

John Tracy Thames, Jr.

Curriculum Vitae

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PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2019- **Clemson University**, Assistant Professor of Religion
Department of Philosophy and Religion
- 2017-19 **Yale University**
Yale College, Lecturer, Fellow of Jonathan Edwards College
Yale Divinity School, Lecturer in Hebrew Bible
- 2015-19 **University of Connecticut**, Senior Lecturer of Biblical Languages
and Biblical Literature
Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages
Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life

EDUCATION

- 2016 Ph.D., Hebrew Bible and Northwest Semitic Philology
Department of Near Eastern Studies
Johns Hopkins University
Dissertation: "Ritual Revision and the Influence of Empire:
The Politics of Change in the *zukru* Festival of Late Bronze
Age Emar."
- 2010 M.A., Hebrew Bible
Yale University Divinity School
- 2008 M.A., Philosophy
Louisiana State University
Thesis: "Pacifism and War: What are the Ethical
and Theological Limitations on the Use of Violence?"
- 2004 B.A., Philosophy
Louisiana State University
Concentration in Religious Studies
Minor: Jewish Studies

BOOK

The Politics of Ritual Change: The zukru Festival in the Political History of Late Bronze Emar. Harvard Semitic Monographs 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

- “Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread as a Single Ritual Complex: The Comparative Evidence from Emar,” *Vetus Testamentum*, in press.
- “International Politics and Local Change at Emar,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* 10 (2023): 23–52.
- “Dagan and the Ritualization of First Fruits at Emar” in *Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of P. Kyle McCarter Jr.* Edited by Christopher Rollston et al. Ancient Near East Monographs (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2022).
- “Writing Ritual and Calendar Together: The Biblical Cultic Calendars in Ancient Near Eastern Context.” *Religion Compass* 15 (2021).
- “Keeping the Paschal Lamb: Exodus 12.6 and the Question of Sacrifice in the Passover-of-Egypt.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 44/1 (2019): 3–18.
- “A New Discussion of the Meaning of the Phrase ‘am hā’āreš in the Hebrew Bible.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130/1 (2011): 109-125.
8,701 words

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- “Review of Mary E. Buck: *The Amorite Dynasty of Ugarit: Historical Implications of Linguistic and Archaeological Parallels.* (Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant.) xiii, 376 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2020. ISBN 978 90 04 41510 2.” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 85/3 (2022).
- “Culture Summary: Ancient Israelites.” *Human Relations Area Files, World Cultures.* New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 2018.
Online version: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu>.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 “Ritual, Textualization, and the Festivals from Emar”
Society of Biblical Literature (San Antonio)- forthcoming
- 2023 “Israelite Ritual and Late Bronze Continuity: Observations from Psalms”
European Association of Biblical Studies (Siracusa)
- 2022 “Psalmic Terminology in Comparative Perspective”
Society of Biblical Literature (Denver)
- 2020 “Power and Change in Late Bronze Age Emar”
American Schools of Oriental Research (virtual meeting)
- 2019 “Problems of Comparativism in Ritual: Considering the Role of Emar in Biblical Studies.”
Society of Biblical Literature (San Diego)
- 2017 “Processional Politics in Emar’s *zukru* Festival and Implications for Procession Rituals in the Hebrew Bible”
Society of Biblical Literature (Boston)
- 2015 “The Character of Dagan in Emar’s *zukru* Festival and the Biblical Ritual of First Fruits.”
Society of Biblical Literature (Atlanta)
- 2014 “On Keeping a Lamb Four Days: *mišmeret* in Exodus 12:6.”
Society of Biblical Literature (San Diego)
- 2008 “Just War Theory and Cosmopolitanism.”
Louisiana State University Philosophy Colloquium

INVITED LECTURES

- 2018 “The Political Impact of Ritual Change at Emar”
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
New York University
- 2016 “The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls”
University of Hartford

COURSES TAUGHT

- Clemson University
- Old Testament (REL 3010)
 - Biblical Hebrew I & II (REL 3520 & 3530)
 - The Ancient Near East (REL 3510/HIST 3510)
 - Judaism (REL 3060)
 - Studying Religion: Theories and Methods (REL 3000)
 - Junior Research Colloquium (REL 3990)
 - Studies in Biblical Literature and Religion (REL 4010)
Topic: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers (Spring 2020)
 - Religious Studies Senior Seminar (REL 4900)
Topic: Psalms in Historical Context (Fall 2019)
Topic: Israelite Worship in the Psalms (Fall 2023)
- Other Courses
- The Bible: Old and New Testaments
 - The Song of Songs: Sex, Sexuality, and Religion in the Bible
 - Hebrew Wisdom Literature in the Ancient World
 - Judaism in the Hellenistic World
 - The New Testament and Early Christianity
 - Hebrew Prophets
 - Elementary Biblical Hebrew
 - Advanced Biblical Hebrew
 - Rituals in Ancient Societies
 - First Year Seminar: Inquiry-based Learning
 - Senior Year Integrative Capstone
 - Introduction to Ethics
 - The History of the Alphabet

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE TO THE FIELD

- 2023- Member, Editorial Board
Life and Society in the Ancient Near East (Transnational)
- 2023- Co-chair, Hebrew Bible Section
American Academy of Religion Southeast Region
- 2023- Co-chair, ASOR Member-sponsored Section
American Academy of Religion Southeast Region
- 2020- Member, Editorial Board
Avar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Life and Society in the Ancient Near East (Transnational)

- 2020- Member, Ritual in the Biblical World Steering Committee
Society of Biblical Literature
- 2017-19 Society of Biblical Literature, New England/Eastern Canada
Regional Executive Committee Member
- 2017-18 Project Editor
Yale University; University of Pennsylvania
- 2017-18 Copyeditor
Journal for the Study of Judaism, Brill Publishers
- 2017-18 Grant Proposal Reviewer
Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation
Civilian Research and Development Fund Global

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

- 2021 Humanities Hub Faculty Research Fellowship
Clemson University
- 2019 Fellow of Pierson College
Yale University
- 2018 Fellow of Jonathan Edwards College
Yale University
- 2014-15 Hodson Fellowship
Johns Hopkins University
- 2013-14 Samuel Iwry Fellowship
Johns Hopkins University
- 2012 Summer Travel Grant
Johns Hopkins University
- 2011 Summer Language Study Award
Mellon Foundation
- 2010-15 Jewish Studies Awards
The Leonard and Helen R. Stulman
Program in Jewish Studies
- 2010-15 Departmental Fellowship (Near Eastern Studies)
Johns Hopkins University
- 2009 Two Brothers Fellowship
Yale University

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

- 2012 Tayinat Archaeological Project, Hatay Province, Turkey
 Square Supervisor
- 2009 Leon-Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, Israel
 Volunteer

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society of Biblical Literature
American Society for Overseas Research
Catholic Biblical Association – Full Member
European Association of Biblical Studies

LANGUAGES

modern: German, French; Modern Standard Arabic (elementary).
ancient: Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Akkadian, Northwest Semitic
 Dialects (Phoenician, Moabite, epigraphic Hebrew), Egyptian,
 Greek (koine).

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Ritual in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Near East. Ritual theory.
Ritual and the construction of power.
History of the Late Bronze Age. Late Bronze Age Syria (Ugarit and Emar).
Book of Psalms.
Cuneiform and West Semitic epigraphy.