativity,” 43–44; Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 172, on placing 3.1–96 in the first century CE, in contrast to the early Hellenistic provenance of much of this oracle. My point here is that Bacchi and Lester may offer different characterizations of the place of gender in Sibylline discourse, but this difference reflects their different points of focus, thereby highlighting the layered shifts in the meaning of the Sibyl’s gender within the tradition itself—which, notably, thus seems to have distinctive yet interrelated phases of literary development in the second century BCE, on the one hand, and the first century CE, on the other, in a manner that mirrors the main phases in the literary development of apocalyptic literature as well.

⁵¹ Notably, passive ἵστημι is sometimes used in the sense of pregnancy.

concerning the earth [καὶ πάλι μοι μέγαλοιο θεοῦ φάτις ἐν στήθεσσιν ἴστατο καί μ' ἐκέλευσε προφητεῦσαι κατὰ γαῖαν.]... (*Sib.or.* 3.490ff)

In each of these passages, her reception of this knowledge is described in nearly identical terms: the Sibyl speaks to her own experience of inspiration as consisting of the feeling of God placing His voice (φάτις) into her chest (στήθος, pl.),⁵² at time paired with statements with how He put specific questions and statements into her mind⁵³ and/or commanded her to prophesy about specific questions. The engine of prophecy is the seat of her emotions (i.e., “spirit” in the sense of θυμός), and the result is an “inspired hymn” (ἔνθεον ὕμνον). The theme of compulsion remains (e.g., 3.297) but is notably less prominent than in first-century examples of Sibylline discourse like *Third Sibylline Oracle* 3.1–96 and the *Fourth* and *Fifth Sibylline Oracles*.

In the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, the term φάτις is used on only one other occasion, and the context is telling—namely, the assertion of the exemplarity of Israel. When the Sibyl here introduces the Jews, it is by referring to “a race of most righteous people (γένος ... δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων)” whose origins are placed in “Ur of the Chaldeans” (3.218-19) but who are nevertheless deemed pious because of their self-distancing from the astronomical and divinatory knowledge for which the Chaldeans are famed:

...they do not worry about the cyclic course of the sun or the moon (οὔτε γὰρ ἡελίου κύκλιον δρόμον οὔτε σελήνης) or the monstrous things under the earth nor the depth of the grim sea Oceanus nor portents of sneezes, nor birds of augurers (οὔτε πελώρια ἔργα μεριμνῶσιν κατὰ γαίης οὔτε βάθος χαροποῖο θαλάσσης Ωκεανοῖο, οὐ παρμῶν σημεῖ', οἰωνοπόλων τε πετεεινά), nor diviners, nor sorcerers, nor soothsayers, nor the deceits of foolish words of ventriloquists (οὐ μάντεις, οὐ φαρμακοῦς, οὐ μὴν ἐπαιδοῦς, οὐ μύθων μωρῶν ἀπάτας ἐγγαστεριμύθων); neither do they practice the astrological predictions of the Chaldeans nor astronomy (οὐδέ τε Χαλδαίων τὰ προμάντια ἀστρολογοῦσιν οὐδέ μὲν ἀστρονομοῦσι). (*Sib.or.* 3.221-28)⁵⁴

Their distinctiveness in this regard is later explained by Sibyl as because this people has been “filled full of the voice [φάτις] of the great God, as a legal hymn [ἐννομον ὕμνον]” (3.246). In turn, this sense of the chosen line of Abraham as marked by its filling by divine voice as “legal hymn” lays the groundwork for Sinaitic revelation: although God “gave the earth in common to all” (3.247), it is here the giving of “the Law from heaven” through Moses that is

⁵² Although often rendered “breast” (e.g., by Collins in *OTP*), note that the Greek term here is not μαστοί in the sense of women’s breasts, but rather the less gender-marked στήθος, which in the plural can convey a metaphorical sense of a seat of feeling and thought, more akin to Hebrew *lev*, and is a familiar Homeric phrasing (e.g. *Il.* 1.83; 2.142; 5.125; 4.309; 17.570; *Od.* 3.18). I thus here translate it as “chest.”

⁵³ For this idiom, see also *Sib.or.* 3.196-98: “But why did God put in my mind [νόφ ἐνθετο] to say [λέξαι] this too: what first, what next, what will be the final evil on all humankind, what will be the beginnings of these things?” Also 3.821 (quoted and discussed below).

⁵⁴ Examples of the positive treatment of Abraham’s association with Ur of the Chaldeans, and the Chaldean’s association with astronomy/astrology in other Jewish literature of the time, include Artapanus, Pseudo-Eupolemus, and an anonymous fragment preserved after the latter in Eusebius via Alexander Polyhistor (*Praep.ev.* 9.17-18) as well as a pseudo-Orphic Greek hymn of probable Jewish origin refers to Abraham as “a certain unique man, by descent an offshoot of the Chaldeans... knowledgeable about the path of the Star, and the movements of the spheres around the earth, in a circle regularly but each on its own axis” (*apud* Clement, *Misc.* 124); cf. *Jub.* 12.16–18; Philo, *On Abraham* 69–71; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.155–158. See further references and discussion in A. Y. Reed, “Abraham as Chaldean Scientist and Father of the Jews: Josephus, *Ant.* 1.154–168, and the Greco-Roman Discourse about Astronomy/Astrology,” *JSJ* 35.2 (2004): 119–58.

said to distinguish the “people of the twelve tribes” (3.248-58). Just as God fills this people with His voice, in a manner parallel to how the Sibyl describes her experience of prophetic inspiration, so the priests among them are the only *men* who are said to have knowledge divinely implanted into their chests in a manner akin to how she describes her own reception of knowledge as well: the Sibyl speaks of them as “a sacred race of holy men (εὐσεβέων ἀνδρῶν ἱερὸν γένος) who attend to the counsels and intention of the Most High, who fully honor the Temple of the Great God” (3.573-74), and she stresses that “to them alone did the great God give wise counsel and faith and excellent understanding in their chest” (μόνοις γάρ σφιν δῶκε θεὸς μέγας εὐφρονα βουλήν καὶ πίστιν καὶ ἄριστον ἐνὶ στήθεσσι νόημα; 3.584-85). The inspiration of the Sibyl is involuntary, then, but her positioning as female is perhaps a bit different in its epistemological implications than for 3.1-96 and later Sibylline tradition: in this early strata of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, the Sibyl positions herself as a female counterpart and complement to the no-less-inspired legal and priestly traditions of Jewish men. She is less like the Delphic Pythia and more like the Israelite prophetess Huldah.⁵⁵

To what degree are the oracles that she speaks, then, marked by a sense of this female positioning? It is interesting, in this sense, that the retelling of familiar tales here features some attention to the agency of women as determinative for key moments in human history—as if a female prophetess might notice such moments in a manner that a male one might not. Her retelling of the tale of the Titans, for instance (3.129-155), emphasizes the role of Rhea—here described as a “marvel of woman” (3.143)—in articulating the plan that eventually led to “the first beginning of war for mortals” (3.155).⁵⁶ Similarly, when Moses is introduced, it is as “a great man... whom the queen found by the marsh, took home, reared, and called her son” (3.252-54).

Also intriguing is the choice of collective terms for those to and about whom the Sibyl speaks in the *Third Sibylline Oracle*. Translators have tended to elide such choices by rendering both explicitly-masculine terms like ἄνδρες and gender-inclusive terms like ἄνθρωποι with the English “men.”⁵⁷ When we attend to the distinctions, however, we notice some interesting patterns. Above, I noted how the later Roman-era material in *Sib.or.* 3.1-96 tends generally to use gender-inclusive terms like ἄνθρωπος and βρότος for the addressees of the Sibyl.⁵⁸ In the rest of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, however, one finds more reference made specifically to men (i.e., ἄνδρες, etc.). This is the case especially when the Sibyl is making

⁵⁵ For the comparison with the depictions of the prophetess Huldah in 2 Kings 22:14-20 and 2 Chronicles 34:22-28, see Bacchi, “Uncovering,” 74-75, and further below. Following Esther Fuchs, Bacchi there notes how Huldah may be an exception to a broader pattern whereby “God speaks directly [only] to male prophets and they speak on behalf of God” (p. 74). She also notes how “Huldah is given the title of prophetess and is sought out by Hilkiah the priest to give insight into words of the law; however, Huldah’s authority as a conduit for divine knowledge is tempered by her designation being further qualified by the name of her husband and her role as keeper of the robes” (p. 75). As I discuss in more detail below, what I personally find intriguing is the manner in which Huldah in 2 Kings 22—like the Sibyl in the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in particular—emblemizes a prophetic tradition of revealed knowledge that remains independent from (and is arguably positioned as superior to) scribalism and the textualization of revelation.

⁵⁶ For a detailed analysis of its treatment of the Titans, stressing its intertwining of Jewish and Greek concerns, see now Bacchi, “Uncovering,” 88-129.

⁵⁷ So, e.g., Collins in *OTP*.

⁵⁸ Exceptions include the reference to “Latin men” at *Sib.or.* 3.51, as well as references to the husbands of the widows in 3.43-44 as discussed above.

predictions about Israel's enemies and other non-Jews—such as Latin men (3.51), Cretan men (3.140), Assyrian men (3.303), leaders of the Greeks (3.545), et al.⁵⁹—and it may come with the force of marking of agents of earthly war as male and thereby heightening the contrast with the divinely-inspired woman who here rebukes them and predicts their demise.

Nor is this simply a matter of the text paying more attention to sexed difference. Terms for women, like γυναῖκας, actually occur only a small handful of times in the *Third Sibylline Oracle*.⁶⁰ But terms for men, like ἀνήρ, are pervasive and repeated throughout. Those to and about whom the Sibyl speaks are quite often here noted to be specifically ἄνδρες—including but not limited to those "men of old" who died in the Flood (3.109), "men who will have a great fall" (3.182), those men to whom great affliction will come (3.187), foolish men who fall prey to astrology (3.229), grave-minded men (3.460), a race of impious men (3.568), a race of grievous men (3.761), and so forth.⁶¹ And major figures in world history are introduced, not by name, but with phrases like "the faithless man" (3.389 for Alexander) and "the destructive man from Italy" (3.470 for Sulla). The cumulative effect is to highlight the the Sibyl as a female prophetess with divine knowledge of the true meanings and workings of a male world of politics and war; if the reader is imaginatively invited to see history and the future through a female gaze, it is a gaze in which it is masculinity that is marked.

If the pseudepigraphical adoption of the position of the Sibyl here contributes to a depiction of female knowledge, then what is depicted as masculine knowledge? To the degree that her knowledge is positively correlated with a masculine counterpart, it is—as we noted above—with Israel's priests and their righteous male ancestors. When the *Third Sibylline Oracles* speaks of men as pious, holy, and righteous, in fact, it tends to be in relation to the Jerusalem Temple (3.213, 215, 573).⁶² But even in the case of those men, the Sibyl is given a distinctive role that is far from subordinated: she predicts that evil will come upon the "pious men who live around the great Temple of Solomon,"⁶³ but she also assures us that "I shall nevertheless proclaim the tribe of these, and the genealogy of their fathers, and the polity of them all, all very thoughtfully, O devious crafty mortal" (ὁμῶς καὶ τῶνδε βοήσω φύλον καὶ γενεὴν πατέρων καὶ δῆμον ἀπάντων πάντα περιφραδέως, βροτὲ ποικιλόμενι, δολόφρον; 3.213-15).

But her positioning as female is perhaps most poignant in relation to the contrast with another sort of masculine knowledge—that is: the Greek *paideia* emblemized by Homer. The polemic with Homer, as Bacchi notes, is detailed and extensive throughout the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, and it is made explicit in 3.419-32.⁶⁴ In this passage, the Sibyl refers to him

⁵⁹ Cf. *Sib.or.* 3.492 on Phoenician men and women. Also more positively of Macedonians in 3.160.

⁶⁰ One finds γυναῖκας used quite rarely in the *Third Sibylline Oracle*: twice in the later stratum of 3.1-96 (i.e., of widowed women in 3.43 and of Cleopatra in 3.75, on which see above) and only four times in the rest of the work, once positively of Rhea, as noted above (3.143), but otherwise just in a few collectives that do not actually refer to women but rather convey completeness, e.g., "whatever man or woman" (372), "Phoenician men and women" (492), "children and women" (526). Note also the term θῆλυς in the discussion of the children of Cronos in 3.110-55.

⁶¹ Note also the use of ἀνήρ in particular in eschatological predictions, e.g. *Sib.or.* 3.619, 674, 695, 711, 761, 775.

⁶² The use of other positive adjectives with ἀνήρ also tend to be associated with Israel, e.g., in *Sib.or.* 3.252 for Moses and 3.824 for Noah; note, however, the Macedonians in 3.610.

⁶³ *Sib.or.* 3.213: ἀνδράσιν εὐσεβέσιν ἤξει κακόν, οἱ περὶ ναόν οἰκείουσι μέγαν Σολομώνιον οἳ τε δικαίων ἀνδρῶν ἔκγονοί εἰσιν·

⁶⁴ Bacchi, "Recovering Jewish Creativity," 130–58.

as "a certain false writer, an old person, of falsified fatherland" (καί τις ψευδογράφος πρέσβυς βροτὸς ἔσσειται αὐτίς ψευδόπατρις; 3.419–20), and what she then notes of him is his blindness: "The light will go out in his eyes." Her descriptions of him, moreover, stand in contrast to what she claims and proclaims of herself. Whereas she speaks inspired words of divine inspiration and total truth, for instance, Homer "writes... not truthfully but cleverly" (3.423–24). Even more strikingly, he is revealed to be dependent upon her: the Sibyl calls him out as her first reader—"the first to unroll my scrolls with his hands" (πρῶτος γὰρ χεیرهσιν ἐμὰς βίβλους ἀναπλώσει; 3.425)—but also her first plagiarist: "he will master my words and meters" (3.424), albeit "writing falsely, in every way, about empty-headed men" (ψευδογραφῶν κατὰ πάντα τρόπον, μέροπας κενοκράνους; 3.430).

For understanding this contrast and its epistemological implications, Bacchi's insights prove especially useful. Whereas Lester situates "Sibylline discourse" foremost by analogy to prophetesses compelled to inspiration by divine compulsion like the Delphic Pythia, Bacchi uses the polemic against Homer as a lynchpin in her rejection of the past source-critical atomization of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* into "pagan" and Jewish portions in awkward amalgam and her re-reading of this work as a robustly Hellenistic and Jewish work that makes sense within its Ptolemaic cultural context. By situating the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in relation to the literary and epistemological trends of the early Hellenistic era, in general, and Alexandrian scholastic culture, more specifically, Bacchi offers a specific synchronic setting for considering the choice of a female authorizing figure: in her view, "the cultural milieu Hellenistic Egyptian Jewry was ripe for a female voice of prophecy" in the second century BCE, largely because it was "a time when Hellenistic literature shows a newfound interest in gendered voices."⁶⁵

Consistent with her demonstration of the "intimate knowledge of Greek tradition" throughout the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, Bacchi further proposes that "the descriptive of Homer in verses 419–432 functions as a culmination of a subtle commentary on Alexandrian Homeric scholarship" that is marked by both intimate familiarity and polemical efforts at self-distinction.⁶⁶ To the degree that Hellenistic scholars in Alexandria like Callimachus elevated Homer yet associated him with deceptiveness,⁶⁷ the adoption of a female prophetess as authorizing figure may have provided an opportunity to critique the preeminent Greek male author through contrast to what is claimed as Jewish female voice of truth.⁶⁸ In effect, Bacchi suggests, "the Jewish author... uses Greek tradition against itself, subordinating Homer and subsequently Greek heroes and pantheon to the Sibyl, the messenger of the one true God."⁶⁹ In the process, "the Sibyl makes claim to Homer's status as father of Greek literature,"⁷⁰ taking credit for the very poetic artistry for which he was so celebrated in the

⁶⁵ Bacchi, "Uncovering," 86, 134.

⁶⁶ Bacchi, "Uncovering," 132, 160—there situating its reference to Homer in relation to its engagement in playful and subtle modes of Hesiodic and Homeric intertextuality of a manner similar to other Alexandrian scholasticism of the early Hellenistic age and also arguing for its participation in this project, "not as a passive witness to the Alexandrian scholarly milieu but an active contributor" (p. 132).

⁶⁷ Bacchi, "Uncovering," 140.

⁶⁸ See Bacchi, "Uncovering," 148–50, for "pagan" examples of female figures contrasted with Homer.

⁶⁹ Bacchi, "Uncovering," 146.

⁷⁰ Bacchi, "Uncovering," 151. In effect, the Sibyl here enables a claim of Jewish priority to Greekness akin to what we find argued with reference to Enoch, Abraham, Moses, et al., in contemporaneous works of Jewish authors like Artapanus, wherein Jewish figures are placed at the invention of much of what Greeks and Egyptians deemed valuable in the early Hellenistic age; see further Reed, "Abraham as Chaldean Scientist."

early Hellenistic age, especially in the Alexandrian scholarship embraced and sponsored by early Ptolemies.

To this, I would add that her female positioning also functions to invert the gender dynamics of the Hesiodic and Homeric claims to inspiration that shaped Hellenistic literary production—that is: the claim of Greek male authors to be inspired by female Muses. Such connections are perhaps not surprising: after all, the Muses—no less than Homer—were a focus of fresh attention under the early Ptolemies, by virtue of the foundation of the Museion (i.e., temple of the Muses) of which the famous Library of Alexandria formed a part.⁷¹ Writing of the Sibylline tradition, more broadly, Jane Lightfoot notes how the Sibyl is in some sense akin to a Muse.⁷² What I would suggest for the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in particular, however, is that the Sibyl is here positioned as Homer in inverse, and it is her gender that underlines the inversion at play: she is a woman inspired by a male deity, and whereas Homer and his heirs must plea for inspiration,⁷³ she is depicted as so overflowing with inspired hymns that she pleads instead for rest. And to the degree she is depicted as compelled, it is as Plato depicts Homer and the inspiration of poetry—but whereas he can only compose poetry when “his mind is no longer in him” (ὁ νοῦς μηκέτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνῆ: *Ion* 534b), she speaks what God “puts... in her mind” (νόῳ ἔνθετο; *Sib.or.* 3.196, 3.297; see also 3.164, 3.810).⁷⁴ In the process, what the *Third Sibylline Oracle* does, here too, is to maintain some of the very system that it critiques from within: as for the Muses, for instance, inspiration for the Sibyl is expressed in the idiom of voice and song.⁷⁵

When we follow Bacchi in situating the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in the early Hellenistic age and in relation to what we know of cultural, literary, and pedagogical shifts especially in Alexandria under the early Ptolemies, we can thus see some of poignant epistemological

Note also the Hellenistic Jewish and early Christian traditions surveyed in Droge, *Homer or Moses*—albeit with the puzzling omission, there, of this reference to the Sybil and Homer. My suggestion here is that gender is one of the features that makes this particular argument for Jewish priority different from early Christian assertions that Plato borrowed from Moses (e.g., Justin, *I Apol.* 44) and their Hellenistic Jewish precedents in claims about Enoch as Atlas, Moses as Hermes, etc.: this is not a claim that Greek *paideia* is ultimately Jewish, such that Jews and Christians can partake of it, but rather a deeper critique of the whole system of *paideia* and its totalizing epistemological claims, which is all the more resonant in its articulation through a figure also well known to non-Jews (who is, moreover, revealed here to be actually part of the history of the Jews; see below).

⁷¹ On which see further, e.g., Rudolf Blum, *Kallimachos: The Alexandrian Library and the Origins of Bibliography* (Madison: U. of Wisconsin Press 1991), 95-100.

⁷² Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 11, 22-23, 202. By this reading, the possibility is here left open that she might be the very Muse who inspired Homer himself, and at the very least, her words can also be read as offering a more direct version of what Greek poets claim to speak—divine words at one less step of mediation.

⁷³ On these pleas, see Graham Wheeler, “‘Sing, Muse...’: The Introit from Homer to Apollonius,” *Classical Quarterly* 52 (2002): 33-49.

⁷⁴ I.e., Homer himself is an exemplary *male* example of inspiration as involuntary—at least as he is framed by Plato in relation to his notion of the mania of poetic inspiration, as in the famous assertion attributed to Socrates that “the poet is a light thing, winged and sacred, unable to make poetry before he is enthused and out of his mind and intelligence is no longer in him” (*Ion* 534b); see further, e.g., Silke-Maria Weinek, “Talking About Homer: Poetic Madness, Philosophy, and the Birth of Criticism in Plato's *Ion*,” *Arethusa* 31 (1998): 19-42.

⁷⁵ On the association of Muses with the divine voice, already in Hesiod, see Derek Collins, “Hesiod and the Divine Voice of the Muses,” *Arethusa* 32 (1999): 241-62. On their Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman reception, including in relation to gender, see also Efrossini Spentzou and Don Fowler, eds., *Cultivating the Muse: Struggles for Power and Inspiration in Classical Literature* (Oxford UP, 2002).

ramifications of the female positioning of the Sibyl. The thrust, in effect, is to contrast female truth with male falsity. On the one hand, her implied parallel with the Muses permits this gendered configuration of knowledge to be readily rooted in a sense that a female figure of this sort would “naturally” be more closely connected to the divine. On the other hand, her juxtaposition with Homer enables this contrast of female truth with male falsity also to serve as a contrast of Jewish truth with Greek falsity: the former, in both cases, is marked as divine, whereas the latter is derivative, at best, and deceptively clever artifice, at worst. To take on Homer, in this sense, also results in a pointed critique of the Greek *paideia* that was coming at the time to reshape the enculturation of elite men across the Hellenistic world—for which a female position arguably serves as a particularly powerful stance from which to relativize its totalizing truth claims.⁷⁶ Homer, after all, was central to the curriculum of Greek *paideia* whereby elite men were enculturated into translocal Greekness across the Mediterranean in the early Hellenistic age.⁷⁷ But the *Third Sibylline Oracle* speaks from a female position so as to remind the hearer/reader that Homer’s own artistry derives from a feminine source (i.e., the Muses by his account, the Sibyl herself by hers).

When we situate the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in its Hellenistic context, the question also arises as to whether its depiction of Homer is meant to convey suspicion towards precisely the types of textuality that were gaining prestige under the early Ptolemies.⁷⁸ In the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, after all, Homer is not depicted as the first to *hear* the Sibyl; he is described, rather, as the first to lay his hands upon *her books*. For all the elevated and repeated emphasis on voice, speaking, proclamation, and inspired hymns throughout the *Third Sibylline Oracle* (and, for that matter, throughout the works of Homer!) his dependence on her is here framed quite pointedly in terms of acts of *reading* and *writing*—and perhaps, as a result, depicted at yet another remove from the directness of the sound of embodied divine speech. And this too might be a polemic that bears more force for her positioning: the inspired voice of a (Jewish)⁷⁹ woman only accessible to a (Greek) man through books.

⁷⁶ As König and Whitmarsh put it: “The Alexandrian library (later imitated in Pergamum and elsewhere) brought the whole world into a single city, broadcasting the glory of the Ptolemaic rule that had provided the conditions for its possibility. And a whole range of scholars imitated and influenced that totalising gesture in their individual works” (“Ordering Knowledge,” 8–9).

⁷⁷ The marked masculinity of Greek *paideia* has been widely noted, especially since the seminal work of Maud W. Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton UP 2008).

⁷⁸ On shifts toward the increased prestige of books and textuality in the early Hellenistic age, see further Timothy Whitmarsh, *Ancient Greek Literature*, 122–38, there tracing the process of how “Greek identity was increasingly bound up with the study of literature, which it came to see as a defined body of texts” (p. 22), and also Steve Johnstone, “A New History of Libraries and Books in the Hellenistic Period,” *Classical Antiquity* 33 (2014): 347–93, there emphasizing “the political objectification of the book” in this era wherein “the history of the Library of Alexandria... [was] one strand in this decentralized revolution happening from Athens to Babylon and in many places in between” whereby “aristocrats and monarchs across the Greek world began to found and fund libraries as part of the politics of elite benefaction, *euergetism*” (p. 349). I here build upon my efforts to consider Jewish literary production in the third and second centuries BCE in this context in Reed, *Demons, Angels, and Writing*.

⁷⁹ On her claim of a link to Jewishness see discussion of *Sib. or.* 3.810 below.

4. *Seeing, Knowing, and the Positioning of Revealed Knowledge in Early Enochic Literature and the Third Sibylline Oracle*

Just as Lester situates the Sibylline discourse of the early Roman period in a richly meaningful nexus of “pagan” as well as Jewish prophetesses, so Bacchi situates its earliest stages within the knowledge-politics of Hellenistic Egypt under the early Ptolemies. In the process, she recovers neglected evidence for the creative nexus of Greekness and Jewishness in the early Hellenistic age—a topic typically considered, if at all, mainly with reference to the LXX, *Epistle of Aristeas*, and the Greek Jewish authors preserved by Alexander Polyhistor. But among the payoffs of attending to the *Third Sibylline Oracle* in this fashion, in my view, is also to enrich our understanding of inner-Jewish debates about knowledge. Within research on the emergence of apocalyptic literature, much has been said of the debates concerning the limits of human knowledge, and the place of cosmological and eschatological speculation therein, in Enochic *Astronomical Book*, *Book of the Watchers*, *Epistle of Enoch*, and the *Wisdom ben Sira*. It is notable, however, that this inner-Jewish debate is contemporaneous with the emergence of the *Third Sibylline Oracles* (i.e., third and second centuries BCE) and in engagement with the same cultural trends that Bacchi shows to have shaped it: as I have shown elsewhere, for instance, Enochic and related Aramaic Jewish literary production from this period similarly resonates with broader trends in the reordering of local and imperial knowledge in the early Hellenistic age—including but not limited to a new concern for totalizing wisdom (e.g., Callimachus) and textualizing cosmological traditions in new forms (e.g., Aratus) as well as a new defense of the place of the Near Eastern scribe in an intellectual landscape reshaped by Greek *paideia* (e.g., Berossus).⁸⁰ A fuller integration of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* awaits further research. For now, however, it may be worth sketching the contours through a comparison with early Enochic literature, in particular, if only to point to the value of integrating its evidence more fully into our understanding of the Jewish knowledge-politics of this period as well.

Lightstone has noted some parallels between the Sibyl and Enoch, especially with reference to the Sibyl’s self-revelation of her identity at the very end of the *Third Sibylline Oracle*.⁸¹ It is not until this point in the work that her connection to the history of Israel is finally made explicit:

God put all the future in my mind so that I prophesy both future and former things and tell them to mortals (τῶν μετέπειτα δὲ πάντα θεὸς νόφ ἐγκατέθηκεν, ὥστε προφητεύειν με τὰ τ’ ἐσόμενα πρό τ’ ἐόντα καὶ λέξαι θνητοῖς). For when the world was deluged with waters, and a single approved man was left floating on the waters in a house of hewn wood with beasts and birds, so that the world might be filled again, I was his daughter-in-law (νύμφη), and I was of his blood (ἀφ’ αἵματος αὐτοῦ). The first things happened to him and the latter things have been revealed, so let these things from my mouth be accounted true (ὥστ’ ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ στόματος τὰδ’ ἀληθινὰ πάντα λελέχθω). (*Sib.or.* 3.821-296)⁸²

⁸⁰ Reed, “Writing Jewish Astronomy”; Reed, *Demons, Angels, and Writing*.

⁸¹ Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 70-77; see also Bacchi, “Uncovering,” 81-84.

⁸² Is she also related to Circe? The relevant passage directly prior (i.e., *Sib.or.* 3.814-16) is unclear and contested. Collins in *OTP* translates “I am Sibylla born of Circe as mother and Gnostos as father, a crazy liar”—thus depicting the Sibyl as related to Circe and the otherwise unattested “Gnostos,” but Bacchi suggests that the implication is that the Sibyl here counters a false tradition that she is born of Circe and Odysseus, translating instead “Some will say that I am Sibylla, a raging liar, whose mother is Circe and whose father is

Inasmuch as the Sibyl here reveals herself as the daughter-in-law of Noah, her experience of the Flood underpins her predictions of the Eschaton, as in many Enochic and related writings. Among the effects of claiming to speak about the Eschaton from the perspective of the era of the Flood, moreover, is to depict the Sibyl in a manner that broadly recalls Enoch, as Lightstone notes:

Both are primordial seers, recipients of revelation who because of their placement in deepest antiquity can be credited with long-sighted predictions of the distant future. Both have an interest in eschatology, in cosmic calamity, and both have a particular connection with the flood. Both also have a strangely more-than-mortal status.⁸³

It is unclear the degree to which the Enoch-like features of the Sibyl go beyond this one passage, and it is also unclear to what degree any parallels between these authorizing figures might reflect any direct awareness of Enochic writings. Just as the interest in Enoch in the early Hellenistic age resonates with Jewish concerns at this time to claim temporal and cultural priority over the Greeks (as arguably tacit in the *Book of the Watchers* but made explicit, e.g., by Pseudo-Eupolemus in his equation of Enoch with Atlas; *Pr.ev.* 9.17.3), so the *Third Sibylline Oracle* hails from the same era and also shares this same concern; the claim to speak from a perspective of extreme antiquity in *Sib.or.* 3.810, then, may simply extend what we have already seen of the claim of cultural priority in the treatment of Homer in 3.419–32.

Whether there is any connection between the *Third Sibylline Oracle* and early Enochic literature, it remains that our earliest examples of Enochic discourse and our earliest examples of Sibylline discourse both took form in the crucible of the early Hellenistic age, and both reflect a complex of shared concerns that richly resonate with the knowledge-politics of the Ptolemaic empire in the third and second centuries CE. The Enochic *Astronomical Book* and *Book of the Watchers* repurpose the Achaemenid administrative language of Aramaic as a Jewish literary language, while the *Third Sibylline Oracle* adopts the new prestige language of Greek. Yet both are concerned with the true sources of divine knowledge on earth, and both articulate new visions of the scope of Jewish knowledge by extending and transforming older models from biblical prophesy with an eye both to the Near East and to Hellenism: both, for instance, articulate the true nature of divine knowledge with reference to the astronomical and divinatory expertise emblematic of Mesopotamian scholasticism, while simultaneously countering yet matching the totalizing epistemological claims of Greek *paideia*.

Their contrasts are thus especially striking, especially in light of their choice of different gendered positionings. To an even greater degree than biblical literature, the Enochic *Astronomical Book* and *Book of the Watchers* depict the transmission of true knowledge and its lineage as the domain of men—and this is especially the case when we read their claims about Enoch and Methusaleh alongside the evocation of a priestly lineage of knowledge in contemporaneous and related Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls like the *Aramaic Levi Document*, *Visions of Amram*, and *Testament of Qahat*.⁸⁴ Whereas the Torah outlines familial

well-known”; “Uncovering,” 141.

⁸³ Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 71.

⁸⁴ I discuss this Aramaic Jewish scribal pedagogy in more detail in A. Y. Reed, “Textuality between Death and Memory: The Prehistory and Formation of the Parabiblical Testament,” *JQR* 104.3 (2014): 381–412; Reed, “Writing Jewish Astronomy in the Early Hellenistic Age: The Enochic *Astronomical Book* as

genealogies, this Aramaic Jewish literature of the early Hellenistic age asserts Jewish continuity as vouchsafed by lines of men who pass ancestral books and teachings from generation to generation, from father to son. So too is its elevation of the scribe quite decisively the elevation of a male scribe—described in priestly terms but also modeled on Mesopotamian scholasticism, not least through Enoch’s claim to expertise over astronomical and other cosmological knowledge in the *Astronomical Book* and *Book of the Watchers*.

If the Jewish appropriation of Babylonian astronomy in the *Astronomical Book* is prompted in part by a concern to counter Greek *paideia*, for instance, one masculinized model of elite literate education is here contested with another masculinized model of elite literate education. By contrast, as we have seen, the *Third Sibylline Oracle* adopts a female position to critique much the same Hellenistic claims about knowledge and teaching, even taking direct aim at Homer. In addition, it also undermines the connection of Jewish knowledge with Mesopotamia, alluding to Abraham’s connection to Chaldea, not to make a Jewish claim to astronomy, but rather to depict him and his righteous heirs as defined by their decisive rejection of astronomical, divinatory, and other modes of expertise emblematic of Mesopotamian scholasticism. And whereas the scribal model of wisdom in Enochic and related literature is marked by the depiction of revelation as a matter of seeing, showing, reading, and writing, the *Third Sibylline Oracle* notably resists this model: the only references to reading, writing, and books are negative, associated with Homer and his insufficient understanding and deceptive misuse of inspired hymns of the Sibyl, while her own positioning as a source of true knowledge remains decisively predicated on embodied acts of divinely implanted speech.

To be sure, there is no explicit inner-Jewish polemic within the *Third Sibylline Oracle*: if anything, as we have seen, the Sibyl’s female knowledge is here presented as complementary with the male Jewish knowledge of Temple priests and their righteous ancestors. Yet, in the process, such priestly claims to knowledge are relativized and revealed to be partial rather than truly totalizing. In this, the biblical precedent that the Sibyl of the *Third Sibylline Oracle* perhaps most resembles is Huldah, especially as she is described in 2 Kings 22. Bacchi notes how Huldah is a unique case in biblical literature; despite multiple references to prophetesses, she is the only prophetess who is described as speaking in the words of God Himself. To this precedent for the Sibyl, we might also add the occasion of this speech as it reveals her place vis-à-vis male models of Jewish authority: in 2 Kings 22, a high priest is said to have found a forgotten scroll of *torah* in the Temple archives, whereupon he gives it to a scribe to read (22:8), who in turn reads it aloud to the king (22:10). Yet the impressions of priest, scribe, and king here do not suffice; rather, the king asks his servant to “Go, inquire of the Lord” (22:13), and priests and scribes consult the prophetess (22:14). The contents of the book are then confirmed and vouchsafed by her words, which are repeatedly marked and framed as the words of God himself (“Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel...”; 22:15). As for the Sibyl, moreover, the topic of Huldah’s inspired speech is the prospect of divine violence and judgment. The king is depicted as desiring to “inquire of the Lord... concerning the words of this book” via the prophetess precisely because the message in the book pertains to God’s wrath (22:13). Accordingly, her words concerning the book—as here reported in direct speech—also focus on wrath.⁸⁵ The male paragons of ancestral Jewish knowledge—

Aramaic Wisdom and Archival Impulse," *DSD* 24 (2017): 1–37.

⁸⁵ 2 Kings 22:15-20 (RSV): “She declared to them: ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Tell the man

high priest, scribe, and king—are here portrayed as deeming the prophetic speech of a woman necessary so as to confirm and interpret a book of *torah*. If the case of Huldah represents yet another case in which ancient sources take for granted the possibility of an association of divine knowledge with women in a manner than modern scholars do not, it also provides a notable precedent for the Sibyl in the *Third Sibylline Oracle*, whose inspired prophetic knowledge is also presented as supplementary yet necessary to the knowledge of priests and other righteous Jewish men.

As a model of prophethood, moreover, Huldah in 2 Kings 22 stands as emblematic of the limits of books, scribes, and writing to convey divine knowledge apart from the power of inspired speech. Whereas early Enochic literature uses a male position to develop male prophetic models like Ezekiel (e.g., 3:1–7) toward an increased textualization of revelation and elevation of books,⁸⁶ the *Third Sibylline Oracle* seems to use a female position to develop female prophetic models like Huldah so as to temper this post-exilic turn to textualization. The contrast is at the very least striking: whereas the Enochic *Astronomical Book* elevates the act of reading into a medium of receiving and transmitting heavenly knowledge (e.g., *1 En* 81:1; 82:1) and the *Book of the Watchers* celebrates the scribe as the one privy to divine speech and secrets in a manner akin to angels (e.g., *1 En* 12:4; 15:1),⁸⁷ the *Third Sibylline Oracle* only makes mention of reading in relation to Homer and insists throughout upon true prophesy as an act of embodied speech. To the degree that it has been neglected, then, scholars may have missed an important part of the story of the transformation of biblical prophesy in Second Temple times as well as an important component of inner-Jewish debates about revealed knowledge in the early Hellenistic age.

5. Conclusion: Gendered Knowledge and Modern Scholarly Practice

In her classic essay on “Situated Knowledges,” Haraway suggests that “we need the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meanings and bodies, but in order to build meanings and bodies.”⁸⁸ To this, I would add that the questions raised by such theories might also, at times, help us to recover meanings and bodies, not least from modern scholarly readings of ancient sources that have tended to ignore the gendered and other embodied aspects of the knowledge therein.

The intervention of Haraway’s classic essay that still resonates today—as Peta Hinton notes in a recent retrospective—is “her reworking of the transcendent status of objectivity as

who sent you to me, *Thus says the Lord*, I will indeed bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. Because they have abandoned me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall you say to him, *Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel*: Regarding the words that you have heard, because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, *says the Lord*. Therefore, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place.”

⁸⁶ Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 101-2; Reed, “Pseudepigraphy and/as Prophecy.”

⁸⁷ See further Reed, “Pseudepigraphy and/as Prophecy.”

⁸⁸ Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 580.

already partial, already embodied specificity.”⁸⁹ To the degree that scholarly knowledge production—including but not limited to historical scholarly knowledge production—has elevated an ideal of disinterested inquiry, its grounding epistemology is predicated on the conjuring of a purportedly neutral position, unmarked by any embodied specificity, as the position from which it is purportedly possible to see and know in totality. And the illusion that makes this possible has been the sleight-of-hand whereby male particularity and the partiality of a male gaze have treated as if a universal human position and purview, rather than gendered, situated, and embodied. Haraway, Hinton, and others have noted how this illusion functions categorically to exclude women and others who are marked by contrast as particular, embodied, partial in our vision and knowledge, and thus vulnerable to partiality, and they have thus articulated a “politics of location” as requisite for “a feminist practice that emphasizes the specificity of the speaking subject in order to foreground her capacity to speak.”⁹⁰ Yet this move is also perhaps promising for the practice of historical scholarship, due in its simultaneous power, as Hinton notes, “to account for the way that all knowledge claims remain situated and contingent.”⁹¹

My interest, here, has been in asking how modern assumptions about knowing and seeing can sometimes lead us to ignore or misread the notions of knowledge within our ancient sources. Just as ancient optic theories presume that seeing is a fundamentally tactile act and thus caution us against retrojecting our modern sense of vision as power from a distance, so we should not assume that all ancient theories of knowledge necessarily share the modern scholarly preference for those types of seeing and knowing that claim to be disembodied from their contexts and from the gendered bodies of those who see, speak, write, read, and know. Nor is it clear that maleness was nearly as invisible, neutral, universal, etc., for ancient authors and readers as it has been for many modern scholars.

In Haraway’s view, the critique of falsely disembodied knowledge-claims of modernism can open the way for a new vision of rational knowledge that “does not pretend to disengagement: to be from everywhere and so nowhere” nor “to be free from interpretation, from being represented, to be fully self-contained or fully formalizable”; in her view, such “rational knowledge is a process of ongoing critical interpretation... a power-sensitive conversation... not partiality for its own sake, but rather for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible.”⁹² Her alternative vision of scholarly/scientific knowledge-making is paired with an insistence on embodied sight:

⁸⁹ Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 103. Or, in other words: “What an emphasis on situated knowledge production responds to is... a reprobate subject that assumes its distance from the world and therefore a capacity to speak for that world as a generalized resource. The question, then, of non-locatability, or the ability to speak from anywhere, is presented first and foremost as a problem that needs redefining in light of feminist aims to scrutinize and contest objective, context-independent modes of enquiry. A politics of location arrives as an important intervention in this regard. In recognizing the essentially unstable nature of subjectivity as already material and embodied, it performs a critical manoeuvre that reveals and delegitimizes the universalizing and disembodied ambitions of the *cogito* and its obscuring of the mechanisms through which silencing and marginalization can be sustained” (Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 100-1). But what remains unresolved—Hinton there suggests—is whether Haraway is “reinstalling a distinction between universality and specificity” in the process (p. 104).

⁹⁰ Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 100.

⁹¹ Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 100.

⁹² Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 590.

I am arguing for... an epistemology of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge and claims... I am arguing for the view from a body, always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured body, versus the view from above.⁹³

In this sense, I would suggest that her intervention complements the recent interest in the study of Second Temple Judaism in avoiding anachronism by attending anew to the “native categories” and “native theorizing” within our ancient sources, while also questioning anew the modern analytical terms and taxonomies that we have been accustomed to imposing upon the past as if neutral and universal (e.g., “religion,” “magic”).⁹⁴ Likewise, her insistence that *all* vision is partial, positioned, and situated—including the idealized illusion of the totalized universalism of a disembodied and “objective” neutral-*qua*-male gaze—might inspire us further to push to historicize (and thereby relativize) our own modern scholarly practices but also to take seriously the diversity of our ancient sources as simultaneously a diversity of perspectives from which to see the past.

Writing of race in the United States, for instance, Hazel Carby notes the need “to make visible what is rendered invisible when viewed as the normative state of existence: the (white) point in space from which we tend to identify difference.”⁹⁵ In this, she follows bell hooks in critiquing a sort of American liberal multiculturalism wherein the “theoretical paradigm of difference is obsessed with the construction of identities rather than relations of power and domination, and in practice, concentrates on the effect of this difference on a (white) norm.”⁹⁶ Inasmuch as much of our current scholarly interest in identity has been fostered precisely in this milieu, I have elsewhere suggested that scholars might do well to heed such critiques in our historiography as well: rather than simply map or celebrate the “diversity” of ancient identities, for instance, we may wish also to reflect upon which positions we do and do not adopt as the perspectives from which we analyze identity and difference—asking, in other words, through whose eyes we choose to see the past *vs.* who remains as if seen but not seeing, or unseen; whose perspectives we treat as representative *vs.* whose vision we treat as partial; whose locations we treat as central and “mainstream,” and thus possible to abstractify into global trends, *vs.* whose positions we marginalize as particular, peripheral, or “merely local.”⁹⁷ Much the same might be said of gender and difference: to correct what Peskowitz notes as the “misnomer of engendering” whereby “masculinity is still assumed as the universal, and femininity continues to function as the mark of difference,”⁹⁸ it arguably does not suffice to make masculinity visible, or to work to include women in narratives about the past as seen and told by men: we might also wish to question the monolithic privileging of a male perspective from which it even makes sense to

⁹³ Hinton, “Situated Knowledges,” 589.

⁹⁴ For a powerful recent example: Daniel Boyarin, *Judaism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2018).

⁹⁵ Carby, “Multicultural Wars,” 12.

⁹⁶ Carby, “Multicultural Wars,” 12. See further now George Yancy, *Look, A White!: Philosophical Essays on Whiteness* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2012)—there stressing how the invisibility of whiteness raises the question of invisible *to whom*, thereby pointing to black and other nonwhite perspectives as necessary for illuminating the workings of whiteness. Similarly, to the degree that we speak of maleness as a presumed neutral or “objective” state of humanness, we presume that the privileged gaze of the scholarly analytic viewer is also ideally/normatively male.

⁹⁷ Reed, “After ‘Origins,’ Beyond ‘Identity,’ and Before ‘Religion(s).”

⁹⁸ Peskowitz, “Engendering Jewish Religious History,” 30.

treat a male perspective as universal and a female one as marked different, imagining instead an epistemology and historiography that can allow for a multiplicity of positions, visions, and locations.

By their very existence, the *Sibylline Oracles* remind us that ancient Jewish authors, scribes, tradents, and readers were actually able (and quite willing and interested!) to imagine what we modern scholars habitually do not—that is: what it might feel like to see the past and future of Israel and the world through the eyes of a female prophetess, and what it might sound like to hear a woman’s voice speaking divine knowledge in a world filled with the wars of men. In scholarship on Second Temple Judaism, we are accustomed to accepting that what Mroczek has called the “ancient Jewish literary imagination” included the creative imagining of the past from perspectives of angels, Giants, etc., no less than those of any variety of men, from the most distant past to the lived present. But we are less accustomed to noticing the imagining of women’s voices and perspectives as well. Precisely in their insistence on an embodied female voice, then, the *Sibylline Oracles* make visible some of what has been taken as invisible in modern scholarship on ancient apocalyptic and related literature—that is, the presumption of a male voice as the voice that speaks the truth, the presumption of a male seer as the gendered gaze from which divine knowledge is granted about history and the heavens, the presumption of a male persona as the position from which we best learn about the past and consider how the future was imagined from that past. Even if fictive, the imagined possibility of positioning prophesy as female therefore challenges us to ask, not just about what *we* do not see of the past by virtue of our received archive, but also about whose perspectives on knowledge *we* choose treat as if neutrally representative and/or disembodied from their gendered identities, both in the past and through our own present-day performances from a scholarly position of “objectivity.”