

REVIEWS

Sara J. Milstein. *Tracking the Master Scribe: Revision through Introduction in Biblical and Mesopotamian Literature*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016. xviii + 244 pp. £64.00. ISBN 978-0-19-020539-3.

In recent years, biblical scholarship is witnessing an increased appreciation of the creativity of the ancient scribes who actually transmitted the scriptural texts and sometimes reworked them while doing so. At the same time, a movement is emerging towards focusing on so-called 'hard evidence' as the empirical basis for a more controlled form of literary criticism that avoids the conjectural and speculative guesses about the growth of texts that have been proposed in the past, and effectively brings literary criticism closer to textual criticism. This book, which is based on the author's doctoral dissertation defended at New York University in 2010 and which incorporates portions of papers published more recently, may be considered representative of both trends, and actually presents an original contribution to the ongoing debates. By focusing on the phenomenon of frontal additions that transform the entire text, it explores a specific scribal technique applied by Ancient Near Eastern 'master scribes', i.e., scribes who actively intervened in texts and controlled the stream of tradition, and are thus to be distinguished from scribes who merely copied the texts they were assigned. Millstein uses documented cases of textual growth to demonstrate that, within the collective and anonymous enterprise of producing literature, scribes regularly added a new introduction that allowed them to combine the preservation with the innovation of texts, or to put in the oft-quoted words of James Sanders, to repeat the tradition while also resignifying it. In order to locate the biblical texts within their Ancient Near Eastern context, the examples discussed have been drawn from the two different yet related corpora of Mesopotamian literature on the one hand, and biblical texts on the other.

As may be expected from a monograph focused on beginnings as a means to channel a reader's perception of a text, the first chapter – for which it may be surmised, despite the absence of so-called 'hard evidence', that it was added at a later stage to pre-existent materials – lays out the contours of the book in a very clear fashion. At the same time, it provides a general introduction to the study of Mesopotamian and biblical texts, paying particular attention to the 'hard evidence' for variant editions of biblical texts that comes from the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint, and it briefly surveys recent literature on scribal practices. The second chapter gives a general overview of texts for which 'hard evidence' or overt inconsistencies in the final form suggest the existence of variant editions. These include the *Sumerian King List*, the *Epic of Etana*, the *Community Rule* from Qumran and the biblical book of Esther, where the

“Doctrinal Economy.” In the current conflict between idealistically ahistorical approaches to Catholic doctrine and reductively historicising approaches, Meszaros’ superb book sets out the salutary ground.

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Ward De Pril. *Theological Renewal and the Resurgence of Integrism: The René Draguet Case (1942) in Its Context*. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 266. Leuven, Paris and Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2016. xlv + 333 pp. €85.00. ISBN 978-90-429-3036-0.

The present work constitutes the publication in English of the doctoral thesis defended by Ward De Pril January 14, 2010 at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the Catholic University of Louvain (KU Leuven), under the title *De Leuense theoloog en orientalist René Draguet (1896-1980): Studie van zijn theologische positie en zijn conflict met de kerkelijke overheid*. The author had already made a brief presentation in 2015 in another Louvain-based review: “The Resurgence of Integrism: The Action of the Holy Office against René Draguet,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 91, no. 2 (2015): 295-309.

On 1 July 1942, the Holy Office deprived, without explaining itself, René Draguet (1896-1980), professor of fundamental theology at the Faculty of Theology of Louvain, of his teaching position. That condemnation followed the placing on the Index, the preceding February 6, of two works with at first glance a seemingly different appearance: that of the Belgian Dominican Louis Charlier (1898-1981), professor at the house of studies of his order in Louvain (*Essai sur le problème théologique*, Thuillies, Ramgal, 1938), and that of his French confrere Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990), regent of studies at the convent of the province of France installed at Kain-la-Tombe (Tournai) in 1904 (*Une école de théologie, le Saulchoir*, Tournai: Casterman, 1937). And like Draguet, the two Dominicans censured in February were soon deprived of their teaching positions, amounting to quite a few sanctions in a short period of time, too many for not seeing a clustered shot against a hypothetically deviant theological current (the “new theology”) and a resurgence of “integrism.”

Already partially analysed by Étienne Fouilloux and Robert Guelluy in the years 1985-1986, this affair has been systematically reworked by the author, notably thanks to the contributions of documents maintained by Draguet which only recently became available. In fact, Draguet, who never accepted his condemnation, immediately began a tenacious struggle for his rehabilitation, which he obtained partially in 1948 (when the Holy Office accepted his re-entry into the Faculty of Theology, but without giving courses there) and completely in 1965, a struggle that he had patiently negotiated and carefully documented through a dossier which he systematically closed in 1977, in specifying that it should only be made public twenty years after his death (see the presentation of these Draguet papers preserved at the Faculty of Theology of KU Leuven, on pp. 141-143). That is not the only original contribution of this solid study,

the second part of which utilises this original documentation to its advantage in retracing anew, on the one hand, the contours of the condemnation (chapter I, p. 145-249) and on the other his two-fold rehabilitation in 1948 and in 1965, respectively (chapter II, pp. 251-302 and 302-318). The first part is also, in effect, innovative in reviewing and profoundly analysing the writings of Draguet, already presented summarily by Guelluy in 1986. That affords us a better understanding of the Louvain professor's position (chapter I, pp. 11-84), before providing a detailed analysis of the *Essais* by Charlier and attempting to measure its convergences and variations vis-à-vis Draguet's thought and, to a lesser degree, with Chenu's (85-136).

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Matthew A. Rothaus Moser. *Love Itself Is Understanding: Hans Urs von Balthasar's Theology of the Saints*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016. xxxii + 319 pp. \$79.00. ISBN 978-1-451-49959-9.

The history of Christianity is coloured by the lives of the saints. Lauded for their exemplary imitation of Jesus, and their ability to revive and inspire the church to live the gospel faithfully in every age, the saints are fundamental to Christian self-understanding. But what is the relationship of the saints to the task of theology, or, perhaps even more curiously, to the task of philosophy?

Through the thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar, Matthew Rothaus Moser explores this question. He argues that, among other things, the saints offer a particular "form" for the way in which theology, and even philosophy, should be approached. The particular "form" offered by the saints is one of love. Love, as Moser's Balthasarian inspired vision understands it, is defined, in part, by a human being's *receptive openness* to Being and, ultimately, to God. Love is further articulated as an *obedient response* of prayerful dialogue between the human being and all of reality, which has the potential to bear *fruit*. The fruit of an obedient response to God and to Being is *understanding*: a deepened understanding of the mystery of God and of Being, as well as an understanding of how one should "be" in the world. That the saints exemplify this form of love, and that this form can lead to understanding, is the underlying thesis of Moser's work, which is pithily summed up by the title: *Love Itself is Understanding*.

Readers who engage with Moser's work will find it helpful for a number of reasons, two of which are worth mentioning here. First, primarily in chapters one through three, Moser provides a description of Balthasar as a theologian thoroughly informed by an "Ignatian" theological vision. It is Ignatius of Loyola who inspires Balthasar's understanding of the aforementioned saintly form of love. It is also Ignatius' thought which forms Balthasar's own mission as a theologian. This mission, for Balthasar, is an attempt to "find God in all things," and can be witnessed, for example, in Balthasar's own academic pursuits as he engages with various forms of culture and thought.

Second, primarily in chapters four through seven, Moser provides a helpful summary of Balthasar's *Theo-Logic*. This summary expounds the important