

classical” situation of Vedic royal consecration, which was broken into two parts by a “symbolic war expedition” (pp. 140, 162).

In counterpoint to the Kadri monastery’s elevation of its *mahant* to royal status, Nepal’s Caughera monastery exemplifies another leitmotif of Nāth mytho-history: the elevation by a Nāth Yogī of an untested prince to the royal throne, and the subsequent royal land grants that founded and have since maintained the *math*. Bouillier’s detailed account of the monastery’s history, organization, and daily ritual program is colored throughout by its legendary founder’s dual identity. Ratannāth, also identified as Ratan Pīr, Hājji Ratan—and, most recently, as Kanipā—is a figure who embodies the Nāths’ intertwined identities as Siddhas and Sufis, Hindus and Muslims. Here, as Bouillier notes, the Sufi title of *pīr*, attributed to the monastic heads of every *pañcāyatī* monastery, is considered by the Caughera Yogīs to be specific to their place (p. 192). Nāth ties to Sufi Islam are also evidenced in the *dargah*-style appearance of the *samādhi mandir* of Amritnāth, the Fatehpur monastery’s founding guru (pp. 252–53), and the celebration of the death anniversaries (comparable to the Muslim *‘urs*) of a number of monastic founders.

The book’s part three, devoted to personal monasteries (*niji maths*), is the least compelling portion of the book, comprising an overview of what Bouillier typologizes as “charismatic” (Fatehpur) and “political” (Gorakhpur) monasteries, with the Asthal Bohar monastery standing as a synthesis of the two types. The great bulk of these chapters being devoted to the foundation, history, and current patronage and management styles of Fatehpur and Asthal Bohar, the reader is left to wonder why the Gorakhpur monastery—whose current *mahant*, Yogi Ādityanāth, is also the highly controversial right-wing Chief Minister of the state of Uttar Pradesh—receives such scant attention. A more serious shortcoming of this otherwise wonderfully rich and insightful book lies in Bouillier’s seemingly interchangeable references to the Nāths as a “religious order” and a “sect.” This reader would have appreciated more clarity on her understanding and usage of these terms.

DAVID GORDON WHITE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

Male and Female in the Epic of Gilgamesh: Encounters, Literary History, and Interpretation. By TZVI ABUSCH. Winona Lake, Ind.: EISENBRAUNS, 2015. Pp. ix + 236. \$39.50 (paper).

The Epic of Gilgamesh as represented by tablets from the “libraries” of first-millennium BCE Mesopotamia is the best known and most accessible to modern readers of all the literature of the ancient Near East, save that of the Hebrew Bible. As a result, it is often included in introductions to world literature, both in print and in the classroom. Similarly, it has frequently caught the attention of literary scholars and translators, even of some ignorant of the ancient Akkadian language in which it was composed.

Indeed, scholarship on the Epic has tended to cluster at two poles—on the one hand, the reconstruction of the basic text from its numerous fragmentary preserved exemplars and attention to technical philological problems of lexicon, grammar, and poetic practice, and on the other, as the author of this volume states, close reading that endeavors “to understand the meaning of the text on its own terms” (p. 1), paying attention “primarily to personal and psychological levels of the narration” (p. 2).

Over thirty years, Tzvi Abusch has written nine essays (one with the collaboration of Indologist Emily West) that combine his philological acumen with a literary-critical approach to the matter of Gilgamesh. The book under review collects these pieces, now minimally edited for internal consistency and provided with a short introduction. Read together, these contributions set forth a grand scheme of the development of the tales featuring the Mesopotamian hero from the third through the first millennium BCE, as evidenced most clearly in chapter 6, “The Development and Meaning of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*: An Interpretive Essay.”

Abusch’s conclusion in short: “Gilgamesh seeks immortality as a human being, and in all three versions of the text, he learns that this is impossible. In the Old Babylonian version, Gilgamesh finds a meaningful context within the bosom of the family . . . and accepts the role of builder-king. In the

eleven-tablet version, he becomes a responsible ruler who rules his community with wisdom. . . . In the twelve-tablet version, he readies himself to become a normal god who judges dead human beings for eternity” (pp. 142–43).

In the course of fashioning this arc of development, Abusch not only compares the extant textual witnesses from the earliest and latest periods, but posits the existence of lost stages of the story, such as an early version in which the seduction of the primeval man Enkidu is undertaken by the harlot Shamhat on her own initiative (p. 156), and another wherein Gilgamesh’s quest ends with marriage to the divine bar-maid Siduri (p. 115).

Such a daring approach has not been to the liking of all readers of these essays in their earlier incarnations. See, for instance, Andrew George’s dismissal of what appears here as chapter 5 (“The *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the Homeric Epics”) as unsubstantiated (*The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts* [Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 2003], 55 n. 140), as well as Abusch’s rebuttal in this work (p. 144 n. 1).

I must admit to being among the sceptics (see also p. 178) who demand stronger evidence than literary analysis alone in positing such *historical* events as the composition of a text now lost to us. And can we really conclude what a character in an ancient text, laconic in comparison to most modern literature, is thinking if its author doesn’t see fit to inform us? Abusch repeatedly deduces the thoughts and motivations of the Epic’s actors, as of Gilgamesh when propositioned by Ishtar (pp. 15–16), and he even suggests that another personage discloses crucial information “inadvertently, perhaps” (p. 80). For me, such psychologizing is unconvincing, as is the invoking of Freud and E. Kübler-Ross when examining a very distant and alien culture (p. 50 n. 77).

More serious perhaps is the interpretation of Gilgamesh’s remark to Siduri that “Now, alewife, that I have seen your face / The death that I constantly fear may I not see” (Old Babylonian Meissner Tablet ii 12’–13’) as a formulaic proposal of marriage (pp. 69–70). There is simply no evidence to support this assertion, despite the parallels adduced from later Near Eastern folk customs. Abusch’s observation that in any case, such a union could never be, “for it is a mingling of human and god” (p. 79), ignores the fact that Gilgamesh himself is the product of such a coupling and is consequently two-thirds divine (Twelve-Tablet Version I 48). Or are we to attribute this description of the hero’s genetic makeup to a later editor? I think not, since the goddess Ninsun is mentioned as his mother already in the Old Babylonian Pennsylvania Tablet (vi 236).

Furthermore, the idea that an embryonic stage of the narrative functioned as a kind of Mirror for Princes (pp. 172–76) that had accreted around a core of instruction in hunting for a crown prince is more than questionable. Abusch sees the lore of venery in the killing of Huwawa, guardian of the Cedar Forest (Tablet V), as well as in Gilgamesh’s activities during his wanderings in the steppe following the death of Enkidu (Tablet IX). But it is stretching things to characterize the tutelary monster Huwawa as game (so p. 168), and while on his trek through the wilderness Gilgamesh is not preparing to assume kingship but has adopted the mode of life followed by his lost beloved companion prior to the latter’s civilizing at the hands—or loins—of Shamhat.

Finally, the contention that the anomalous Tablet XII, a more or less direct translation of the Sumerian tale “Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Underworld,” is “a simple description of the norms and procedures that govern life in the netherworld” (p. 142), appended in order to prepare the hero (pp. 56, 142) for his role attested elsewhere as a divine judge in the afterlife, falters upon the observation that while its contents indeed depict the sad lot of the inhabitants of that realm, they say nothing concerning its administration.

So much for the objections of a cranky old philologist, which are by no means intended to discourage readers from picking up this book. On a literary-critical level, Abusch has given us much to think about and has presented a plausible, if uncertain, reconstruction of the Epic’s long and complicated history. Of his posited developmental path, one might say “Kann sein, muß aber nicht.”

I can certainly affirm Abusch’s statement that the basic conflict here “is that between the extraordinary and the normal” (p. 131). However gifted a person might be, he or she must come to terms with the constraints inherent in the human condition. But I would hold that this lesson of the Epic applies

not only to a semi-divine ruler, but to any person, which helps to account for the great popularity of the tale(s) of Gilgamesh—in the ancient Near East and in the present day.

GARY BECKMAN
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Daughters of Hecate: Women & Magic in the Ancient World. Edited by KIMBERLY B. STRATTON and DAYNA S. KALLERES. New York: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2014. Pp. xv + 533. \$39.95 (paper).

The essays in this volume examine the ancient background of the association of women with witchcraft that has contributed to early modern witch-hunts and to a continuing presence in popular culture. It considers the links between women and magic in Roman, Jewish, and late antique culture. The essays are divided into three sections: the first treats literary presentations of magic, the second magical discourse in practice, and the third material culture. Stratton's introduction locates the volume as an intervention more in the scholarship on witchcraft than in the study of antiquity. She points out that while the association of magic with women is frequent in the early modern period, it is not found in the Middle Ages and is not universal even later. Yet, Stratton argues, the scholarship on witchcraft has been influenced by assumptions that it is inherently female.

In the first section, Babette Stanley Spaeth discusses the Greek and the Roman witch, and Kimberly Stratton treats "Magic, Abjection, and Gender in Roman Literature." Both essays are valuable, especially for non-specialists. Spaeth's paper argues that Latin poetry portrays witches as more grotesque and disgusting than Greek literature does. It is good to be reminded that the witches represented in ancient Greek literature are young and beautiful. The physical nastiness of many Latin witches is important for reception. However, if we want to understand the authors themselves, genre and accidents of preservation need to be considered—for example, if the Lydian woman who seems to be giving the speaker a magical treatment for impotence in Hipponax fr. 92 was described in the poem, she was not pretty. Also, Silver Latin generally tends to the baroque, and the extravagantly disgusting Erichtho is typical of Lucan. Stratton uses J. Kristeva's "abjection" to define the way magic in Roman literature threatens the integrity of the body and patriarchal power, and she argues that this abjectness led to the association of women with magic. Stratton's emphasis on how magic violates physical integrity is enlightening, but the abject is not a useful category, since it can cover anything and so defines nothing. Stratton tends to ignore genre, citing erotic magic in Tibullus in a discussion of the threat adultery posed to the Augustan order (p. 163)—but the speaker of elegy is the adulterer and Augustan order is not unequivocally supported.

In "Women as Witches in 1 Enoch and Rabbinic Sources," Rebecca Lesses asks if the view that "women are sorceresses" is the normative view in the rabbinic tradition and concludes it is not. She also asks if this view is connected to earlier traditions in the Bible or in the Book of Enoch. Although rabbinic sources are aware of the tradition that women are witches, Talmudic commentaries state that neither a male nor a female sorcerer shall live, indicating that witchcraft is not the exclusive domain of women. They explain however that the text in Exodus is written in the feminine to teach that "most women are sorceresses" (y. *Sanh.*, 7:19, 25d). Hillel is also quoted as saying, "the more women the more sorcery" (m. *Avot* 2.7), and R. Yosi says, "the daughters of Israel use incense for purposes of magic" (b. *Eruv* 64b). The Palestinian Talmud records a story, moreover, in which eighty witches were crucified by Shimon ben Shetah in Ashkelon in the first century BCE (y. *Sanh.* 6.8, 23c), although the Talmud may have claimed they were witches to exonerate Shimon ben Shetah of the executions. In fact, no specific actions attributed to women in the Talmud are associated with witchcraft. Condemned activities are rather associated with the "ways of the Amorites." Indeed, a medical practitioner called "Em" ("mother") is not associated with either witchcraft or the "ways of the Amorites."

In "Gendering Heavenly Secrets?" Annette Yoshiko Reed objects to the misogynistic view of the Watchers and demands that we not read the Book of Enoch through the lens of later Greek and Egyptian