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## § One §

# KOLDEWEY'S CONUNDRUM AND DELITZSCH'S DILEMMA



*“At first this fabulous creature was classed along with the winged, human-headed bulls and other fabulous monsters of Babylonian mythology, but profound researches gradually forced the professor to quite a different conclusion.”*

—Ivan T. Sanderson<sup>1</sup>

ROBERT KOLDEWEY, famous German architect and “amateur” archaeologist, faced a problem. A *big* problem. In the intellectual world of the nineteenth century, the myth that all ancient myths were nothing *but* myths was quickly collapsing. Von Schliemann would prove that ancient Troy, far from being a figment of Homer’s overactive and quite epic Hellenic imagination, actually existed, for he was the one who, using clues from Homer’s “myth,” actually dug it up. Whoops. Sorry, academia. Wrong again.

Koldewey also entered this typically German quest to verify the reality of ancient myths not only by unearthing Babylon from her sandy tomb, but the actual fabled “hanging gardens,”<sup>2</sup> one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and the equally impressive Ishtar Gate of Babylon. He was one of the principal architects, in fact, of what would become something of an archaeological obsession with the region for the Germans, and they’ve been there ever since, scratching in the sands of Mesopotamia for clues to the actual history of mankind. And that was

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1 Ivan T. Sanderson, *More “Things”* (Adventures Unlimited Press, 2007), p. 21.

2 Many modern scholars and archaeologists dispute Koldewey’s conclusions and doubt he found the hanging gardens. He did, unquestionably, find Babylon and the Ishtar Gate.

the problem, for the deeper they dug, the stranger that picture became. And in Koldewey's case, the problem was even more acute, for the problem *was* a picture.

The problem was a picture, or to be more precise, the ideas he was entertaining about that picture, for it was one thing to maintain Troy and Babylon really existed, but *this*? Could it be? And if so, what would the academic world think? Had he been under the desert sun too long? Had he a touch of *Wahnsinn*? Was he perhaps *ein bisschen Verrückt*? He surely must have wondered those things himself, given the thoughts he was conceiving, not to mention the fact that he was actually thinking about *publishing* those thoughts. But the insanity of World War I still raged... perhaps no one would notice (until it was too late) if he just snuck a most unorthodox, nonacademic "idea" into an otherwise serious scholarly and archaeological study. After all, he needn't comment on its implications, which were many and profound. He could leave commentary to others. All *he* had to do was "sneak it in," point the way, *hint* at those wide and profound implications.

And that's exactly what he did in a book published in Leipzig in 1918.

The book was innocently entitled *Das Ishtar-Tor in Babylon, The Ishtar Gate in Babylon*. And like the Ishtar Gate itself, Koldewey's book will be our gate into a very epic, and very Babylonian, problem.

#### A. KOLDEWEY'S CONUNDRUM: THE SIRRUSH

The picture, or rather, bas-relief, that was causing the good Professor Koldewey such grief was this, the middle animal on either side of the Ishtar Gate of Babylon, the reconstruction of which is shown below:



The Reconstructed Ishtar Gate of Babylon

And a close-up of the left side will reveal the problem:



Close-up of the Ishtar Gate Animal Reliefs

Note the top and bottom reliefs, like so many other reliefs in Babylonian and Assyrian artwork, are of fairly conventional-looking cattle or other very ordinary animals. But these were not Professor Koldewey's problem. The problem is the *middle* relief, appearing as it does between two very normal-looking bulls.

A closer look at that middle relief is in order:



The Creature from Babylon: The Sirtush

While the head of this creature — whatever it is — is obscured somewhat in the photo, the feet alone should tell us, as they told Koldewey, that “we have a problem,” for the front “paws” look somewhat like the paws of a large feline, while the rear “claws” look everything like the claws of some gigantic bird.

As if that were not enough, there is a long “spiraling” tail...



Spiraling Tail of “the Creature from Babylon”

...a long thin body that appears to be feathered or scaled...



The Long Scaled or Feathered Body of “the Creature from Babylon”

...and topping it all off was the head of a dragon or serpent of some sort:



Dragon's Head of “the Creature from Babylon”

However, the problem for Koldewey (and everyone else since, as we shall see shortly) was not that the Babylonians had given full freedom to their artistic flights of fancy; the problem was that they apparently had *not*, for the creature, known as a “*Sirrush*,” appeared right in the middle of other creatures known as aurochs that were self-evidently real, and though they are now extinct as well, they were not extinct in Babylonian times. The problem was the very real *context* in which the otherwise fantastic and bizarre “*Sirrush*” appeared. But that wasn't the *only* problem.

Koldewey wrote:

A creation of another, essentially different type confronts us in the “dragon.” This is the *sirrush* of legend, or as it is often referred to today, the *Mus-rushu*, which Delitzsch renders as “splendid serpent.”

The slender body, the wavy-lined tail, the similarly steep, solemn slender neck with its small scale-covered head... stands out better in color reproduction. The scaly attire shows itself on the hind legs downward to the middle of the shins. One observes larger diagonal scales on the abdomen. The forelegs resemble those of a long-legged type of cat, perhaps a panther. The hind feet are those of a bird of prey.... On the end of the tail one can observe a curved quill, as in a scorpion. The head is entirely that of a snake with a closed mouth from which a forked tongue protrudes. It also bears a large upright, prominent horn from which an appendage spirals or curls out.... Behind the “whiskers” a tuft of three locks of hair falls, pictured as three long spiraling locks....

This strange animal, with the above-enumerated features, as per Jastrow’s picture portfolio of the religion of Babylon and Assyria, was found in the oldest Babylonian art and preserved these features unchanged for millennia. *Thus one may not say that it is a fantastic production, a chimerical picture of Babylonian-Assyrian art.*<sup>3</sup>

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3 Robert Koldewey, *Das Ishtar-Tor*, Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Babylon (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1918), pp. 27–29, my translation from the German, emphasis added. The complete text of the German cited above (including passages elided in the citation above) is as follows:

“Eine Schöpfung wesentlich anderer Art begegnet uns in dem Drachen. Es ist der “Sir-russu” der Inschriften oder, wie heute vielfach gelesen wird: “Mus-russu”, von Delitzsch durch “Prachtschlange: wiedergegeben.

“Der schlanke Leib, wie der in Wellenlinie emporgerichte Schweif, und der ebenfalls steil getragen dünne Hals mit dem kleinen Kopf ist mit Schuppen bedeckt, die einen dachförmigen Querschnitt haben, was in der Photographie nach dem nicht emaillierten Exemplar...besser hervortritt als in der Wiedergabe der farbigen. Das Schuppenkleid zieht sich an den Hinterbeinen bis zur Mitte des Unterschenkels herab. Am Bauch bemerkt man die grösseren Querschuppen. Die Vorderbeine ähneln denen einer hochbeinigen Katzenart, etwa eines Panthers. Die Hinterfüße sind die eines Raubvogels, mit Ausnahme des Tarsalgelenks, dessen Bildung noch dem Vierfüßler zugerechnet ist. Am Schweifende bemerkt man einen kleinen nach oben gebogenen Stachel, wie ihn der Skorpion hat. Der Kopf ist im ganzen der einer Schlange, bei welcher auch bei geschlossenem Maul die gespaltene Zunge hervortritt. Er trägt ein grobes, aufrechtes, gerades Horn, von dessen Wurzel aus ein Hautanhang sich spiralig nach hinten emporringelt. Beide Bildungen sind, wie schon oben bemerkt, paarig aufzufassen. Hinter den Backen fällt ein Büschel von drei Haarlocken herab, und eine aus drei langen, ebenfalls spiraligen Locken gebildete Mähne zieht sich vom Kopf bis zur Schultergegend herab.

“Dieses merkwürdige Tier, als das des Gottes Marduk und zugleich des Nebo, tritt mit den hier aufgezählten Hauptreigenschaften schon in der ältesten babylonischen Kunst auf Jastrow, Bildermappe zur Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens, und hat sich Jahrtausende hindurch fast unverändert erhalten.

In other words, one had a creature with the forelegs of a great cat, the hind legs of a bird, with a curving tail with what appeared to be a scorpion's sting, a long scaly body, a snake's head, out of which grew a horn! And this creature appeared in the artwork of the region with *amazing* consistency through the millennia, and in the context of other very *real* creatures, one of which was the now-extinct *aurochs* (about which more in a moment). It could not be, Koldewey concluded, merely the chimerical production of a fevered Mesopotamian artistic imagination, for in cases where such mythological creatures were encountered in Babylonian art, these showed a great deal of change over time; the *sirrush* did *not*.

Koldewey attempted to rationalize the creature's strange appearance by various comparisons to the features of known dinosaurs, and concluded, somewhat less than convincingly, that "When one finds a picture such as our *sirrush* in nature, one must reckon it as belonging to the order of dinosaurs and indeed of the sub-order of ornithopods."<sup>4</sup> However, one would be hard-pressed to find dinosaurs with the forelegs of a cat, the hind legs of birds of prey, with spiraling tails and scorpion's quills, and snake's heads growing horns, all in one fantastic creature. Koldewey proposed one dinosaur, the iguanodon, which did indeed have hind feet similar to a bird, as being a close match to the *sirrush*.<sup>5</sup> But that does not really make the dilemma any more palatable, since that would mean that *long* after dinosaurs were supposed to be extinct according to standard evolutionary theory, the ancient Babylonians were depicting them in the clear context of other very real, and very *living*, creatures, the aurochs.

To make matters very much worse, it even appeared to Koldewey that the *sirrush* might have been the basis behind at least one biblical story, that recounted in the Greek versions of the book of Daniel, and known as *Bel and the Dragon*:

And in that same place there was a great dragon, which they of Babylon worshipped. And the king said unto Daniel, Wilt thou also say that this is of brass? lo, he liveth, he eateth and drinketh; thou canst not say that he is no loving god: therefore worship him.<sup>6</sup>

In the story, Daniel kills the dragon by poisoning it. But the *sirrush* and the problems it posed could not be gotten rid of so easily, for there it was, boldly emblazoned on the enameled bricks of the Ishtar Gate which Koldewey himself had unearthed.

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Das kann man von den phantastischer gestalteten Mischbildungen der babylonisch-assyrischen Kunst nicht sagen.

4 Koldewey, *Das Ishtar-Tor*, p. 29.

5 Ibid., pp. 29.

6 *Bel and the Dragon*, pp. 23–24, Authorized King James Version.

The renowned naturalist Ivan T. Sanderson summed up Koldewey's conundrum this way:

(Despite) his solid Teutonic background, Professor Koldewey became more and more convinced that it was not a representation of a mythical creature but an attempt to depict a real animal, an example of which had actually been kept alive in Babylon in very early days by the priests. After much searching in the depths of his scientific soul, he even made so bold as to state in print that this animal was one of the plant-eating, bird-footed dinosaurs, many types of which had by that time been reconstructed from fossil remains. He further pointed out that such remains were not to be found anywhere in or near Mesopotamia and that the "Sirrush" could not be a Babylonian attempt to reconstruct the animal from fossils. Its characters, as shown in Babylonian art from the earliest times, had not changed, and they displayed great detail in scales, horns, wrinkles, the crest and the serpentine tongue, which, taken together, could not all have been just thought up after viewing a fossilized skeleton.<sup>7</sup>

So there it was, and the conundrum was extraordinary, any way one sliced it.

Lest it have been missed, however, it behooves us to retrace the steps of Koldewey's logic in order to exhibit the conundrum with the full force of its implications:

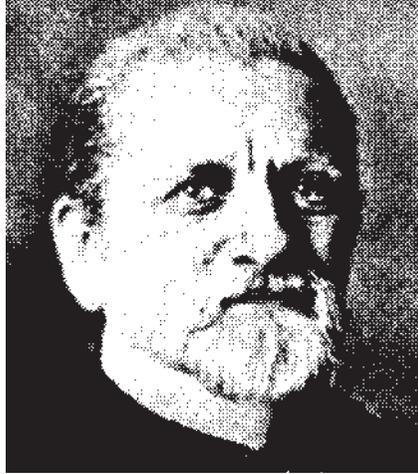
- 1) There were no fossil remains near Babylon by which the Babylonians could have artistically reconstructed such a fantastic creature;
- 2) The closest dinosaur resembling the *sirrush* was the iguanodon, but again, there were no remains of such a creature near Babylon that would have allowed an artistic reconstruction;
- 3) The *sirrush* appeared throughout Mesopotamian art with amazing consistency, whereas other mythological and chimerical creatures depicted in the art of the region varied over time;
- 4) The *sirrush* appeared in a context with other really existing animals, namely, the now-extinct aurochs; and thus,
- 5) Either the Babylonians managed to encounter some sort of dinosaur long after they were supposed to be extinct; *or*,
- 6) The *sirrush*, notwithstanding a generalized resemblance to the

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<sup>7</sup> Ivan T. Sanderson, *More "Things"* (Kempston, Illinois: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2007), p. 22.

iguanodon, was some *other* sort of bizarre and chimerical creature unknown to modern paleontology, but nevertheless, really existing.

And to top it all off, the creature may have even been the basis for a famous story from the biblical Apocrypha.



Robert Koldewey, 1855–1925



Left View of the Sirkush

However, while Professor Koldewey was busily digging up all sorts of problems for standard academic fundamentalisms of ancient history and the

evolution of life, yet another German was posing problems of a different sort, for a very different sort of fundamentalism.

### B. DELITZSCH'S DILEMMA: BABEL UND BIBEL

Friedrich Delitzsch (1850–1922) was a noted German Assyriologist who had the distinction of having caused an international firestorm of controversy that it took no less than the efforts of Kaiser Wilhelm II, acting in his capacity as the chief bishop of the German Lutheran Church, to stamp out.

The controversy began innocently enough.

The Cambridge scholar C.H.W. Johns, in his 1903 “Introduction” to Delitzsch’s lectures, summarized its rather innocent beginnings in the following way:

The announcement that Professor Friedrich Delitzsch, the great Assyriologist, had been granted leave to deliver a lecture upon the relations between the Bible and the recent results of cuneiform research, in the august presence of the Kaiser and the Court, naturally caused a great sensation; in Germany first, and, as a wider circle, wherever men feel interest in the progress of Science. The lecture was duly delivered on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1902, and repeated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.

Some reports of the general tenour of the discourse reached the outside world, and it was evident that matters of the greatest interest were involved. In due course appeared a small book with the text of the lecture, adorned with a number of striking pictures of the ancient monuments. This was the now celebrated *Babel und Bibel*.<sup>8</sup>

The title was a neat one, emphasizing the close relation between the results of cuneiform studies and the more familiar facts of the Bible.<sup>9</sup>

One may easily imagine the scene: the Kaiser resplendent in his uniform, his marshals and ministers surrounding him, sitting in ornamented chairs, listening to the distinguished professor elaborating his discoveries and conclusions.

But then, according to Johns, events took a decidedly strange turn. Indeed, “it came, therefore, as a shock of surprise to find that rejoinders were being issued.” That wasn’t all:

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<sup>8</sup> i.e., *Babel and Bible* (ed.).

<sup>9</sup> C.H.W. Johns, “Introduction,” to Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2007), pp. v–vi.

A rapid succession of articles, reviews, and replies appeared in newspapers and magazines, and a whole crowd of pamphlets and books. These regarded the lecture from many varied points of view, *mostly with disapproval*. The champions of the older learnings assailed it from all sides. Even those who had been forward to admit nothing but a human side to the history and literature of Israel were eager to fall on the new pretender to public favour; and, to the astonishment of many, these arose a literature *zum Streit um Babel und Bibel*.

As the echoes of this conflict reached our ears, we seemed to gather that the higher critics, usually known for their destructive habits, were now engaged in defending, in some way, the Bible against the attacks of an archaeologist and cuneiform scholar. This seemed a reversal of the order of nature. We had been used to regard the archaeologist, especially the Assyriologist, as one who had rescued much of the Bible history from the scepticism of literary critics.<sup>10</sup>

But then, to make matters even worse, Delitzsch was invited to deliver yet another lecture in the presence of Kaiser Wilhelm and his court.



Kaiser Wilhelm II von Hohenzollern

<sup>10</sup> C.H.W. Johns, "Introduction," to Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, pp. vii–viii, emphasis added.

And that was when the “cuneiform hell” broke loose, requiring the Kaiser’s personal imperial intervention to quiet the controversy:

But now reports of a very disquieting nature reached us. Our papers had it from their correspondents that a very direct attack was made on Holy Scripture, and even, it was not obscurely hinted, on the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Faith. The storm broke out afresh in Germany, and spread hither also. We learnt, to our amazement, not exactly realizing the Kaiser’s position as *Summus Episcopus*, that he had seen fit to address a letter, the text of which appeared in the *Times* of February 25<sup>th</sup>.

That lectures, even on such an interesting subject, could lead to measures of such high state policy was a guarantee that the matter had passed beyond the circles of scholarship and research, and was become a matter of national concern. We could not afford to remain longer in ignorance of what had stirred our allies so profoundly.<sup>11</sup>

Just exactly *what* had Delitzsch said to the Kaiser and his court, and why did it have everyone from “bible believer” to “higher critical skeptic” so exercised that it required a letter from the Kaiser himself, in his capacity as “highest bishop” in the Lutheran Church, to quell?

If one glances at the short biographical sketch of Delitzsch in the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, one begins to have some approximation:

Friedrich Delitzsch specialized in the study of ancient Middle Eastern languages, and published numerous works on Assyrian language, history and culture. He is remembered today for his scholarly critique of the Biblical Old Testament. In a 1902 controversial lecture titled “Babel and Bible,” Delitzsch maintained that many Old Testament writings were borrowed from ancient Babylonian tales, including the stories of Creation and the Great Flood. During the following years there were several translations and modified versions of the “Babel and Bible.” In the early 1920s, Delitzsch published the two-part *Die große Täuschung* (*The Great Deception*), which was a critical treatise on the book of Psalms, prophets of the Old Testament, the invasion of Canaan, etc. Delitzsch also stridently questioned the historical accuracy of the Hebrew Bible and placed great emphasis on its numerous examples of immorality....<sup>12</sup>

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11 Ibid., pp. x–xi.

12 [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich\\_Delitzsch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Delitzsch)

Clearly, Delitzsch's program was a total one, as his work entitled *The Great Deception* implies, but that program was first enunciated in his lectures before the Kaiser and his court, the lectures which eventually became *Babel and Bible*.

Delitzsch himself put the matter this way at the very beginning of his first lecture:

What is the object of these labours in distant, inhospitable, and dangerous lands? To what end this costly work of rummaging in mounds many thousand years old, of digging deep down into the earth in places where no gold or silver is to be found? *Why this rivalry among nations for the purpose of securing, each for itself, these desolate hills — and the more the better — in which to excavate?* And from what source, on the other hand, is derived the self-sacrificing interest, ever on the increase, that is shewn on both sides of the ocean, in the excavations in Babylonia and Assyria?

To either question there is one answer, which, if not exhaustive, nevertheless to a great extent tells us the cause and aim: it is the Bible.<sup>13</sup>

Observe carefully both what Delitzsch has *implied*, and what he has *actually said* here.

First, Delitzsch has implied that the excavations in Mesopotamia had a direct bearing on our understanding of the origins of our Judeo-Christian civilization and, to a lesser extent, the civilization of the Islamic world as well. But secondly, and more importantly, he has explicitly stated that the *control* of such excavation sites was a matter of great power rivalry, since it was precisely those nations that were aiming to control such sites across the Middle East, and *that* implies that there might be a hidden agenda at work behind the seemingly innocent purposes of archaeological digging. Just what that agenda may be will become more and more evident in a moment.

Delitzsch interlarded the actual published version of his lectures with a number of pictures that clearly pointed to *some* deep Babylonian-Assyrian-Sumerian origin or influence upon much of the stories of the Old Testament:

May we point to an old Babylonian cylinder-seal? Here, in the middle, is the tree with hanging fruit; on the right the man, to be recognized by the horns, the symbol of strength, on the left the woman; both reaching out their hands to the fruit, and behind the

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<sup>13</sup> Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, pp. 2–3, boldface emphasis Delitzsch's, italicized emphasis mine.

woman the serpent. Should there not be a connection between this old Babylonian representation and the Biblical story of the Fall?<sup>14</sup>

He then reproduces this depiction of the impression of the cylinder-seal:



Babylonian Cylinder-Seal Depiction of the Fall of Man<sup>15</sup>

There were other suggestive artistic parallels between popular Christian imagery and ancient Babylonian and Assyrian art. For example, there was a depiction of Assyrian king Ashurbanipal slaying a lion, all too eerily similar to depictions of St. George slaying the dragon:



King Ashurbanipal Slaying a Lion<sup>16</sup>

14 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, p. 56.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., p. 22.

The theme was repeated, in a different guise, with the god Ninurta/Marduk wielding powerful thunderbolts to slay a chimerical “dragon”:



Ninurta/Marduk Slaying the Dragon with Thunderbolts<sup>17</sup>

Delitzsch's commentary is worth citing:

It is interesting to note that there is still an echo of this contest between Marduk and Tiamat in the Apocalypse of John, where we read of a conflict between the Archangel Michael and the “Beast of the Abyss, the Old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan.” The whole conception, also present in the story of the knight St. George and his conflict with the dragon, a story brought back by the Crusaders, is manifestly Babylonian.<sup>18</sup>

As I have argued elsewhere, the struggle between Marduk and Tiamat might actually be the dimly recollected memories of an actual cosmic, or interplanetary, war fought in very ancient times with extraordinary technologies.<sup>19</sup> In Delitzsch's time, with the discoveries of Nikola Tesla and other inventors already transforming the world, it would have been an easy step for the elites of those great powers to read the ancient Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian texts, and to conclude that they contained hints of a lost technology of vast power, and hence, one has one explanation for the possible hidden motivations of the scramble those nations showed to control the various archaeological sites.<sup>20</sup>

17 Ibid., p. 52. Q.v. my *The Cosmic War* (Adventures Unlimited Press), pp. 53–58 for a physics rationalization of the peculiar shape of these “thunderbolts.” Authorities appear to be divided as to which god — Ninurta or Marduk — is depicted in the relief.

18 Ibid., p. 52.

19 Q.v. my *Giza Death Star Destroyed* (Adventures Unlimited Press), pp. 37–52; and *The Cosmic War* (Adventures Unlimited Press).

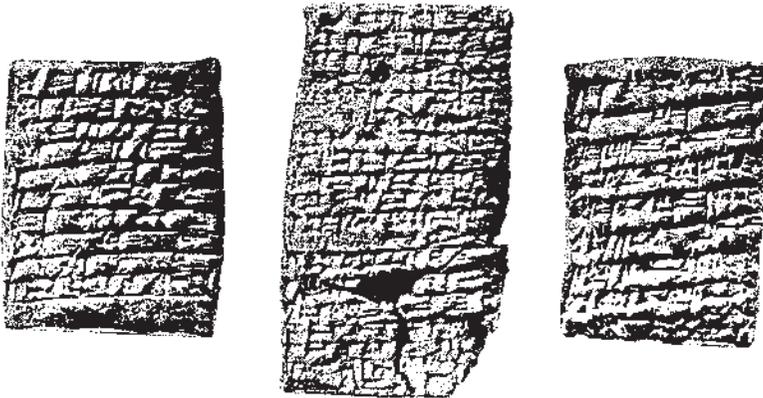
20 The struggle appears to have continued to modern times with the recent episode of the looting of the Baghdad Museum. Q.v. my *Nazi International* (Adventures Unlimited Press), pp.

1. *The Cuneiform Tablets*  
*and an Out-of-Place Name for God*

But by far the most sensational piece of evidence and commentary that Delitzsch produced in his lecture was a set of cuneiform tablets.

What is there to be seen on these tablets? I shall be asked. Fragile, broken clay upon which are scratched characters scarcely legible! That is true, no doubt, yet they are precious for this reason: they can be dated with certainty, they belong to the age of Hammurabi,<sup>21</sup> one in particular to the reign of his father Sin-mubalit. But they are still more precious for another reason: they contain three names which, from the point of view of the history of religion, are of the most far-reaching importance...<sup>22</sup>

...and here, he places a photograph of the tablets:



Delitzsch's Photograph of Three Cuneiform Tablets  
Dating from the time of King Hammurabi<sup>23</sup>

What was of interest to Delitzsch — and therefore to us — were three cuneiform names that were the heart of the controversy between the famous Assyriologist on the one hand, and all the skeptical higher critics and biblical fundamentalists on the other:

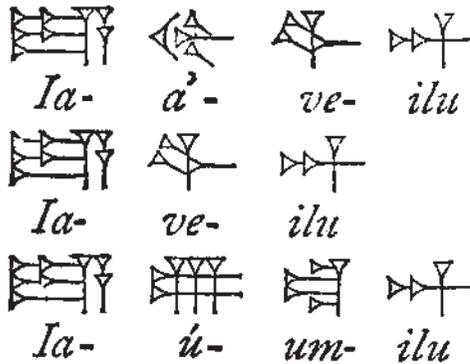
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417–420, 232. See also my article “The Baghdad Museum Looting: Some More Thoughts” at [www.gizadeathstar.com](http://www.gizadeathstar.com).

21 Hammurabi was the sixth king of Babylon, ca. 1792–1750 B.C.

22 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, p. 71.

23 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, p. 71.



The Three Cuneiform Names at the Heart of the Controversy<sup>24</sup>

Notably, the three names contained the root word “Ia” and in one significant instance, the name “Iave” or, to Hebraicize it, “Yahveh,” the very proper name of God, the mysterious “tetragrammaton” which was, according to the account in Exodus 3, spoken or revealed to Moses after the Exodus from Egypt some centuries later! In short, there was nothing special about the name “Yahweh,” or “Iave.”

## 2. The Documentary Hypothesis: Astruc to DeWette

One may get a sense of the enormous implications of Delitzsch’s discovery — at least for the biblical literalists of the period — by posing an obvious question: what was a supposedly uniquely Hebrew proper name for God doing in cuneiform texts manifestly much older than the book of Exodus, and in a very *un-Hebrew*, very *Sumerian* context?

But what of the problems it posed to the literary higher critics? Why did *they* take umbrage at Delitzsch’s cuneiform tablets? To answer that question requires a short excursion into a critical theory called “the Documentary Hypothesis,” or as it is also sometimes known, the “Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis” or the “JEDP theory.” In its recognizable modern form, this theory holds that the first five books of the Old Testament — the “Pentateuch” or “Torah” — were composed from different underlying documentary “sources” indicated by the four letters J, E, D, and P. The theory began in Enlightenment France with the observations of the French physician Jean Astruc.

Astruc noticed that in the Hebrew text of the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis, each chapter referred to God by a different name, *Elohim* (אלהים), translated “God” in the Authorized version, was the name used in

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

chapter one, and *Yahweh* (יהוה), translated “LORD” (in all capitals) in the Authorized version in chapter two. In order to account for this difference, Astruc reasoned that Moses, when composing the “creation accounts” (which he assumed both chapters represented), had in fact utilized two independent sources, or “documents.”<sup>25</sup> In so arguing, he provided the metaphysical and philological first principle that would guide subsequent scholarship to elaborate the fully fledged Documentary Hypothesis: *different Divine Names indicate the presence in the extant text of different underlying source material for that text.*

By 1853, nearly a century later, the German critic Herman Hupfeld would extend this principle to its logical conclusion: *differences within passages of overall style or vocabulary constituted a sufficient basis upon which to posit different underlying documentary sources from which those stylistic differences derive.* With “the Astruc Principle” and the “Hupfeld Corollary,” a critical agenda of its own was emplaced and empowered, for now the various names of God could come, with a certain brazen and nominalistic elegance, to stand for something completely mundane rather than for some characteristic metaphysical property of God; they came, within the historical phenomenology of the hypothesis itself, to stand only for the source documents from which the final extant text was alleged to derive. The divine names, so to speak, were only the revelations of no-longer-extant source documents, which were the task of critical scholarship to discern and disentangle. And the Germans, more than anyone else, were the ones most busily engaged in this process.

It is worth pausing to consider the implications of all of this as possible manifestations of yet another agenda. By empowering the critic himself, with all his specialized tools of knowledge of the original languages, philology, and other ancient texts, a complete end run was done around existing ecclesiastical magisteria and doctrines, and additionally, the entirety of the Old Testament came to be viewed within such circles as the special creation over centuries of the Hebrew priesthood and elite, with the occasional bow to Egyptian origins for much of it.<sup>26</sup>

In any case, once the first two chapters of Genesis had been subjected to the “Astruc Principle” and the “Hupfeld Corollary,” there was nothing logically to prevent their application to other passages of the Torah.<sup>27</sup> Indeed,

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25 Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), pp. 73–75; R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), pp. 11–12.

26 Critics would point out, for example, that there was nothing *Hebrew* about the name “Moses,” but rather, that the name was properly Egyptian in origin, as in the name of the pharaoh Thutmose. Other critics would point to the close similarity of the biblical decalogue to similar statements in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.

27 Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, pp. 77–78; R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 17.

it was Johann Gottfried Eichhorn who first extended Astruc's criterion of the divine names as indicating separate source documents to the remainder of the book of Genesis and on into the first two chapters of the book of Exodus, in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, published in Germany between 1780 and 1783. This work earned him his lasting epithet as being the "father of Old Testament criticism."<sup>28</sup> What was new with Eichhorn was the coupling of Astruc's philological principle with the new assumption that Moses had not authored any of the Torah or "Five Books of Moses." In other words, it was Eichhorn who in fact accomplished the empowerment of the critical scholar and the accompanying agenda, for if Moses did not author those books, and they were, on the contrary, the editorial compilation from sources made over time, then it followed that a massive task of historical reinterpretation and reconstruction would have to be undertaken. In Eichhorn's case, the "ancient agenda" at work in the text was simple: he maintained that the ancient Hebrew theology had evolved or developed from a primitive polytheism to an advanced personal monotheism, an evolution that in turn implied a post-Mosaic date for the emergence of the Torah in its final textual form.

Once the Torah was no longer the work of "Moses," or, to put it differently, one author, the way was then clear for critics to question the compositional, and therefore, the metaphysical and moral unity and integrity of the Torah. Indeed, as the elaboration of the Documentary Hypothesis proceeded throughout the late eighteenth century and all throughout the nineteenth, as the presupposition of unitary authorship collapsed, the discovery of textual, moral, and metaphysical contradictions within it grew in inverse proportion. With Eichhorn, then, we have Astruc's division of two "sources," the J or Jahwist source, and the E or Elohist source, extended to the entirety of the book of Genesis and on into Exodus chapters one and two.

One of the first to pursue the implications of Eichhorn's abandonment of Mosaic authorship was Wilhelm M.L. DeWette in the first half of the nineteenth century. He maintained that the Book of the Law which was discovered in 621 B.C. during King Josiah's reign, as recounted in II Kings 22, was in fact the book of Deuteronomy. DeWette argued that, since King Josiah and the high priest Hilkiah were concerned to abolish localized sanctuaries and places of sacrifice and to centralize worship in the Jerusalem Temple, then, so his argument ran, the book which was "discovered" had in fact been deliberately composed for that purpose by an agent of the Temple, and its discovery was staged at the appropriate moment. For DeWette, the whole production, in other words, was in the service of a hidden agenda, namely,

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28 R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 14.

to centralize worship, thus solidifying the kingdom, and enriching the royal and temple treasuries. Readers of my previous book, *Babylon's Banksters*, will recall that it was precisely in alliance with ancient temples that the ancient banking fraternity often hid its own agendas.<sup>29</sup> But as we shall see in chapter three, there are possibly even more hidden, technological agendas at work in this maneuver. In any case, this pinpointed the date of the book of Deuteronomy to 621 B.C.<sup>30</sup> With DeWette's "discovery," the third document, D for the "deuteronomist" document, had been found. We now have J, E, and D.

### 3. *The Documentary Hypothesis: Hupfeld's "Copernican Revolution"*

With the work *Die Quellen der Genesis (The Sources of Genesis)* by the aforementioned Herman Hupfeld in 1853, the "Copernican revolution" in the history of the Documentary Hypothesis occurred.<sup>31</sup> His contribution to the evolution of the hypothesis were three new principles of examination of the Torah, and a newly discovered source document, so it is worth taking some time to examine Hupfeld in closer detail.

The first component in Hupfeld's "Copernican revolution" was that, by subjecting the previously isolated "E" document to a new philological examination, he discovered there were portions of "E" which, with the exception of the divine name "Elohim" itself, otherwise greatly resembled the "J" document in diction, style, and thematic focus. Thus, there were some portions of "E" which, in the historical scheme of the emerging hypothesis, appeared to be material as early as that of "J." Hupfeld was obliged, therefore, to separate "E" into *two further documents*, an earlier "E" that resembles "J," which he called "E<sub>1</sub>," and the rest of "E" which became "E<sub>2</sub>," or more simply, the original "E." There were now four documents, displaying more or less the following chronological order: E<sub>1</sub>EJD. It was this E<sub>1</sub> that became the later "priestly" or "P" document, and it will henceforth be referred to as such. With this change in symbols, the order of documents now reads PEJD.

As if this were not already confusing enough, to this apparatus Hupfeld added a second, and perhaps the most important, principle in the arsenal of presuppositions of Old Testament criticism, for he maintained that the documents thus distinguished by the criteria of different vocabulary, diction, and interest had *integrity*; that is, they could not only be *distinguished* within the extant text of the Torah, but actually *recovered and reconstructed* as separate

29 See my *Babylon's Banksters* (Port Townsend, Washington: Feral House, 2010), pp. pp. 159-204.

30 R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 15. In De Wette's case, other factors are at work, including a reaction against critical rationalism, q.v. John Rogerson, *Old Testament Criticism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: S.P.C.K., 1984), pp. 28-49.

31 Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 77.

documents from that text. The text, in short, could be *rewritten*. (Talk about agendas!) This assumption was posited no doubt out of the perceived need on the part of Old Testament criticism to justify its increasingly radical reconstructions of early Hebrew history with a measure of “scientific” verifiability.

Thirdly, Hupfeld posited the existence of an “editor,” or *Redaktor*, designated as “R” in the growing non-propositional calculus of the critic, an “R” who edited the portions of the text in “E” which resembled “J” which, according to the theory, should have belonged in “J” to begin with, except for the fact of the presence of the name *Elohim* and not *Yahweh*! If this is not confusing enough, it can be restated to make the confusion even more explicit: “R” lay behind the conflation of “P” and “E<sub>2</sub>” into “E.” This “R” was therefore truly a godsend, a literal *Redaktor ex machina*, for “whenever the theory ran into trouble with the facts or ran counter to the actual data of the text itself, the bungling had of R (the anonymous redactor) was brought in to save the situation.”<sup>32</sup> This assumption of the redactor indicates the dialectical impasse into which the theory was quickly coming, for the discovery of “P” contradicted Hupfeld’s own assumption of the integrity and recoverability of the source documents; for if “P” which so closely resembled “J” in diction could only be posited by positing a redactor — who is introduced precisely in order to account for the *resemblances* between the “documents” — then the integrity of the source documents collapses, for that integrity is dependent upon the *differences* in style and vocabulary to begin with! In other words, Hupfeld’s redactor fills precisely the same function as an *author* utilizing sources, which is where the theory began.

#### 4. *The Documentary Hypothesis: Karl Heinrich Graf and Julius Wellhausen*

The ultimate *reductio* was reached in the work of Karl Heinrich Graf in 1866. As Hupfeld had divided “E” into “P” and “E,” Graf in turn distinguished within P between two *further* sources. He claimed to have discovered material in “P” which could only have been written *after* the deuteronomic legislation allegedly discovered by King Josiah in 621 B.C. Thus, there was some “P” that could only have come from a period later than “D.” However, there was also historical material in “P” that could only have come from a period *earlier* than “D.” Thus, P (Hupfeld’s E<sub>1</sub>) became “P<sub>1</sub>” and “P<sub>2</sub>.” Thus, the chronological order from earliest to latest layers of source documents was P<sub>1</sub> (the really old P), E, J, D, and P<sub>2</sub> (the legalistic or priestly P).

Graf’s separation of “P” into two different sources of “P” was not to endure. In 1869 the Dutch critic Abraham Keunen argued that P was a unified

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32 Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 78.

source, because the legal and legislative portions could not be separated from the historical ones without resulting in complete confusion, since the proper understanding of the one required the other. But, since Graf had fairly well established that the priestly legislation occurred after the Babylonian Exile, the entire P document had to have been composed after the discovery of “D” in 621. *This was a “gentle critical way” of saying that most of the laws in the Torah were really the product of a post-Exilic priesthood.* It was a gentle way of saying that, rather than those laws being the basis for Talmudic Judaism, the reverse was true; Talmudic Judaism was the basis of those Torah laws. It was a gentle way of stating that the Torah had been composed as the result of an *agenda* by an *elite*, an elite that was, in its turn, continuous within Hebrew society throughout several centuries.

In any case, with Graf’s overturning of the separation of P and its redating to a period after D, only one final component needed to be added, and that was the component that the J document was the product of the Hebrews when they worshipped their local tribal god, Yahweh, and thus, the order of documents came into its now standardized chronological order: JEDP. It was this order that Julius Wellhausen gave in his massive reconstruction of ancient Hebrew history in his now classic work on the subject, *Introduction to the History of Israel*.

### 5. *The Critical Suspicion of an Agenda*

To put it succinctly, and regardless of its many problems, the higher critics who elaborated the Documentary Hypothesis were perhaps correct on one thing: they suspected that behind the biblical stories and the pious reasons advanced in them for various events, that there lay a hidden agenda of a hidden elite, manifesting itself, ever so faintly to be sure, in the philological and thematic differences between various passages. For these critics, many of whom had ceased to believe in any sort of God, criticism and the suspicion of “an agenda” at work in the texts became a way that they could plausibly read those texts and retain them in the canon of Western culture. If one accepts for the sake of argument that this is true, then perhaps they were too oblivious to the implications of their own insight, for such unity as the Torah had came not from an individual author nor even from the clumsy — yet “infallible” — hand of the *Redaktor ex machina*, but from the enduring influence and extent within ancient times of a surviving post-cosmic war elite.

6. *The Suggestions of an Agenda at Work with the Critics: Weishaupt's Strange Comment and a Hidden Illuminist Role in Early Old Testament Criticism?*

The critics might have looked closer to home for the possible work of an agenda in their own midst, in addition to one behind the texts they were scrutinizing, and that possible agenda may be pointed out by noting that higher criticism of the Old Testament, particularly in the hands of an Eichhorn, began in southern Germany in the eighteenth century, a time, and place, rife with what would become a by-word for conspiracies and agendas: the Illuminated Freemasonry of University of Ingolstadt professor of Canon Law, Adam Weishaupt, better known as the founder of the Bavarian Illuminati.

However, there do exist serious grounds for considering a possible relationship between the two. Both Masonry and criticism at that time shared a basic presupposition with respect to the Pentateuch, namely, that the ancient history of man and of Israel as recorded there was at best an allegorical compilation from other, earlier traditions, traditions either deliberately omitted or obscured by the extant biblical text.

More importantly, it was the stated goal of Adam Weishaupt and his Illuminati “to acquire the direction of education — of church management — of the professorial chair, and of the pulpit” and to “gain over the reviewers and journalists” in order to spread Illuminist opinions, and thus it would seem highly likely that biblical studies would have been a principal target for this agenda.

Even more importantly, Weishaupt himself refers once, in the writings captured by the Bavarian government, to his own “*history of the lives of the Patriarchs*” which, though apparently no longer extant, does indicate his own deep interest in biblical studies, and knowing Weishaupt’s predilections, we may easily guess that this history was hardly in line either with Catholic or Lutheran orthodoxy of the period.

The Illuminati did indeed make great strides in the recruitment of prominent clergy for the day. Captured Illuminist writings list as members of the order one “Baader, professor,” one “Barhdt, clergyman,” and a “Danzer, canon,” who most likely are Franz Xavier von Baader (1765–1841), Karl Friedrich Barhdt (1741–1792), professor of biblical archaeology at Erfurt, and Jacob Danzer (1743–1796), professor of moral and pastoral theology at Salzburg, a haven of Illuminati activities.<sup>33</sup>

But perhaps most importantly, Weishaupt boasts in one of his letters, “Who would have thought that a Professor at Ingolstadt was to become the teacher of the professor of Goettingen, and of the greatest men in Germany?”

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33 John Robinson, A.M. *Proofs of a Conspiracy* (New York: George Forman, 1798), pp. 160–161.

Goettingen, at the time that Weishaupt wrote his letter, was home to Old Testament professor Michaelis, and his more celebrated pupil, Eichhorn.

### 7. *The Explosive Thunderclap of Delitzsch's Dilemma*

So, why *was* “Delitzsch’s Distinctive Dilemma” such an explosive thunderclap that its echoes reverberate down to our own times in obscure scholarly debates?

So how then may one summarize “Delitzsch’s Distinctive Dilemma”?

- 1) On the one hand, the clear implication of Delitzsch’s cuneiform names containing the root “Ia” and even “Iave” centuries before the epiphany to Moses at the Burning Bush, as recounted in Exodus chapter 3, is that there was nothing inherently *special* about the name “Yahweh” itself, since it was known long before the Exodus, and that in turn demoted the Exodus passage from the status it always had had within within Jewish and Christian theology as a special monotheistic revelation, challenging conservative literalist fundamentalisms; and,
- 2) On the other hand, the presence of the name in tablets clearly datable to a time period from Hammurabi also meant that the careful chronological reconstructions of the Documentary Hypothesis — *the critics’ ‘new fundamentalism’* — were on very shaky foundations at best, or clearly dubious and spurious at worst.

But there was a further implication:

- 3) The presence of such names in very old cuneiform tablets also implied that the biblical text was indeed *edited*, but in a very different way, and for a very different purpose, than that proposed by the higher critics advocating the Documentary Hypothesis. Indeed, as Delitzsch himself pointed out, the presence of “Cosmic War” and “Fall of Man” themes in Babylonian art, themes paralleled in the biblical stories, suggested that the editing was wholesale and present throughout the region’s texts and artwork. It suggested, in other words, that there was an agenda at work throughout *all* texts from the region — biblical or otherwise — and that to learn what that story and agenda was, one would have to reconstruct that history by a careful critical process.

When we put these considerations into the implications of Koldewey's musings on the *sirrush*, we get an even further expanded list of implications, for not only are biblical history and the wider history of religion and culture affected, so too, and by the same token, *is the history of science and technology itself*. This implies that the "agenda" referred to previously, the agenda at work in the careful editing of texts, may be trying to hide something about four things: God, man, religion, and science itself.

Koldewey's *sirrush* with its odd and bizarre mixture of serpentine, ornithological, and feline characteristics points the way, for with the modern science of genetics, the creation of such chimerical creatures looms as an ever more feasible reality, a reality that the ancient texts from Mesopotamia also implied once existed, and even implied the use and manipulation of a technology to achieve it. Could it all have been an agenda of massive misdirection, a case of sleight-of-hand designed to get the vast majority of mankind looking elsewhere, while an informed elite, looking at ancient texts and seeing a lost science and technology, was really digging and scratching in the desert sands in an attempt to recover and redeploy that lost technology?

That possibility informs the rest of this book, and to it, we now turn.