"My Thoughts *Are* (Not) Your Thoughts." Transposed Second-Order Thinking in the Hebrew Bible

Jaco Gericke
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1304-7751
North-West University
21609268@nwu.ac.za

Abstract

Following 19th-century distinctions between Hellenism and Hebraism, many popular 20th-century histories of Western philosophy assigned the intellectual world of the Hebrew Bible to a twilight zone between late mythological and early philosophical ways of thinking. Partly in response to this, research in Semitic languages during that time began to include comparative-linguistic arguments hoping to demonstrate radical structural incommensurability between Hebrew and Greek ways of thinking. In the latest trend in the associated research, a multi-disciplinary dialogue has been initiated on the subject of "second-order thinking" within the ancient Near East "before" or "outside" Greek philosophy. In this article, the author aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion by suggesting that Biblical Hebrew as religious language already presupposes an intricate variety of transposed second-order thinking.

Keywords: Hebrew Bible; Second-order thinking; Greek Philosophy

Introduction

Many popular 20th-century overviews of Western philosophy presuppose an older theological (and later secular) distinction between Hellenism and Hebraism (Arnold 1869[1993], Ch. 4). The latter contrast supervened on subsequent scholarly constructions of the contribution of so-called "Early Judaism" to the history of ideas. In turn, the Hebrew Bible was assigned to a transitional period within the "Axial Age" (see Jaspers 1949, 2) while the intellectual content of Biblical Hebrew came to be located in a twilight zone between late-mythological and early-philosophical views of the world (Russell 1945, 308–323; Frankfort and Frankfort 1946, 223–362; Eisenstadt 1982, 294–312: Donald 1991, 214; Tarnas 1991, 94–95).

In response, much of biblical scholarship adopted an apologetic stance. This led to several publications in Semitic languages purporting to provide cognate-linguistic and comparative-philosophical evidence of incommensurable structural differences between so-called "Hebraic" and "Greek" ways of thinking (see Pederson 1926–1940; Boman 1960; Barr 1961; Tsevat 1978, 53–58; Carasik 2006, 1–11). For both hermeneutical (historical) and theological reasons, the aforementioned contrast— alternatively dichotomised as "biblical" versus "philosophical" logic—remains popular to this day. This despite the numerous informal logical fallacies identified in the arguments used to perpetuate a paradigm burdened with anomalies (see Barr 1999, 146– 171; Gericke 2012).

More recently, however, there has been a turn (or return) to philosophy in ancient Near Eastern scholarship in general (see, e.g., Assmann 2003; Smith 2004; Van de Mieroop 2015). The same trend is also present in ancient Hebrew linguistics and literary theory (see Barr 2000, 27; Moore and Sherwood 2011, vi, vii). What is different is that despite the diversity of approaches and perspectives involved, a renewed interest in relations between the Hebrew Bible and philosophy is discernible. This is not limited to theoretical reflections on method and does not involve a return to pre-critical approaches bereft of historical consciousness. Rather, the said interest is concerned with what the latest related research implies about the nature of Biblical Hebrew as religious language and from this perspective, the Hebrew Bible's relation to the history of philosophy (see, e.g., Knierim 1995, 195; Barr 1994; Gericke 2014, 583–598; Sekine 2014).

Coming from the opposite disciplinary direction, a related turn to theology in general and to Hebrew Bible in particular is now visible in both so-called analytic and continental traditions of philosophy itself. Again, despite a great diversity of philosophical traditions, disciplines, locations, agendas, assumptions, problems, and perspectives involved, what is common to all associated is the renewed attempt to rethink the role (for good or ill) of the Hebrew Bible in the development of Western philosophy and science (see, e.g., Carmy and Shatz 1997, 13–37; Cupitt 1997, 2008, 2010; Hazony 2012; Glouberman 2013a, 43–66; 2013b, 503–519).

The Research of the Present Study

Over the last decade, a new multi-disciplinary dialogue has been initiated with the aim of identifying traces and types of so-called "second-order thinking" in ancient Near Eastern religious language and literature "before" or "outside" Greek philosophy (see Davies 2011, 145–164; Dietrich 2017, 45–65; Wagner and Van Oorschot 2017). The state of the research has been complicated by the fact that a great variety of associated jargon has attached itself to the concept of second-order thinking in a variety of academic and non-academic contexts (see Eisenstadt 1986, and especially Elkana 1986, 40–64). These include religious studies, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and

psychology, as well as business and education (see, e.g., Donald 1991, 214; Elbow 1994, 25; Bellah 2011, 275).

Diachronically, what is now called "second-order thinking" has a history of overlap with related terms including "philosophy", "the scientific method", "critical thinking", "the theoretical attitude", "second-order cybernetics", "meta-cognition", and others. Also, synchronically, second-order thinking is a "fuzzy concept". With regard to rank, the related includes references to anything from "first-order" to various levels of "higher-order" thinking. With reference to the adjective *preceding* the abstract noun, one encounters second-order *religious*, *philosophical*, *scientific* and other types of thinking. As for the abstract noun "thinking" itself, alternative possibilities include second-order *knowledge*, *logic*, *language*, *discourse*, *theories*, etc.

One could complicate matters to the point of no return by suggesting that the reification of a metaphorical state of affairs about numerical rank or hierarchy in mental operations seems pretentious. Or by adopting a philosophical perspective involving the elimination of perceived occult phenomena associated with the concept of thinking itself. That being said, for practical purposes it is necessary to temporarily fix the reference and offer an easily comprehensible and functional account of the construction of second-order thinking presupposed in the discussion that follows. To this end, let what we normally mean when we casually refer to thinking about things be called "first-order thinking". Then the concept of "second-order thinking" can be said to denote the creative use of the imagination to adopt a fictional transcendental perspective in order to critically reflect on the nature, value, contents, and limits of human thinking as such.

The research problem that can now the formulated involves the question of whether and where the Hebrew Bible can be said to contain examples of second-order thinking as defined above. The hypothesis is that Biblical Hebrew in its function as religious language might be considered a fruitful location for the identification of transposed second-order thinking. The focus of the research will be on constructions of the concept of the divine mind in contexts representing divine/human thinking about divine/human thinking. The objective is to provide an introductory overview of the varieties of second-order religious language present in the data under consideration. The research methodology utilised will be descriptive and historical in orientation, limited to conceptual clarification and comparative-philosophical considerations (cf. Gericke 2012, 32–58). The assumption is that the divine mind as constructed in the text is a literary creation with the ontological status of a fictional object (see Patrick 1982, 212; Carroll 1991, 38; Gunn and Fewell 1993, 61; Clines 1995, 190; Brueggemann 1997, 33 Thompson 1999, 304; cf. Gericke 2017, 16).

As for outline and content, the discussion commences with what is believed to be the relevant philosophical and religious-historical backgrounds for contextualising the claim that the Hebrew Bible's constructions of second-order thinking related to the

divine mind are philosophical fictions in the non-pejorative sense. A small selection of samples, with brief comments on the various types of transposed second-order thinking perceived to be present in the Hebrew Bible, is then provided in support of the hypothesis. The study concludes with a cursory synthesis of the findings and some remarks on the implications and limits thereof within the broader contexts of related research.

Constructing the Divine Mind in Early Religion and Philosophy

In some non-realist linguistic theories within Continental philosophy of religion on the origin of religious language, the concept of a divine mind as ideal observer is seen as a necessary condition for second-order thinking to have developed in the first place:

> Those who first acquired language and tried to think about the human situation were utterly overwhelmed. They could cope only by imagining that there were greater invisible beings who could and did understand and control both the human psyche and the world. 'I can't make sense of it, but I have to believe that there is a larger perspective within which it all makes sense.' (Cupitt 2010, xiii)

In the context of early Greek philosophy, second-order religious language was used in the construction of the concept of a divine mind to communicate the seemingly transcendent perspectives attained via second-order thinking. This is evident in the ideas attributed to several so-called Pre-Socratic thinkers. For example, despite being most famous for his critique of anthropomorphism in local cultural constructions of divine bodies, Xenophanes (560–478 B.C.E.) takes it for granted in his *Memorabilia* 1.4.8 that not only is there a god, but also that the god has a mind constantly engaged in thoughts beyond the reach of ordinary mortal thought (Bonnette 1994, 16). Also, Heraclitus (535–475 B.C.E.) in *Fragment 118,* reductively equates "Zeus" with scribal "wisdom", the latter being a property of the "gods" in literature that stands in relation to ordinary human wisdom in a way analogous to how the wisdom of adults stands in relation to the naiveté of children (Kahn 1979, 83).

Other philosophers of the Pre-Platonic era even presented their own second-order thinking in the form of second-order religious language. Parmenides (515–440 B.C.E.), in the *Fragments* 1, 5, 8–11, 13, presents his philosophical views in the form of poetry revealed to him by a goddess (Coxon 1986, 80–84). Empedocles (490–430 B.C.E.) followed suit in his poetic *Fragments* 9[3]–10[131] (Inwood 2001, 214–215; cf. Hazony 2012, 7–9). This is evidence of a literary convention along with the associated form-critical protocols that philosophers chose to follow in communicating representations of human second-order thinking, transposed onto the divine mind via second-order religious language. In other words, the particular deity's name functioned as a philosophical pseudonym and the god, along with the divine mind, were similar to what today would be called "thought experiments" or "philosophical fictions" rather than actual entities first encountered in the world behind the texts.

The aforementioned trends were continued in the writings of Plato (427–347 B.C.E.). In some contexts, the rational human mind or *nous* is seen as not so much a recipient of divine revelation but as having innate knowledge (*anamnesis)* which it has forgotten (*Meno* 80a–d). Consequently, the philosopher must strive to attain the higher-order meta-cognitive perspective one would imagine the gods as ideal observers would have access to (*Philebus* 28a–c). If it was believed that this state has been reached, the use of second-order religious language was deemed perfectly appropriate to present one's own human second-order thinking as revealed by or representative of the divine mind itself (Cooper 1997, 416, 879).

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), in chapters 7-9 in Book 12 of his *Metaphysics* (1072 b 12), used second-order religious language to construct the divine as both a thinker (νοῦς) and as object of thought (νοητόν). In *Metaphysics* (1074 b 34) he goes further by arguing that the divine mind is divine because divine thinking thinks itself and its thinking is the thinking of thinking. On this view, a god spends its time in a meta-cognitive state of thinking about thinking, although humans cannot actually use such second-order thinking as intellectual ideal since a god's thought is incomparable. Yet humans can still reflect on and marvel at the infinity of the divine mind and the incomparability of divine thoughts (De Koninck 1994, 471–515).

Many similar examples of second-order thinking as the philosopher's *Imitatio Dei* through second-order religious language can be found in all subsequent philosophers until the end of antiquity. To be sure, there is more to the story than recounted in these examples and they too are open to alternative interpretations (as all things scholarly are). If, however, the background constructed is accepted as functional for the sake of the argument, despite its conditional status, the philosophical literary convention involved shows that the popular contemporary distinction between, inter alia, philosophy/mythology, reason/revelation, divine/human is actually anachronistic as regards the form-critical aspects of literary representations of second-order thinking during this period of its history.

The regrettably short discussion of historical and comparative-philosophical contexts will terminate at this point to focus more on texts from the Hebrew Bible. No direct influence is claimed or assumed, whatever it may have or could not have been. The only axiom operative is the profound relational truism that for anything to happen, everything must be in place.

Varieties of Transposed Second-Order Thinking in the Hebrew Bible

In the discussion to follow, a few examples of textual references to divine/human thinking about divine/human thinking are provided and briefly commented upon. These are not assumed to be either coherent or representative of what the Hebrew Bible as a

whole contains in relation to the topic at hand. However, given the limitations of space in presenting data in favour of the hypothesis, the particular divisions, selection, and comments are deemed sufficient to illustrate the possible presence of transposed second-order thinking in some of Biblical Hebrew's operations as second-order religious language. Related important issues regarding the Hebrew source materials and the concerns of both linguistic and biblical-critical forms of analysis are bracketed only for this reason without implying their redundancy. As for the idiosyncratic and one-sided selection of Biblical Hebrew terms, none of which are completely synonymous with the concept of thinking in English, more will be said with regard thereto in the section to follow.

Divine (Human) Thinking about Human Thinking

In this subject-object relation of transposed second-order thinking in the Hebrew Bible, the divine mind is explicitly referred to as the thinking subject (sometimes by the self-objectified human speaker who becomes an object). Various configurations of the grammatical person appear in the world of the text when representing *divine-thinking about-human-thinking*. The numerical value refers to that of the god's eye view as constructed, irrespective of whether it is implicit or explicit, direct or indirect, narrated or enacted.

In the first sample of this sub-type, an implied first-person perspective of the divine mind in Biblical Hebrew functioning as second-order religious language is presented in Isaiah 10:7.

> But this is not what he thinks (**יחשׁב**),
> nor does he have this in mind;
> but it is in his heart to destroy,
> and to cut off nations not a few.

Aside from everything else that can be said, this text has as a condition of its possibility prior human thinking about the nature and limits of human thought in the context of mental operations related to planning and calculating. In non-philosophical but still second-order religious language, the propositional content of the text furthermore presupposes certain folk-philosophical or folk-psychological distinctions regarding the difference between reality and appearance. The phenomenal experience of being an autonomous rational agent is implied to be an obstacle to becoming conscious about the determined nature of both intentional states and the actions they supervene on. Interestingly, determinism in the strong sense is also unable to "save all the phenomena" in the world of the text so that whoever's transposed second-order thinking is involved here was able to transcend the either/or dichotomies of binary thinking regarding conative causal *relata* by assuming something approximating a compatibilist perspective on the relation between divine providence and human agency. In the next example of this sub-type, a second person perspective is attested in Psalm 139:2.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my **thoughts (מחשבות)** from afar.

The second-order thinking-as self-transcendence via introspection is evident where the transposing shows the divine mind's manner of thinking about human thinking, both in terms of method and thoughts of interest. We also find in verse 23 of the same Psalm.

Search me, o God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my **thoughts (מחשבות)**!

What is indeed first-order expressive devotional language in the context of literary constructions of collective communal religiosity is in the context of a non-realist ontology simultaneously a form of transposed second-order thinking. Second-order religious language is clearly utilised to imagine both a god's eye view as ideal observer and as a functional tool for critical introspective reflection. The human objectivity strived for is by anamorphosis identified with divine (human) subjectivity, thereby allowing human thought to think itself as both subject and object of meta-cognition. In layperson terms, one cannot see one's own eyes except by way of reflection or, in this case, a refraction of reason only possible through the kind of trans-rational imagination (in a non-pejorative sense) facilitated by second-order religious language.

An example of a third-person perspective in this sub-type is present in the introductory section of the so-called "Flood Narrative" in Genesis 6:5.

Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man
was great in the earth;
and that every imagination
 of the **thoughts (מחשבות)** of his heart
was only evil continually.

In this text we find the quasi-"omniscient narrator" going beyond what the philosophers in the previous section aspired to by presenting an ideal observer's perspective not identical with but, in the world between texts, even transcending the fiction of the divine mind itself. While this can indeed be seen as pure theological imagination in mythological mode and bereft of critical philosophical reason, consider the meta-cognitive conditions of possibility to account for why the world in the text as constructed here could be the way it is, or how it could be at all. The text not only presupposes human thinking about divine thinking about human thinking but also human thinking about the nature of human thought, its moral properties and epistemological value as it appears from the philosophical transposed "god's eye view". The level of abstract critical thinking about thinking required before the particular details expressed in second (third?)-order religious language comfortably qualifies as "higher-order" cognition.

A related case of Biblical Hebrew functioning as second-order religious language in the philosophical sense already discussed, is present in the words of Psalm 94:11.

> Yahweh knows the **thoughts (מחשבות)** of man,
> that they are worthless.

This text represents a variation in form of this sub-type (third person, albeit the psalmist and in the context of poetry). It is noteworthy to the extent that it presupposes second-order thinking transposed onto the character of the deity depicted via second-order religious language. Here the god is depicted as engaged in an axiological devaluation of supposed profundity and efficacy of human thoughts in the context of planning, calculating, and scheming vis-à-vis divinely ordained cosmic and moral orders.

Human Thinking about Divine (Human) Thinking

In the second sub-type, we encounter human thinking about divine (human) thinking as the relational configuration structuring the second-order religious language involved in transposing second-order thinking onto the world of the text. The human character or speaker is constructed as the passive subject of thought while the divine thoughts are attributed with meta-cognitive prowess and objectified in a way that again hides the human angle through anamorphosis. In some cases, explicit reference to the self as subject is completely absent, and the reference to the object has in view only a particular property of divine thought rather than its content. For example, in Psalm 33:11, the text reads:

> The counsel of Yahweh stands for ever,
> the **thoughts (מחשבות)** of his heart (mind) to all generations.

Transposed second-order thinking is evident in this text in a) its ascribing ideal observer thoughts to the deity; b) originating from a divine heart (mind); and c) as objective and truthful to the extent of being impervious to the contingencies of human plans and opinions. Yet the implied content of the second-order thinking transposed through second-order religious language is itself only human given how the details thereof never transcend the ideas of the human critical thinking that must be presupposed as a condition of possibility in the construction of the world in the text. Moreover, the history of religion shows that none of the great-making properties of divine thought noted in a), b) and c) above, nor even the belief in a divine mind, is a necessary part of all conceptions of divinity. Consequently, the critical thinking involved in the second-order thinking implicit here can only become apparent once one considers what is required as conditions of possibility for the construction of the particular vantage point of the speaker. The ideal observer location constructed for the latter presupposes an attempt to transcend the given through second-order religious language, the nature and content of which presuppose a complex configuration among many possible world-in-the-text alternatives.

Our next sample in illustrating evidence of this sub-type comes from Psalm 92:5.

> How great are your works, o Yahweh!
> your **thoughts (מחשבות)** are very deep!

A related idea is expressed in Psalm 139:17.

> How precious to me are your **thoughts (מחשבות)** O God!
> How vast is the sum of them!

In these texts we encounter as a condition of possibility to account for the specific details expressed in the second-order religious language a human speaker engaged in what in Kantian terms would be called regressive analysis (standing back instead of looking down, the latter as the Platonic metaphor conceptualises the task of the philosopher). The choice of words in imagining the divine mind as ideal observer presupposes a meta-cognitive procedure involving reasoning critically and *a fortiori* from an epistemic humility and awareness of the perceived limits of human cognition to the "depth" (quality) and vastness of sum (quantity) of a god's eye view. Translated into ordinary language philosophy it means that second-order thinking is not only "true" but also strikes one as valuable in "seeing the bigger picture", "having thought of everything", "having seen it all", "having covered all bases", "with nothing left out", etc.

A final example of this sub-type of transposed second-order thinking in second-order religious language constructions of human thinking about divine (human) thinking is found in Psalm 144:3.

> O Yahweh, what are humans that you regard them,
> or the sons of man that you **think (תשׁב)** of them?

Here the divine mind is constructed as having humans as its metaphysically relativised object. As a condition of possibility we see the meta-cognitive ability of the transposed subject of human thought to think about itself from an imaginary objective, critical, if not cosmic, perspective in relation to its Other. Presupposing perplexity, mystery, bafflement, and wonder, the anamorphic concealment of the human source of what is imagined to be the "bigger picture", "the mind of God", and even a religious hermeneutic of suspicion (if you will) in fact facilitates the higher-order insights present. The latter amounts to a sense of appreciation of the limits of religious language in any thought experiment aimed at de-centring the human self by reconstructing its external relations from an imaginary non-anthropocentric perspective of the world and of the human condition as a unified and inextricable whole.

Divine (Human) Thinking about Divine (Human) Thinking

In this third and final sub-type construction, we encounter what, according to the theoretical framework of this study, amounts to transposed second-order thinking as expressed in second-order religious language constructions of divine thoughts about divine (actually attempted objective, relativising, self-transcending and "higher" human) thoughts. The sample noted comes from the relatively familiar passage in Isaiah 55:8-9.

> For my **thoughts** (מַחְשְׁבוֹת) are not your **thoughts** (מַחְשְׁבוֹת)
> neither are your ways my ways, says Yahweh.
> For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
> so are my ways higher than your ways
> and my **thoughts** (מַחְשְׁבוֹת) than your **thoughts** (מַחְשְׁבוֹת).

To be sure, the immediate context of this passage is not at all part of a context of religious language in the Hebrew Bible simply concerned with "thinking about thinking". Yet the deity is implied to be thinking about its own and human thinking and their kinds, properties, and relations. Moreover, to the extent that the character of the divine speaker is itself a product of human thinking involved in imagining a "higher"-order perspective, the second-order religious language does appear to presuppose as a condition of its own possibility prior human second-order thinking transposed onto the divine subject as ideal observer. In this way the texts follow the same literary convention of the construction of the concept of the divine mind as a vehicle for communicating human meta-cognitive perspectives (correct or not) on the nature, scope, and limits of human thinking. This conclusion holds, even if the overt and direct concerns are ethical and theological rather than metaphysical and epistemological.

A second example of this sub-type is found in Jeremiah 3:7.

> And I **thought (יֹתֹרְמָא)** 'After she has done all this
> she will return to me',
> but she did not return,
> and her false sister Judah saw it.

A similar notion is expressed in Jeremiah 3:19. Again, being second-order religious language, these texts are only incidentally concerned with second-order thinking and that only on the level of transposed assertion. Yet the meta-cognitive operations that must be postulated as conditions of possibility for the non-philosophical religious language to express what it does include various assumptions. These are clearly not all that different from those supervening as the philosophical literary convention of constructing a self-reflective divine mind via psychomorphic projection. In addition, the ability to do introspection, to admit to having committed the fallacy of presumption, and the willingness to engage in belief revision are all assumed to be great-making

properties and epistemic virtues, both in this text and in second-order thinking in general. This is functionally facilitated by imagining and constructing the ideal observer and the divine mind in a state of perpetual becoming and self-transcendence as regards its knowledge and understanding of the nature and limits of divine and human selfhood (cf. Fretheim 1982).

Synthesis and Additional Remarks

The comparative-philosophical clarification provided above might not be in the Hebrew Bible's own terms, but it can still be seen as on par with them in the sense of "a philosophical restatement or clarification" of what is implicit. More importantly, the second-order jargon or meta-language adopted in descriptive comparative-philosophical commentary is no more anachronistic or distortive of the meaning of the text than the concepts, concerns, and categories of any other interpretative approach with a social-sciences or humanities subject as auxiliary discipline (Smith 2004, 36; Gericke 2012). For example, in the texts briefly remarked on, the Hebrew word (מחשבות) most often translated as "thought" in many English versions and dictionaries of Biblical Hebrew most probably refers not to cognition in the general sense but specifically to the mental activities involved in what we understand by the words "plan", "scheme", "consider", "calculate", etc. (e.g,. Carasik 2006). Be that as it may, that does not change the fact that as such it would still taxonomically be classified as belonging to the genus "thinking", even if said operations indicate the species in view.

In other words, all planning, scheming, considering, and calculating are still forms of thinking, even if not all thinking involves planning, scheming, considering, and calculating. The same line of reasoning applies in response to problems related to other words involved. For example, the use of the particular Hebrew verbal root אמר with the first-person suffix suggests awareness that human second-order thinking is transacted in second-order language. This conception of thinking as speaking to oneself *a fortiori* implies the presence of transposed second-order thinking.

Once it is granted that the samples of Biblical Hebrew's second-order religious language references to the divine mind in the world of the text are literary constructs with the ontological status (also) of fictional objects, human transposed second-order thinking must be postulated as a condition of possibility to account for the transworld-of-the-text identity of human/divine thinking about divine/human thinking in each sub-type. Yet on the same assumption, in all three divine/human subject configurations, the observed second-order properties of Biblical Hebrew as religious language merely obtain with reference to the literary representations in the world of the text constructed to instantiate them. That is, given their ontological status as fictional objects, the trans-textual relations between divine and human forms of second-order thinking, however, aren't actually relations between thoughts and the subjects thinking them at all. They only have a subject of intra-textual inherence in the concept of the divine mind whose meta-

cognitive relations they are and folk-philosophical *termini* to which they relate the anamorphic human subject.

That being said, it would be a fallacy to equate the second-order thinking perspectives transposed onto the divine mind in the world of the text with the author's own views on any particular matter. In other words, as with any other character's thoughts constructed, transposing may not always mean projection, despite the fact that overlap can occur. Moreover, it would involve committing a fallacy of gross generalisation if this was assumed to imply that the noted type of second-order thinking (about the functions and limits of divine/human thinking) is always present in the religious language of the Hebrew Bible. This is not the case, even with reference to other constructions of the concept of the divine mind and of the thoughts ascribed to it.

Conclusion

It this study, Biblical Hebrew in its function as second-order religious language was identified as a potential location in searching for examples of transposed second-order thinking in the Hebrew Bible. The variety of second-order religious language constructions of transposed second-order human thinking discussed in the study, though having as subjects entities with the ontological status of fictional objects, are such in a non-trivial sense. Within the theoretical framework of a non-realist literary ontology, the presence of samples of the following three sub-types of configurations of second-order thinking in divine/human subject-object relations were demonstrated:

  i.   world-in-the-text representations of divine thinking about human thinking;

  ii. world-in-the-text representations of human thinking about divine thinking; and

  iii. world-in-the-text representations of divine thinking about divine thinking.

While second-order thinking in the Hebrew Bible is therefore an emergent property within relations between objects in the world of the text, it becomes a supervening property when one must postulate as a condition of possibility for the sub-types identified in i)–iii) to obtain second-order human thinking about divine (human) thinking in the world behind the text that i)–iii) are the product or outcome of. As such, the findings of the data offer a prolegomenon and incentive for more intensive and extensive future research aimed at clarifying the ways in which Biblical Hebrew as religious language could be considered a fruitful location for the identification of transposed second-order thinking in the Hebrew Bible.

References

Arnold, M. 1869 [1993]. *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings.* Edited by Stefan Collini. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Assmann, J. 2003. *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*. English translation by A. Jenkins. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Barr, J. 1961. *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barr, J. 1994. *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology*. The Gifford Lectures for 1991, delivered in the University of Edinburgh. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198263767.001.0001.

Barr, J. 1999. *The Concept of Biblical Theology. An Old Testament Perspective*. Philadelphia: Fortress.

Barr, J. 2000. *History and Ideology in the Old Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198269870.001.0001.

Bellah, R.N. 2011. *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age*. London: Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674063099.

Bonnette, A.L. 1994. *Xenophon's Memorabilia*. English translation by A L Bonnette. Ithaca: NY: Cornell University Press.

Boman, T. 1960. *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*. English translation by J E Moreau. New York: W.W. Norton.

Brueggemann, W. 1997. *Old Testament Theology: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress.

Carasik, M. 2006. *Theologies of the Mind in Biblical Israel*. Studies in Biblical Literature 85. New York: Peter Lang.

Carmy, S. and Shatz, D. 1997. "The Bible as a Source for Philosophical Reflection." In *History of Jewish Philosophy*, edited by D.H. Frank and O. Leaman, 13–37. New York: Routledge.

Carroll, R.P. 1991. *Wolf in the Sheepfold: The Bible as a Problem for Christianity*. London: SPCK.

Clines, D.J.A. 1995. *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Cooper, J.M. 1997. *Plato*: *Complete Works*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Coxon, A.H. 1986. *The Fragments of Parmenides.* Assen: Van Gorcum.

Cupitt, D. 1997. *After God: The Future of Religion*. London: SCM.

Cupitt, D. 2008. *The Meaning of the West: An Apologia for Secular Christianity*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.

Cupitt, D. 2010. *Theology's Strange Return*. London: SCM.

Davies, P.R. 2011. "Reading the Bible Intelligently." *Relegere: Studies in Religion and Reception* 1 (1):145–164. https://doi.org/10.11157/rsrr1-1-392.

De Koninck, T. 1994. "Aristotle on God as Thought Thinking Itself." *Review of Metaphysics* 47 (3):471–515.

Dietrich, J. 2017. "Hebräisches Denken und die Frage nach den Ursprüngen des Denkens zweiter Ordnung im Alten Testament, Alten Ägypten und Alten Orient." In *Individualität und Selbstreflexion in den Literaturen des Alten Testaments*, edited by A. Wagner and J. Van Oorschot, 45–65. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt.

Donald, M. 1991. *Origins of the Modern Mind: Three Stages in the Evolution of Culture and Cognition*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Eisenstadt S.N. 1982. "The Axial Age: The Emergence of Transcendental Visions and the Rise of Clerics." *European Journal of Sociology*, 23 (2): 294–314. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975600003908.

Elbow, P. 1994. "Teaching Two Kinds of Thinking by Teaching Writing." In *Re-thinking Reason: New Perspectives in Critical Thinking*, edited by K.S. Walters, 25–31. New York: State University of New York Press.

Elkana, Y. 1986. "The Emergence of Second-Order Thinking in Classical Greece." In *The Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilisations*, edited by S.N. Eisenstadt, 40–64. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Fox, M.V. 2007. "The Epistemology of the Book of Proverbs." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126 (4): 669–684. https://doi.org/10.2307/27638461.

Frankfort, H. and Frankfort, H.A. 1946. *Before Philosophy*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Fretheim, T.E. 1982. *The Suffering of God*. Overtures to Biblical Theology 12. Philadelphia: Fortress.

Gericke, J. 2012. *The Hebrew Bible and Philosophy of Religion*. RBL 70. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt32bzm3.

Gericke, J. 2014. "Is There Philosophy in the Hebrew Bible? Some Recent Affirmative Perspectives." *Journal for Semitics* 23 (1), 583–598.

Gericke, J. 2017. "Metaphysical Perspectives on YHWH as a Fictional Entity in the Hebrew Bible." *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 73 (3): 4566. https://doi.org/ 10.4102/hts.v73i3.4566.

Glouberman, M. 2013a. "The Holy One: What the Bible's Philosophy is and What it isn't." *The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly* 62: 43–66.

Glouberman, M. 2013b. "The First Professor of Biblical Philosophy." *Sophia* 52 (3): 503−519. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11841-012-0349-6.

Gunn, D. and Fewell, H. 1993. *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hazony, Y. 2012. *The Philosophy of Hebrew Scripture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Inwood, B. 2001. *The Poem of Empedocles*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Jaspers, K. 1949. *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*. München: Piper.

Kahn, C.H. 1979. *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moore, S.D. and Sherwood, Y. 2008. *The Invention of the Biblical Scholar. A Critical Manifesto*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Patrick, D. 1982. *The Rendering of God in the Old Testament*. Overtures to Biblical Theology 10. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Pedersen, J. 1926−40. *Israel: Its Life and Culture*. Volumes 1-IV. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Russell, B. 1945. *A History of Western Philosophy*. London: Alan & Unwin.

Sekine, S. 2014. *Philosophical Interpretations of the Old Testament*. English translation by J.R. Short. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 458. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Smith, M. 2004. *The Memoirs of God: History, Memory and Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel*. Augsburg: Fortress Press.

Tarnas, R. 1991. *The Passion of the Western Mind. Understanding the Ideas that Shaped our Worldview*. New York. Ballantine Books.

Thompson, T.L. 1999. *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past.* London: Jonathan Cape.

Tzevat, M. 1978. "An Aspect of Biblical Thought: Deductive Explanation." *Shenaton* 3: 53−58. (Hebrew)

Van de Mieroop, M. 2015. *Philosophy before the Greeks: The Pursuit of Truth in Ancient Babylonia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.