

The name here seems to function as a locus of presence, not just a facilitator of simple memorialization (cf. Radner 2005; Westenholz 2012). This practice is strikingly similar to those attested at Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Sam'al, but we have precious little data to cast light on the specific conceptualizations of the stele's reflective functions.⁵⁵ Intuitively speaking, however, there can be no doubt that for many there was an element of the deceased's presencing associated with such memorials (as is the case even today). An authoritative line of division is unlikely to have been maintained between memorialization and the more intuitive presencing without leaving any trace in the normalizing literature.⁵⁶ Absent regulation and other powerful reflective frameworks to decouple it, the trend will be in the direction of the more intuitive conceptualization.

The notion that the dead live on in some manner, but require support from the living, is further manifested in the provisioning of the deceased with "items of personal adornment, lamps, cosmetic containers, cooking pots, bowls, and jugs with food" (Schmitt 2012b, 457; cf. Suriano 2018, 51–53, 154–76).⁵⁷ There is a great deal of overlap between burial assemblages and those of domestic settings, suggesting some continuity between the needs of the living and those of the dead.⁵⁸ Lamps, for instance, are frequently left in burials, perhaps to provide light in the dark underworld.⁵⁹ Vessels with small amounts of animal bones have been found in many burials that likely reflect food offerings for the dead, very much in line with—if not as elaborate and explicit as—the funerary and mortuary feeding of the dead in the societies discussed above (Bloch-Smith 1992a, 122–26; Schmitt 2012, 457–59).⁶⁰ Textual data can be brought to bear on this question, although the Hebrew Bible is notoriously reticent regarding such practices (Friedman and Overton 1999; Lewis 2002). What little is in the texts is largely proscriptive or

give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." Cf. van der Toorn 1996, 208.

⁵⁵ Stavrakopoulou (2010, 15) notes, "The extent to which standing stones are seen to manifest, deify, or merely symbolize or represent the dead is uncertain—and likely dependent on the (changing) context-specific particularities of the stones themselves, including, perhaps, the perspective of the viewer before whom the stone is exhibited."

⁵⁶ See Kerry Sonia's (2020, 127) comment: "death-related practices do not always rely on a well-articulated or widely accepted rationale for those practices."

⁵⁷ On burial goods more generally, see Bloch-Smith 1992a, 61–108; Schmitt 2012b, 438–49.

⁵⁸ "Based solely on archaeological evidence, it is not possible to reconstruct death cult rituals in tombs; identical finds in both tombs and houses and public buildings preclude identifying distinctive mortuary practices" (Bloch-Smith 2009, 126).

⁵⁹ See, for instance, Ps 88:6; 143:3; Lam 3:6. As Suriano (2018, 47–48 and n. 27) notes, many lamps were found placed next to the head of the deceased, sometimes lacking any indication of soot, indicating they were never lighted and were likely intended for the use of the dead. Suriano describes their function as "symbolic."

⁶⁰ Wayne Pitard (2002, 150) has been skeptical about many of the data that have been adduced for such practices.