

# *Reading Between the Lines*

## *A Narratological Approach to the Deir Alla Inscription Combination I*

Alexandra Wrathall

B.A, (Macquarie University)

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Research

Department of Ancient History, Faculty of Arts

Macquarie University, Sydney

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*For my mother Patricia and my father Garry.*

*My very first storytellers*

*Thank you for gifting me with the imagination to dream, the courage to pursue and the  
means to achieve.*

*and*

*To Dr. Stephen Llewelyn, my mentor.*

*Who saw something in me before I saw it myself.*

*For regular meetings and discussions that have formed the highlight of my week, every  
week, for five years.*

*Your guidance, knowledge and shared passion for the ancient and theoretical are what  
made this work a reality.*

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## *Abstract*

Two separate schools of thought, historicism and narratology have struggled to communicate with one another since their first intellectual collision in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Fifty years later, and both fields have advanced into schools of thought that share interdisciplinary methodologies. Narratology has newly identified internal structures, revealing complex and universal processes to the creation and transmission of narrative. However, narrative is not a new concept, but rather has been a method of cultural preservation, representation and transmission for centuries.

This study endeavours to facilitate a conversation between narratology and ancient text criticism. Due to the scope of narratology, the focus of this study has been narrowed to how time and temporality intersect with narrative to create and communicate meaning. To bridge the gap between the two disciplines, this study assesses modern narrative time theory and disrupts it accordingly so that it may be applied to the ancient.

The revised ancient narrative methodology is applied to Deir Alla Combination I. A short inscription with a narrative structure, the Deir Alla plaster text has been primarily analysed for its linguistic, epigraphic and archaeological implications. The aim of this study is to test the applicability and productivity of integrating narratology and ancient text criticism, and offer a new perspective on the Deir Alla text.

## *Declaration*

I,....., certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Date:

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