

# John Tracy Thames, Jr.

## Curriculum Vitae

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Clemson, SC 29634-0528 • 864-656-2001  
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### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

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

### EDUCATION

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

## BOOK

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

## PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

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- “Dagan and the Ritualization of First Fruits at Emar” in *Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of P. Kyle McCarter Jr.* Edited by Christopher Rollston et al. Ancient Near East Monographs (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2022).
- “Writing Ritual and Calendar Together: The Biblical Cultic Calendars in Ancient Near Eastern Context.” *Religion Compass* 15 (2021).
- “Keeping the Paschal Lamb: Exodus 12.6 and the Question of Sacrifice in the Passover-of-Egypt.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 44/1 (2019): 3–18.
- “A New Discussion of the Meaning of the Phrase ‘am hā’āreš in the Hebrew Bible.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130/1 (2011): 109-125.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS

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- “Culture Summary: Ancient Israelites.” *Human Relations Area Files, World Cultures*. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 2018.  
Online version: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu>.  
5, 271 words

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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| 2020 | “Power and Change in Late Bronze Age Emar”<br>American Schools of Oriental Research – Annual Meeting  |
| 2019 | “Problems of Comparativism in Ritual: Considering the Role of Emar in Biblical Studies.”<br>Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature                            |
| 2017 | “Processional Politics in Emar’s <i>zukru</i> Festival and Implications for Procession Rituals in the Hebrew Bible”<br>Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature |

- 2015 “The Character of Dagan in Emar’s *zukru* Festival and the Biblical Ritual of First Fruits.”  
Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature.
- 2014 “On Keeping a Lamb Four Days: *mišmeret* in Exodus 12:6.”  
Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature.
- 2008 “Just War Theory and Cosmopolitanism.”  
Louisiana State University Philosophy Colloquium.

### INVITED LECTURES

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

### COURSES TAUGHT

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- Clemson University
- Old Testament (REL 3010)
  - The Ancient Near East (REL 3510/HIST 3510)
  - Judaism (REL 3060)
  - Studying Religion: Theories and Methods (REL 3000)
  - Junior Research Colloquium (REL 3990)
  - Studies in Biblical Literature and Religion (REL 4010)  
Topic: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers (Spring 2020)
  - Religious Studies Senior Seminar (REL 4900)  
Topic: Psalms in Historical Context (Fall 2019)
- Other Courses
- The Bible: Old and New Testaments
  - The Song of Songs: Sex, Sexuality, and Religion in the Bible
  - Hebrew Wisdom Literature in the Ancient World
  - Judaism in the Hellenistic World
  - The New Testament and Early Christianity
  - Hebrew Prophets
  - Elementary Biblical Hebrew

- Advanced Biblical Hebrew
- Rituals in Ancient Societies
- First Year Seminar: Inquiry-based Learning
- Senior Year Integrative Capstone
- Introduction to Ethics
- The History of the Alphabet

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AT CLEMSON UNIVERSITY**

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2021-	Alternate Member Clemson University Faculty Senate
2021-	Member, Chair's Advisory Committee Department of Philosophy and Religion
2020-22	Department Secretary Department of Philosophy and Religion
2020	Member, Department Chair Search Committee Department of Philosophy and Religion
2019-	Member, New Faculty Research Forum Clemson Humanities Hub
2019-2020 2021-2022	Representative, Faculty Awards Committee College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities
2019-2020	Representative, Student Awards Committee College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities
2019-2020	Organizer, Departmental Student Awards Department of Philosophy and Religion

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE TO THE FIELD**

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2020-	Member, Editorial Board <i>Avar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Life and Society in the Ancient Near East</i> (Transnational)
2020-	Member, Ritual in the Biblical World Steering Committee Society of Biblical Literature
2017-19	Society of Biblical Literature, New England/Eastern Canada Regional Executive Committee Member

## **PROFESSIONAL TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**

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2020	Clemson Online Learning Tech Conference, August 13, 2020
2019	Clemson Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation New Faculty Introduction to Teaching at Clemson
2017	Yale Center for Teaching and Learning Yale Summer Institute: Course (Re)Design
2016	UConn Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Faculty Teaching Workshop
2011	Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum Syriac Epigraphic Project, Incantation Bowl
2008-10	Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Public Services Project Assistant

## **FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS**

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

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK**

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

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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Society of Biblical Literature  
American Schools of Oriental Research  
Catholic Biblical Association – Full Member

## **LANGUAGES**

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

## **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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