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BOOK REVIEWS

Leopold LEEB. *Parallel Lives, Congenial Visions: Christian Precursors of Modernity in China and Japan* (Collectanea Serica. New Series, 5), Abingdon – New York, Routledge, 2024. (18×25), 294 p. ISBN 978-1-0326-2198-2. £135.00.

Dans la droite lignée de son dernier livre (L. Leeb, *One Dragon, Two Doves: A Comparative History of the Catholic Church in China and Vietnam*, New York, Peter Lang, 2022), Leopold Leeb, professeur de langues classiques à la Renmin University of China, continue son œuvre d'histoire comparée des églises asiatiques avec ce dernier ouvrage. La présente édition est une traduction, par les soins de l'auteur, d'un texte initialement publié en chinois. L'ouvrage de Leopold Leeb consiste en une série de portraits de personnalités analogues, structurée autour de thématiques variées (exemple de chapitre: *The First Travelers to Europe* ou *The First Teachers of Western Languages*), une méthodologie déjà utilisée dans son précédent livre. Inspiré par le livre *Bioi paralleloi* de Plutarque ainsi que par le concept «d'illumination mutuelle» du professeur Tang Yijie, Leopold Leeb présente ici 28 paires de chrétiens, catholiques et protestants, chinois et japonais ayant participé à construire des ponts entre leur pays et «l'Occident».

Les chapitres sont assez courts et se lisent facilement grâce à une écriture fluide. La plupart sont illustrés par des portraits des acteurs présentés, parfois dessinés par l'auteur lui-même lorsque qu'aucune autre illustration n'était disponible. Ces chapitres présentent 2 à 4 acteurs historiques originaires de Chine et du Japon en s'attardant particulièrement sur leur rapport au christianisme et aux occidentaux ainsi que sur leur parcours faisant souvent d'eux des personnages à l'intersection de différentes cultures.

Plus qu'un dictionnaire biographique, l'ouvrage propose un parcours impressionnant par la diversité des thématiques abordées. Commençant au début du XVI^e^ siècle jusqu'à la seconde moitié du XX^e^, L. Leeb aborde, à travers ses portraits, des sujets aussi variées que la création du clergé indigène (39-49), l'introduction de l'art chrétien (71-79) ou la création du droit constitutionnel (163-173). En abordant les contextes directs de ces nombreuses problématiques, L. Leeb dresse un large panorama des histoires chinoises et japonaises dans leurs liens entretenus avec l'Occident. Ses apports sur les questions linguistiques, abordés dans plusieurs chapitres (57-58, 60-63, 99-102, 111-114), sont particulièrement intéressants et montrent comment les identités nationales chinoises et japonaises contemporaines sont en partie héritées de l'évolution de leurs langages respectifs en rapport (ou non) avec les langues européennes.

L'auteur se défend de n'avoir pas mobilisé une bibliographie extensive, dans une volonté d'accessibilité et de lisibilité. On ne peut que lui donner raison au vu de la tâche colossale entreprise. Néanmoins, compte tenu de la nature du livre, il aurait été judicieux de mobiliser davantage de littérature théorique sur les questions de modernité et d'histoire globale, d'autant plus quand on connait de la

fortune historiographique récente de ces sujets. Ainsi, on reste circonspect de la définition proposée de la modernité, qui est, selon l'auteur, le corollaire du développement de la foi chrétienne («In other words, the Christian missions in Japan and China set in motion a gradual process of modernization in the Ruist (or Confucian) nations of the Far East, shifting conditions towards equality and internationalization – changes which helped these societies transform themselves», XXVI-XXVII). En ce sens, le manque de théorisation mène à des écueils classiques de l'histoire globale, pourtant discutés depuis maintenant quelques années. On pense, entre autres, à l'effacement des mécaniques de pouvoir et de ses composantes socio-économiques derrière une étude des transferts culturels (voir S. Conrad, *What is Global History?*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2016). C'est par exemple le cas dans le chapitre 12 (79-84), qui évoque les aspects anti-chrétiens de la révolte des Boxers sans mentionner la question sous-jacente de l'impérialisme européen en Chine, dont les missionnaires étaient l'incarnation pour les révoltés. Ainsi, l'étude des rapports entre les différents espaces de la chrétienté ne peut s'affranchir d'une étude critique de la hiérarchisation des dits espaces dans la modernité (voir D. Iogna-Prat – A. Rauwel – F. Gabriel, *Dictionnaire critique de l'Église: Notions et débats de sciences sociales*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2023). Ces biais sont probablement intrinsèquement liés à la structure choisie par L. Leeb. Proposer une histoire par portraits apporte certes l'avantage d'incarner le récit historique, le rendant peut-être plus digeste, mais occulte irrémédiablement les dynamiques macro-historiques dans lesquelles sont pris les acteurs.

Malgré cet angle mort que l'ouvrage présente au niveau de son regard critique, il n'en reste pas moins une lecture stimulante et qui a le mérite de questionner les rapports complexes entre Europe, Amérique et Asie au regard du rôle joué par la chrétienté dans ceux-ci.

M. GATELIER

Alison G. SALVESEN – Timothy M. LAW (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint* (Oxford Handbooks). Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2021. (17×14,5), XVII-791 p. ISBN 978-0-19-966571-6. £110.00.

Whereas the Septuagint was once discarded as the product of unfaithful or even incompetent translators whenever it diverged from the received Hebrew text, Septuagint studies has become a flourishing field of research in the past decades. It thus comes as no surprise that, in addition to various excellent introductory textbooks that have been published recently, a more specialised introduction in the form of an *Oxford Handbook* is also devoted to the so-called Bible in Greek. However, as various subfields of Septuagint studies have come to maturity, they have also revealed the enormous complexity of the Septuagint, with its many intricate and often vexed textual, linguistic and theological questions, and the various historical-cultural, canonical and scholarly contexts in which these should be considered. As a result, this handbook consists of no fewer than fifty chapters that have been organised into seven parts. The first section, entitled "First Things", tackles some introductory matters, more specifically what the term Septuagint may denote (Cameron Boyd-Taylor), the emergence of Septuagint Studies in the

context of the Reformation (Scott Mandelbrote) and the modern printed editions of the Septuagint produced from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century (Felix Albrecht). The second part probes the Septuagint's various contexts: the social and historical setting in Palestine and the Diaspora outside Egypt (James K. Aitken), and in Egypt during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, particularly in Alexandria (Livia Capponi); the specific nature of Septuagint Greek (Trevor V. Evans); and the physical evidence in the form of papyri and epigraphy (Michael P. Theophilos) and of manuscripts (Luciano Bossina). In addition, it treats the question of to what extent the translators introduced a specific theology through the renderings of some important theological concepts (Mogens Müller), as well as the various criteria that may be applied to characterise the translators' techniques (Hans Ausloos), and the ongoing debate on the historicity of the account of the Septuagint's origins in the *Letter of Aristeas* (Dries De Crom). The peculiarities of individual books and smaller collections – such as the character of the preserved texts and the texts' supposed layers – are presented in the third part, with essays on the Pentateuch (Dirk Büchner), Joshua and Judges (Natalio Fernández Marcos), the books of Samuel (Anneli Aejmelaeus), the books of Kings (Tuukka Kauhanen, Andrés Piquer Otero, Timo Tekoniemi and Pablo A. Torijano), Chronicles or Paralipomena (Laurence Vianès), Isaiah (Rodrigo F. de Sousa), Jeremiah and Baruch (Matthieu Richelle), Ezekiel (Katrin Hauspie), Daniel and its so-called "additions" (Olivier Munnich), the Minor Prophets (Cécile Dogniez), the five *Megillot* – which in the Septuagint do not form a separate corpus of festive scrolls – Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs and Lamentations (Robert J.V. Hiebert), the Psalms (Staffan Olofsson), Proverbs (Lorenzo Cuppi), Job (Maria Gorea), and a series of so-called deuterocanonical and apocryphal books, more specifically Wisdom of Solomon, 1 Esdras or Esdras A, 2 Esdras or Esdras B, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Ben Sira, 1-4 Maccabees, the Letter of Jeremiah, the Psalms of Solomon, the Odes, and Psalm 151 (Alison Salvesen). The Jewish context of the Septuagint is further explored in the fourth part, with essays looking at the various textual questions that arise from the works of Philo (Sarah J.K. Pearce) and Josephus (Tessa Rajak); from the scrolls found at various sites in the Judean Desert (Eugene Ulrich); from the Hebraising revision that has been termed "kaige" in modern research and that is closely related to the revision traditionally ascribed to Theodotion, but obviously predates it (hence the term "proto-Theodotion"), as well as the less extensive revision that followed the same isomorphic principles, the so-called "semi-kaige" (Siegfried Kreuzer); from the revisions associated with Aquila (Giuseppe Veltri and Alison G. Salvesen), and with Symmachus (Michaël N. van der Meer); from the additional revisions conveniently labelled *Quinta*, *Sexta* and *Septima* – in so far as they actually existed – and the Greek version of the Samaritan Pentateuch (both by Bradley John Marsh, Jr.); and from their so-called "afterlife" in medieval Byzantine manuscripts (Julia G. Krivoruchko). As the latter essay is also concerned to some extent with the Christian reception of the Septuagint, it could have been included in the fifth part, which is devoted to the Septuagint as Christian Scripture, more specifically to the citations in the New Testament that supply "a unique window into the shifting state of the Greek text in the first century" (David Lincicum); to the so-called Antiochene text that is said to have been edited by Lucian of Antioch but clearly predates Lucian and is currently considered a very important witness to the *Old Greek*, except by those scholars who envisage a "proto-Lucianic" revision

(Tuukka Kauhanen); to Origen's *Hexapla* (Peter J. Gentry); to the Septuagint's liturgical use in the Greek Orthodox church (John A.L. Lee); to the relevance of Greek early Christian literature (Reinhart Ceulemans); and to early Latin Christian fathers and their received Old Latin versions (Michael Graves). Again, the final essay of this part presents a smooth transition to the next part, which looks at the various daughter translations of the Septuagint, i.e. the *Old Latin* (Pierre-Maurice Bogaert); the Armenian, Georgian, and Slavonic versions (Pablo A. Torijano); the seventh-century Syriac translation of the Hexaplaric edition, the *Syrohexapla* (Marketta Liljeström); and the Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopic versions, incl. those written in the Coptic dialects Sahidic and Bohairic (Andrés Piquer Otero); after which an overview of modern translations in English, German, French, Spanish and Italian serves as a kind of epilogue (Eberhard Bons). Finally, under the title "conversations", the seventh and final part highlights the relevance of the Septuagint for a number of closely related fields of study, more specifically the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible (Bénédicte Lemmelijn), the interpretation of Israel's Scriptures in and the language of the New Testament (J. Ross Wagner), Christian theology and the authority of the Septuagint for Christians (John Barton), and the interpretation of the Bible through visual exegesis in illustrated manuscripts (Maja Kominko). Taken together, this collection of essays written by established scholars from the field presents a very useful tool for students and scholars in search of a summary introduction on a particular aspect of the Septuagint, be it an individual book, a specific revision or a particular translation. As such, it may be considered as complementary to both the various modern translation projects and the less extensive introductory textbooks on the Septuagint.

H. DEBEL

William A. ROSS. *Postclassical Greek and Septuagint Lexicography* (Septuagint and Cognate Studies, 75). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2022. (15×23), XXVI-273 p. ISBN 978-978-0-88414-562-2. $45.00 (pb).

This book represents a meticulous reworking of the author's doctoral dissertation, delving into the intricate realm of the Septuagint. Specifically, it focuses on the dual text of Judges (text A and text B), examining its linguistic context before analysing its language and style.

The introductory chapter serves as an overview of the textual history of the book of Judges. Here, the author navigates through the complexities of the Hebrew text and sheds light on theories surrounding the dual Greek text, with particular emphasis on the *kaige* revision. Furthermore, the methodology employed in the study is outlined, providing readers with insight into the analytical approach adopted. The author also contextualises his research within the broader landscape of scholarly discourse, establishing the significance of his contribution.

The second chapter also serves as an essential foundation, offering a preliminary exploration of the realm of Septuagint lexicography. Here, the author meticulously examines concordances and lexica, arranged in chronological order. The overarching objective is to trace the inception of the so-called "Hebrew-Priority Approach", according to which the meaning and use of a particular Septuagint term is dealt with in connection to its Hebrew counterpart. This approach is juxtaposed with its

correlate, the "Greek-Priority Approach", preferred by the author and by contemporary scholars. Rather than focusing solely on the representation of the Hebrew meaning in Greek, the emphasis shifts towards situating the Septuagint and its linguistic nuances within the framework of Postclassical Greek. This is achieved through insightful comparisons with contemporary documentary sources, enriching our understanding of the Septuagint's language and context.

Chapters 3 to 5 delve into detailed analyses of phrases and lexemes within the Septuagint book of Judges, exploring their significance and usage within text A and text B.

In Chapter 3, particular attention is paid to words associated with warfare, given the significant discrepancies between the two LXX texts in their depiction of war-related concepts.

The focus of this chapter centres on the analysis of two key words related to the realm of warfare: לחם and מלחמה in their Greek translation. In the revision of the text (B group), these Hebrew terms are translated as παρατάσσω and παράταξις respectively, whereas the Old Greek text (AII group) opts for πόλεμος and πολεμέω. Through meticulous examination, the author illustrates how these lexical choices serve as evidence of the textual relationship between the two textual groups. Moreover, the analysis of the words παρατάσσω and παράταξις in their Hellenistic context is conducted with a parallel analysis in contemporary sources (papyri and inscriptions); in light of this examination, the author demonstrates that the lexical choices in the revision were motivated by stylistic concerns and the social context.

In Chapter 4, the author turns his attention to the diverse vocabulary employed to describe the young men engaged in battles throughout the book of Judges within the Septuagint. Once more, a notable contrast emerges between the Old Greek text and its later revision. This discrepancy is particularly evident in the lexicon used to denote these young combatants. In this instance as well, postclassical sources attest to the motivations for the lexical changes in the revised text of the LXX of Judges.

Chapter 5 delves into the examination of Greek vocabulary denoting the encounter between groups and individuals within the book of Judges. A notable linguistic shift is observed between the Old Greek text and its later revision regarding the terms ἀπαντάω and ἀπάντησις, which are replaced with συναντάω and συνάντησις, respectively.

Of particular significance in this chapter is the exploration of the ἀπάντησις ceremony, a prevalent phenomenon during the second century BCE. The author carefully scrutinises the potential influence of this ceremony on the revisionist substitution of ἀπάντησις with συνάντησις. By contextualising these lexical changes within the cultural and historical landscape of the Hellenistic period, the author offers yet again valuable insights into the motivations behind the revisions made to the Septuagint text.

The three instances highlighted above underscore the importance of evaluating Septuagint vocabulary and its changes both in their contemporary contexts and within the broader framework of Postclassical Greek language, encompassing its history and development. It becomes evident that the interplay between the Septuagint language and Postclassical Greek is mutually enlightening.

Overall, this volume serves as a critical assessment of lexicographical studies on the Septuagint, particularly examining the limitations of existing lexica and

their approaches while also proposing a path forward in Septuagint lexicography. Through the insightful analysis presented in the three case studies, the author underscores the significance of prioritising Greek sources in understanding the Septuagint vocabulary. By elucidating the importance of Greek priority in Septuagint lexicography, the author offers a compelling vision for the study of the Septuagint and outlines a methodological approach that challenges long-held misconceptions about its Greek language. The study advocates for a comprehensive evaluation of the Septuagint within its historical, cultural, social, and linguistic contexts, thereby enriching our understanding of this ancient text.

Of great interest also is the Appendix, where the author offers possible lexicographical sample entries for the terms analysed in chapters 3 to 5. In sum, this volume not only contributes to advancing scholarship on the Septuagint but also offers a roadmap for future research in Septuagint lexicography, emphasising the importance of Greek priority and contextual analysis in unlocking the nuances of this ancient text.

C. RECALCATI

Christopher J. FRESCH. *Discourse Markers in Early Koine Greek: Cognitive-Functional Analysis and LXX Translation Technique* (Septuagint and Cognate Studies, 77). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2023. (15,5×23), 279 p. ISBN 978-1628375428. $50.00 (pb); ISBN 9781628375435 $70.00 (hb); e-ISBN 9781628375442 (e-pub).

The volume is the publication of Fresch's PhD thesis conducted at the University of Cambridge under the supervision of the late Prof. Dr. Jim Aitken; it deals with Greek linguistics and the Septuagint. The focus of the study is twofold: the study offers, firstly, an analysis of Discourse Markers (hereafter, DM) in documentary papyri from third- to first-century BCE Egypt and in the Septuagint, and secondly, an examination of Septuagint translation technique in light of the data on Discourse markers, using the Twelve Prophets as a case study. In the volume, the DM taken into examination in Koine Greek are: δέ, εἰ μή and ἐὰν μή, ἀλλά, ἀλλ'ἤ, and μέν.

In the volume's introduction, the author introduces and analyses DM and especially the importance of their examination within the framework of cognitive-functional linguistics analysis. As DM are "pragmatic devices […] they instruct the hearers and readers on how to process the unfolding discourse". Fresch finds it appropriate to use a discourse-grammatical and cognitive approach. In this sense, the author posits the results of his analysis of DM in the Septuagint to mark the translator's freedom to use idiomatic Greek. In the context of translation technique studies, Fresch aims to provide a clearer understanding of the current research in Septuagint Studies. The author critiques the traditional categories employed in translation technique analysis, emphasising the importance of the translator's freedom. It is, in fact, through this freedom that the translator's conscious choices in the target language become more apparent. Additionally, the author highlights the limitations of translation techniques in analysing DM, which, due to their intrinsic nature, often escape conventional frameworks.

Following this, still within the introduction, Fresch presents the *corpora* used for his research. The Twelve Minor Prophets serve as his primary case study, compared against non-literary papyri from the third to the first century BCE, which offer insight into natural Koine Greek (38) and help illuminate various Greek idiomatic expressions. Occasionally, Fresch extends his analysis beyond the Twelve, exploring sections of the Pentateuch or even the broader Septuagint to gather additional evidence.

In the following chapters (chs. 2 to 6), the author examines different DM and their use in documentary papyri and in a set of examples from the Septuagint. The papyri are well presented and contextualised before the DM are analysed, and the same is true of the passages from the Septuagint. At the end of each chapter, Fresch presents a general conclusion on DM both in the papyri and in the Septuagint and attempts to reconstruct the reason behind the use of a particular DM by the Septuagint translator. In each chapter, the author skilfully challenges classical descriptions of each particle (DM) through well-chosen examples.

Chapter 2 focuses on the particle δέ. Here, Fresch demonstrates that the DM δέ serves to structure the text, signalling that the new segment contains different information, a sort of progression in the topic. Accordingly, Fresch argues that the DM is used by the Septuagint translator to signal textual segments and to build a correct mental representation of the text.

The following chapter (Ch. 3) focuses on εἰ μή and ἐὰν μή, especially when they follow the main proposition. The description of the particle in Koine Greek provided by Fresch builds on previous research findings, while also enhancing the "linguistic understanding of its pragmatic function". Fresch concludes that εἰ μή and ἐὰν μή as DM signal to the reader that what follows presents an exception to the previously given information (the main clause). In the Septuagint, these DM translate a range of different Hebrew phrases, and in most cases, the use of εἰ μή and ἐὰν μή seems to signal a similar process as the Hebrew DM.

Chapter 4 centres on ἀλλά. While ἀλλά is classically intended as adversative or opposing, through his analysis of papyri, Fresch remarks that its core function as a DM is that of correcting preceding information in the main clause. In the Septuagint, the use of the DM is often not motivated by the underlying Hebrew, rather its presence speaks to the willingness of the translator to render his base text and relations idiomatically in the Greek.

Fresch devotes his fifth chapter to those cases in which ἀλλά appears in combination with ἤ, thus, forming a new, distinctive DM as ἀλλ'ἤ. The Author noticed that the DM ἀλλ'ἤ became increasingly used in late Koine Greek, nevertheless ἀλλ'ἤ in the Twelve expresses an exclusive correction and once again its presence signals the ability of the Septuagint's translator to "move beyond simple replication of their *Vorlagen*, and evince an ability to indicate textual relations by means of natural koine".

The last chapter (Ch. 6) focuses on the particle μέν which appears only twice in the Twelve but occurs about seven hundred times in documentary papyri – mostly in instances that seem formulaic. Moreover, since in the Septuagint, μέν appears as not qualitatively motivated and only seldom quantitatively motivated in the Hebrew, Fresch concludes that its presence attests to the translator's attention to the broader context and that it is used with an anticipatory function, in connection with other DM.

Overall, the author skilfully applies pragmatic linguistics, an essential tool for the analysis of discourse markers (DM), to Septuagint study. Such a study, merging linguistic theories and translational studies, has long been a *desideratum* in the field, and undoubtedly advances the research. His approach to translation techniques appears as non-traditional, nevertheless it pushes the reflection further and brings important new insights. A great strength of the study is its prioritisation of Septuagint Greek and its context, which has too long been regarded merely as a translation language, often considered only in comparison to its Hebrew counterpart. While the papyri are handled well and presented accurately, the rationale for selecting certain documentary sources over others is not always clear, particularly when there are more numerous examples available. Additional data might have been helpful in these cases.

C. RECALCATI

Hayeon KIM. *Multiple Authorship of the Septuagint Pentateuch: The Original Translators of the Pentateuch* (Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible, 4). Leiden – Boston, MA, Brill, 2019. (16×24), XIV-207 p. ISBN 978-90-04-42051-9. €109.18.

In 2020, Hayeon Kim published his 2007 doctoral dissertation on the difficult question of the number of translators of the Septuagint-Pentateuch. Already the *Letter of Aristeas* mentions multiple (72) translators at work, but the first modern account on the topic appears in the nineteenth century with Zacharias Frankel. Frankel states about the LXX-Pentateuch (*Historisch-Kritische Studien zu der Septuaginta: Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta*, Leipzig, Vogel, 1841, 11): "seine einzelnen Theile sind hinsichtlich der Sprachkenntnisse und der Auffassungsweise verschiedenartig übergetragen und zeigen uns die Übersetzer von einander unabhängig". Since then, different voices have followed Frankel (esp. the so-called Finnish school) or proposed one single translator for all five books instead (e.g. Thackeray, Swete). Now Kim's book collects these different perspectives and aims to offer a new, comprehensive answer to the question.

The book starts off with a useful overview of scholarship on the question, though it could be remarked that some more recent and equally important publications, such as van der Louw's 2011 article on "The Evolution of the LXX-Genesis Translator" are not included in the overview, and only briefly mentioned in some footnotes later.

Next, the methodology is presented, where the different criteria for identifying different/identical translators are selected. Kim rightly observes that "translators are neither consistently literal nor consistently free […] a different literary genre may require a different type of translation". Hence, it is Kim's goal "to include as many criteria/aspects as possible for distinguishing between translation units", through a twofold analysis. The first step in Kim's examination consists of a so-called "superficial reading" with a focus on the common elements of the five Pentateuchal books. Secondly, the differences are addressed, including differences between particular sections of one and the same book: "the main procedure followed is the comparison of the translation options for the same Hebrew word in the various translation units". More specifically, the following elements are

assessed: Hebrew-Greek pairs of words (quantitative approach), phrases and syntagmata (qualitative approach) are evaluated as to their homogeneity throughout the five books, aiming to find certain patterns beyond accidental inconsistencies. From the outset, it is clear that the approach has a focus on consistency addressed from the angle of frequency: "consistent sets of differences between and within the books of the Pentateuch might indicate the existence of separate translators for the books of the Pentateuch or segments of them". Indeed, throughout the monograph, many tables appear with inventories of Hebrew words and their Greek counterparts. The frequency of pairs is compared statistically between the different Pentateuchal books, paying attention to so-called "preferences" (an augmented frequency for a certain rendering) indicative of singular translators who would seem to prefer certain equivalents. This approach raises different questions:

1) Having mentioned the problem of divergent genres and their incompatibility with a strict consistency, how can this problem be overcome in Kim's (statistical) analysis? Does the one not discredit the other? T.A.W. van der Louw, *The Unity of LXX Genesis and Exodus*, in *Vetus Testamentum* 70 (2020) 270-284 observes two main problems with a statistical approach to the problem: a) the problem of context: statistical comparison should take into account context, since the motivation behind differences in renderings of one Hebrew item is at times not individual preference and thus indicative of a different translator, but rather a creative adaptation to the particular context the item is situated in, b) the problem of averages: statistics use averages and comparing average phenomena of one book with another implies eroding the diversity within each book, whereas it is fully possible that some sections of a book diverge in approach and cannot be sufficiently captured in statistical averages (272).

2) How to distinguish between *accidental* inconsistencies and consistent sets of differences? Just how *different* should the differences be?

3) Is the identity of translator the most plausible element behind differences in vocabulary and syntax? What about the style, context, content of a specific verse? What about text-critical issues and the possibility of a different *Vorlage*? The recent publication of B. Beeckman (*One or Two Translators? Translation Technique and Theology of LXX Proverbs and Its Relation to LXX Job* [BZAW 549], Berlin, De Gruyter, 2023), for instance, tackles this problem effectively, by addressing particular elements such as the renderings of *hapax legomena* as more specific test cases to assess the translation technique in lxx-Proverbs and LXX-Job and the implication for the (non-)identity of their translators. As a context- and content-related criterion, this approach overcomes the obstacle of context, and offers a deep insight into translation technique, while also allowing for a different *Vorlage* throughout the detailed analysis and evaluation.

The thesis, unfortunately, does not address these issues in depth and leaves the reader with open questions. In turn, these questions point out the difficulty of the problem regarding the identity of the LXX-Pentateuch translators and certainly offer stimuli to walk further along the path Kim has bravely started to pave.

Then follows the bipartite analysis of different elements of both convergence and divergence between the different Pentateuchal books in the LXX. First, Kim addresses the *similarities* between the five Pentateuchal books, and concludes concerning their shared vocabulary: "it is evident that the translators of the LXX-Pent are from the same geographical, religious and social milieu, although it does not necessarily follow that the translators collaborated". One of the

additional elements Kim addresses in his first step concerns the neologisms of the LXX-Pentateuch. This element transcends the purely statistical domain, as it provides an insight into aspects such as the creativity and shared background of the translators. Consistent choices for similar neologisms can point to a shared or similar translation technique, even though Kim does not address this important aspect. For instance, the reproduction in both LXX-Exodus and LXX-Numbers of the expression אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם by the compound adjective μακροθυμος, not attested elsewhere in Greek before the Pentateuch, could give clues as to how the Pentateuch translator(s) handled particular expressions, and raises questions such as: is the quantitative representation in rendering Hebrew bipartite counterparts an element that returns throughout the five books, or is it only attested here? In what way did the context influence the choice for a particular neologism? Sadly, no explanations are offered, and Kim offers only a general table with the neologisms in the LXX-Pentateuch, without comments or conclusion. Another excursion concerns the unity of the tabernacle accounts in Ex 25–31 and 35–40. Still grouped under the chapter discussing the convergences in the five Pentateuchal books, here too, Kim strives to underline the similarities even though many differences appear. He concludes that there is evidence "that a single translator produced both sections of the tabernacle account" and discards the differences between the two tabernacle accounts (brought up mainly by Wevers) as "freedom and variety […] inconsistency, unusual renderings". It is not clear why shared vocabulary does not imply collaboration, nor a shared identity for the translators, while major differences in the tabernacle accounts would imply one and the same translator at work. However, in this section Kim raises very good points, such as the variation of particular sections of Exodus where one word is preferred, and the difficulty of statistically sound/significant conclusions based upon this diversely and unevenly distributed data.

Thereupon follows the second step of the analysis, addressing and evaluating the *differences* between the five Pentateuchal books. Immediately, a contrast appears between the moderate evaluation of the two tabernacle accounts and the now harsh evaluation of sometimes minor differences, taken as signs of different translators. Kim incorporates at times the context of the different renderings, which helps in assessing the divergent translations as true differences, and not as accidental inconsistencies. Yet, at other times one cannot help but wonder why these differences are *different enough* to qualify as markers for distinct translators, while the differences addressed in the first step were discarded.

Finally, the conclusion is reached, where the different elements addressed are reiterated. The tables here are clear and instructive and provide much material for subsequent research on the question of the number of translators. Kim reaches three main conclusions: 1) "there are five different translators, each in charge of one book"; 2) these different translators share a same Jewish-Hellenistic background that blends in with the broader socioreligious milieu of the third century BCE; 3) There might be stricter or looser relations between the Pentateuchal books or their segments, but these, according to Kim, have no impact on or relation to the number of translators.

In conclusion, Kim's publication on the number of LXX-Pentateuch translators raises many interesting questions, with far-reaching implications for textual criticism, theology (esp. regarding the theology of "the" Septuagint: each translator might insert particular theological accents) and the history of Greek (how do the

different lexical choices fit into the surrounding development of post-Classical Greek?). The book offers a good start for future fine-tuning of the question and addresses diverse elements in the assessment of the different translators. Yet, a more detailed study of the translation technique of the five books (with more emphasis on what Frankel names *Sprachkenntnisse und Auffassungsweise* – for instance by addressing in depth the coining of neologisms), a consistent contextualisation of the divergent renderings and a more coherent methodology are needed in order to resolve some of the questions left open. The book *Multiple Authorship of the Septuagint Pentateuch* certainly indicates the complexity of the topic, and I am curious to see how the elements brought forward by Kim will be received in future research and how they will bring us closer to what Kim calls "the mysteries surrounding the origin of the Greek Pentateuch".

E. De Doncker

Bryan Beeckman. *One or Two Translators? Translation Technique and Theology of LXX Proverbs and Its Relation to LXX Job* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 549). Berlin, De Gruyter, 2023. (16×24), XVIII-368 p. ISBN 9783111041094. €99.95.

In his book *One or Two Translators?*, an edited version of his doctoral dissertation, Bryan Beeckman examines some aspects of the Septuagint version of Proverbs and Job (OG). The book, while applying mainly one approach to these LXX books, introduces new insights in at least four areas of research related to LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job. Before setting out the novelties Beeckman carefully presents, a general overview of the structure and methodology is appropriate.

Beeckman's book addresses three main themes concerning LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job: (a) translation technique, (b) theological exegesis present in the Greek, and (c) the identity of the translator(s), i.e., whether the two books had the same translator. The broad outlines of the book adhere to the following structure: the introductory chapter defines concepts that are fundamental to understanding Beeckman's approach together with the scholarly debate; next follows a careful analysis, evaluation and comparison of the rendering of certain elements (*hapax legomena*, *fauna* and *flora*, and divine names) into Greek in LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job; finally a conclusion with nuanced and insightful remarks on translation technique, theology and the identity of the translators of the two Septuagint books.

The introduction of the book with a thorough overview of research on translation technique clarifies from the outset where Beeckman situates himself. The Louvain stamp is clear here, with an approach that expands qualitative research in focusing on more far-reaching criteria that fit within the Louvain "content- and context-related criteria" where additional elements such as style and exegesis are taken into account, and where the concepts of *creativity* and *faithfulness* stand central. An in-depth *status quaestionis* with a focus on LXX-Proverbs follows, where the innovative aspect of Beeckman's research becomes clear: in the rather partial quantitative and qualitative research conducted so far concerning LXX-Proverbs, far-reaching conclusions have been drawn (concerning style, the translator(s) ["one, two, or more?"] as well as theological exegesis). These rather maximalist conclusions based on generally minimal data possibly painted

a distorted picture of both Septuagint books and their translator(s), which Beeckman aims to nuance by offering a more complete picture. The only researcher having extensively addressed LXX-Proverbs before is J. Cook, who considers the translator of LXX-Proverbs to be creative, introducing stylistic and exegetical elements into his text, which undoubtedly stimulated Beeckman during their close collaboration, to also address theological elements of the Greek text. Accordingly, a *status quaestionis* on the theology of LXX-Proverbs follows, which, according to Cook, implies a heightened attention to the Mosaic Law, and a hostility towards any Greek philosophical thought that contradicts the ideology of the more conservative, Jewish translator of Proverbs. Here again, Louvain research is of great importance, with Beeckman's supervisors B. Lemmelijn and H. Ausloos having thoroughly examined the question of the so-called "theology of the Septuagint". Finally, an overview is offered of the complex question of whether LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job are the products of the same translator. Beeckman shows how the question is unresolved, with Gerleman and Lemmelijn envisaging one translator for both books, and Gammie and Cook occupying the opposite position in arguing for two distinct translators.

After this instructive introduction, Beeckman starts the analysis of the Greek rendering of specific elements in LXX-Proverbs/Job in order to come to a more complete picture regarding the translation technique, theological elements and identity of the translator(s). The rationale behind the elements Beeckman decides to assess is framed within the "content- and context-related approach":

> It examines the Greek translation on the basis of the way in which specific content- and context-related criteria have been rendered. These aspects, then, function as criteria for the characterization of the translation technique of the individual LXX books. These criteria are, e.g., the rendering of Hebrew *hapax legomena*, Hebrew wordplay in the context of parallelism, aetiologies (toponyms and proper names), specific jargon and certain stylistic characteristics. These aspects are being examined because they confronted the LXX translators with a challenge; they form situations that forced them to opt consciously for a specific rendering. By doing so, one can detect how the LXX translators translated their Hebrew *Vorlage* (71).

Beeckman chooses the following elements as "content- and context-related criteria": *hapax legomena* (words occurring only once in the Hebrew Bible, with a focus on *absolute hapax legomena*, "words that only occur once but that cannot be linked to existing lexemes"); *animalia* and *floralia*; and the divine names (with a focus on the *plusses* of κύριος and θεός absent in the MT). One of the things that immediately stands out when reading Beeckman's book is its very clear structure, meticulously followed throughout, guiding the reader, as it were, to the considered, nuanced conclusion. Each chapter follows the same, thorough methodology and structure, with first a collection of the different Hebrew items and their respective Greek counterparts, then an evaluation of the translation where elements such as style, exegesis and context are taken into account. This is first applied to the Greek book of Proverbs and then to that of Job, followed by a meticulous comparison between the two books. One advantage of Beeckman's approach is that he does not focus solely on one criterion in assessing the translation technique, theology and identity of the translator(s) – rather, the extensive inventories and careful analysis examine a whole spectrum of elements, which leads to a nuanced conclusion. For example, the analysis of *hapax legomena*

suggests that the translator of Proverbs and Job is one and the same (Lemmelijn already came to this conclusion in her pilot study on this topic). This preliminary conclusion, however, is nuanced and corrected by Beeckman's evaluation of additional elements, where the divergent animal names between both books especially constitute a major argument for the different identity of the two translators. Beeckman's final conclusion asserts that both translators show a mastery of the Greek and Hebrew languages, and that they probably stem from the same milieu, since both share similar translation techniques where stylistic elements are enhanced (avoiding repetition, creating variation, elaborating imagery) and some typically Jewish themes are emphasised (with a stress on the divine law and God's power).

The above analysis already gives an idea of the importance of Beeckman's book for studies in LXX-Proverbs/Job, but the new insights he offers in at least four areas of research related to LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job merit explicit attention. Firstly, Beeckman's book constitutes the first systematic evaluation of the Greek rendering of *absolute hapax legomena* in LXX-Proverbs. While research has already been advanced on the Greek rendering of *hapax legomena* in LXX-Job by Beeckman's colleague E. Verbeke, the book now presents an updated list of *hapax legomena*, together with their meticulous analysis and comparison also in LXX-Proverbs. The second innovation this book presents is the inclusion of *animalia* and *floralia* as additional criteria within the so-called "context- and content-related criteria". These elements indeed constitute supplementary challenges to the Greek translators, similar to the challenge of translating jargon, and their examination provides important insights into the translation technique and identity of the translators. A third important contribution of this book is the nuanced stance the author adopts in the debate regarding the identity of the translator(s) of LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job. Beeckman, through the careful analysis of multiple items, reaches a conclusion that is, as it were, the golden mean between the binary ("one or two") opinions within the scholarly debate so far: "two translators (due to the difference in lexical choice for shared jargon-defined vocabulary) who probably came from the same milieu/group (based on their shared translation techniques)" (261). Finally, the detailed overview and analysis of the treatment of the divine names in both books and their implications is also a noteworthy contribution. The chapter on this topic, together with Beeckman's recent publications on the divine names in LXX-Proverbs/Job provides a solid starting point for questions regarding theological exegesis in these books of the Septuagint.

Because of his innovative contributions, his clear and sound methodology throughout, and his careful approach, Beeckman's book proves an important tool for in-depth study of multiple themes in LXX-Proverbs/Job. The book also arouses a lot of curiosity in the reader. For example, it raises the topic of ethical emphases within LXX-Proverbs – a hitherto under-researched topic within Septuagint studies. Reference is also made to the common background and milieu of both translators, which raises questions: what did this common background look like, and what elements can the Greek text offer in reconstructing this background? Beeckman's work is a unique fruit of the Louvain school in Septuagint studies, forging his own path, reaching nuanced conclusions that challenge contemporary research, and stimulating the reader to learn more about the complex issues surrounding LXX-Proverbs and LXX-Job.

E. De Doncker

Guillaume LEPESQUEUX. *L'exposition du nom divin dans le livre de l'Exode: Étude exégétique d'Ex 3,1–4,18; 6,2–7,7; 33–34* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament, II/102). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2019. (15,5×23), XV-437 p. ISBN 978-3-16-156734-6. €114.00.

In *L'exposition du nom divin dans le livre de l'Exode*, Guillaume Lepesqueux has published his 2017 doctoral dissertation. The book is dense and offers an in-depth analysis of several revelatory pericopes in Exodus. In the introduction, the enigmatic verse Ex 3,14, where God reveals His name to Moses (*exposition du nom divin*), is cited and forms the pivotal point of the book. The goal of the book is to better understand this verse through a thorough examination: "Il s'agit simplement de comprendre ce que YHWH dit de lui-même, dans quel cadre et pourquoi il le dit, lorsqu'il se présente en privé à Moïse". Lepesqueux correctly observes in the introduction that the highly significant verse Ex 3,14 is often only interpreted from the Latin and Greek translations of the verse, with an isolationist approach, treating the verse as independent from its immediate and broader contexts. Lepesqueux, by contrast, aims to broaden the scope by investigating not only the pericope of the burning bush in its totality, but to also extend the investigation to other texts in Exodus where the revelation of the divine name is central (Ex 6,2-8; Ex 33,19; 34,6-7). For all of these texts, Lepesqueux offers the specific context in which the divine name is revealed, together with their redactional history in order to disentangle and better understand the theology (or theologies) inherent to these texts. Surprisingly, Lepesqueux understands a historical-critical approach as the best fit to (1) find and interpret the different logics of the "*exposition du nom divin*" in the book of Exodus and (2) to contribute to a better, more nuanced overall understanding of the book of Exodus. The reader might wonder why other methodologies, such as a narrative approach, are not included in offering this broader contextual understanding of the revelation of the divine name. Some narrative aspects are addressed throughout the detailed analysis of the pericopes, where *synchronic* elements are taken into account, but the emphasis remains, however, on *diachronic* aspects.

The book is then divided into two subparts. Firstly, a general overview of the most recent (historical-critical) research on the book of Exodus and the Pentateuch is offered. Secondly, over three chapters, the different selected pericopes are analysed in detail. Regarding the general overview, Lepesqueux's mastery of the difficult terminology and scholarly debate immediately stands out. Different compositional models are presented, compared and evaluated. Lepesqueux situates his own perspective in the broad field of diverging historical-critical (mostly redactional) models and clarifies his terminology. He accepts the theory of an ancient, pre-Deuteronomic, non-P Hexateuch, into which during the exile a historicised Deuteronomy was integrated. This integration provoked different series of harmonisations throughout the Hexateuch. Lepesqueux also accepts P as a document of relative independence, the first where the traditions of the patriarchs and the exodus were combined. Through the combination of different texts, both a Pentateuchal redaction (PentR) and a Hexateuchal redaction (HexR) are recognisable, together with theological, ad hoc and harmonising interpolations. Finally, on "Deuteronomistic language" he follows Hans Ausloos' (2015) distinctions where dtr/Deuteronomistic refers to authors and/or redactors responsible for (part of) the

Deuteronomistic History. Post-dtr is understood as texts composed under the influence of, referring to and exhibiting direct (literary) dependence on the Deuteronomistic literature. It is at times not fully clear whether Lepesqueux understands elements such as P as redactions, documents or sources.

After this lengthy, but useful and complete overview, Lepesqueux dives into the different pericopes regarding the revelation of the divine name in Exodus. First comes Ex 3,1-18 (“révélation du nom divin au buisson ardent”), then Ex 6,2–7,7 (“révélation du nom divin en Égypte”) and finally Ex 33–34 (“révélation du nom divin au Sinaï”). For each pericope, the following structure is adopted: first preliminaries (delimitation of the pericope, structure, etc.), then the narrative framework is addressed (translation and text-critical notes, general presentation of the verses, analysis of the verses, and a concluding overview), which leads to the conclusion where both a *diachronical* conclusion is presented, and a detailed summary of how the divine name is addressed in the specific textual unit. The structure adopted shows many similarities to the one used by Cornelis Houtman in his commentaries on Exodus (Historical Commentary on the Old Testament) and helps to provide well-researched material about each of the subsections of the different pericopes. Nonetheless, at times the reader might wonder why a certain theme is addressed in such detail. For instance, a whole subchapter is dedicated to the name of the stepfather of Moses (Jethro, Reuel, or Hobab). It is not clear why this section is needed in such detail – certainly, it is part of the framework of the burning bush, but the analysis of the different names (Jethro, Reuel, or Hobab) adds little to the overall understanding of Ex 3,1–4,18. As the book moves along, the analyses become more succinct and *synchronic* and *diachronic* analyses are interwoven into valuable, engaging and very well-rounded studies of the pericopes. The way in which Lepesqueux addresses Ex 33–34, for instance, merits praise. The structure of the different subparts is set out with precision, without adding too many details, and attention is paid to changes in discourse, theological elements and traces of redactions.

The conclusion follows upon the bipartite discussion (overview of models, and detailed analysis of pericopes). Lepesqueux summarises his findings into four strata of redactions. First, he discerns a Deuteronomistic redaction dated to the beginning of the Persian period, where the texts of Exodus, part of the ancient, pre-Deuteronomic Hexateuch, were reworked to correspond to the Deuteronomistic tradition now inserted into the Hexateuch. An important element is the newly gained prophetic status of Moses: as Moses gains this more elevated status, so too YHWH’s self-representation undergoes an elevation and becomes closely associated with mercy and justice. These Deuteronomistic “updates” should be understood as coming from the postexilic community at the beginning of the Persian period, where a theological reinterpretation flourishes with the return from Babylon, and where *prophet* Moses is seen as the direct interpreter of God’s will. A second layer is situated in the document P, around the end of the 6th or beginning of the 5th century BCE. Lepesqueux sees the self-enunciation of the divine name as part of the Priestly program, where the vocation of Israel is redefined as a sacerdotal, priestly nation spanning a large scope from the antediluvian times through the postdiluvian order of creation all the way to the fulfilment of history comprised in an inclusive monotheistic perspective. The third layer consists of the Pentateuchal Redaction (PentR), following upon the larger Hexateuchal Redaction (HexR) where P was combined with the Deuteronomistic Hexateuch. Lepesqueux

discerns in this third layer a subtle reworking of some verses in Ex 3 and Ex 33–34, where the divine self-revelation is further prepared through the creation of a broader framework that corresponds to the concrete needs of the postexilic community, such as the introduction of the notion of forgiveness. The inclusive monotheism of P is here reinforced and confirmed. Finally, the fourth layer consists of even later (end of the fourth century BCE), more singular interpolations found in Ex 3,14 and 33,18-23. Here, a radicalised version of the inclusive monotheism is adopted and projected upon the texts – it no longer has Israel as focus, but instead portrays Moses as the sole person to receive and witness the divine revelation in private. The goal is no doubt to respond to the challenges the people face, probably at the beginning of the Hellenistic period, where God is seemingly absent. The divine self-proclamation then reaffirms the divine presence in an inclusive way. One critical remark could be made here: is there not an imposed evolution from "particular" to more "universal" in this redactional model? Such an imposed evolution could easily hide certain aspects of the texts, or fall into circularity, as more inclusive monotheistic texts would be grouped under later redactions solely because they represent an idea that is considered to be later. The four different layers Lepesqueux differentiates are illustrated clearly in the four annexes at the end of the book, where each layer is disentangled and marked in the texts. The conclusion again focuses almost solely on text-critical aspects and Ex 3,14 is given surprisingly little attention compared to what one would expect from the introduction. Nevertheless, it clearly situates the verse in its redactional history and could stimulate researchers to incorporate these historicocritical data in further research on the highly theological verse of Ex 3,14.

In sum, Lepesqueux's book on the different Exodus pericopes regarding the revelation of the divine name in Exodus certainly merits attention. It not only gathers a lot of detailed information on the pericopes addressed (such as the valuable textual notes, or the well-researched attention to the structure of the pericopes and their intertextual parallels), but it also provides a new interpretation of historicocritical data with a new model of the redactional history of Exodus within the Hexateuch.

E. De Doncker

Brad E. Kelle – Brent Allen Strawn (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Historical Books of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford Handbooks). Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020. (17×25), xx-589 p. ISBN 978-0-19-026116-0 (hb); 978-0-19-007411-1 (epub). £97.00.

In line with several other recently published volumes surveying research on one or more biblical books, this addition to the ever-expanding library of *Oxford Handbooks* focuses on the so-called Historical Books. Inevitably, this raises the question of *which* narrative books relating some form of "history" are intended, as the term itself presents a highly ambiguous notion – not least in current scholarly research. The editors indicate in their introduction that they originally devised the volume to solely focus on the so-called "Deuteronomistic History" – the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, or the Former Prophets from the Hebrew Bible – but at the Press's request decided to include Ezra-Nehemiah

and Chronicles as well. As a result, the collection of "historical books" studied in this volume coincides with neither the Former Prophets nor any set of "Historical Books" in the various Christian canons, as Ruth and Esther have been omitted, as well as the apocryphal/deuterocanonical historical books Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees and the like in other, more expansive canons. In addition, it may come somewhat as a surprise that the volume does not include essays on individual books. Instead, it is focused on a series of specific issues or figures. The first part places the books in their broader historical and literary context by surveying historiography in the Ancient World (Richard D. Nelson), the relevance of Assyrian and Babylonian sources for the study of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (Martti Nissinen), and of Persian Achaemenid sources (Amélie Kurth), the developmental textual state of the books of Samuel and Kings (Julio Trebolle Barrera and Eugene Ulrich) and of Ezra-Nehemiah (Lisbeth E. Fried), the supposed origins of Ancient Israel (Ann E. Killebrew), and the history of the early monarchy (Walter Dietrich), of the later monarchy (Paul S. Evans), of the exile (Laurie Pearce) and of Persian-period Yehud (Mary Joan Winn Leith). The second part includes essays on society and economy (Roger S. Nam), politics and kingship (Geoffrey Parsons Miller), the role of prophets (Marvin A. Sweeney), and of women (Mercedes L. García Bachmann), exogamy and divorce (Herbert R. Marbury), Yahwistic religion in the Assyrian and Babylonian periods (Richard S. Hess) and in the Persian period (Melody D. Knowles), theological conceptions of history (Matthew J. Lynch), and divine and human violence (Douglas S. Earl). The third part offers a remarkable combination of diachronic and synchronic approaches, with surveys of the compositional history of the so-called Deuteronomistic History (Thomas Römer), the debate on a similar Chronistic History (Ralph W. Klein) and the vexed tradition history of Ezra-Nehemiah (Kristin De Troyer), but also surveys of reading the Historical Books as part of an Enneateuch (Richard S. Briggs), synchronic readings of Joshua-Kings (Serge Frolov), synthetic and literary readings of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah (Steven J. Schweitzer), the role of orality (Susan Niditch), feminist and postcolonial readings (Cameron B.R. Howard) and trauma studies (David Janzen). The fourth and final part probes the reception history of the Historical Books by highlighting specific figures, more particularly Joshua (Zev I. Farber), Deborah (Joy A. Schroeder), Samson (Kelly J. Murphy), Saul (Barbara Green), David (Dominik Markl), Solomon (Sara M. Koenig), and Ezra and Nehemiah (Armin Siedlecki), and concludes with a more general overview of the key points of interest for the authors of the New Testament, who were evidently more interested in the Torah, the Latter Prophets and the Psalms (Steve Moyise).

All in all, this volume may be said to exemplify the current diversity at various levels in the academic study of the Historical Books, as the editors themselves indicate in their introduction. That may be considered as one of its strengths, but it is also its main weakness, since the volume as a whole does not provide students with the clear overview that may be expected from a "handbook". It is a pity that the editors have not taken greater efforts to highlight the converging lines that may be discerned within the diversity, nor to bring conflicting scholarly views into a conversation. Evidently, it needs to be conceded that, at this point, this volume is simply symptomatic of a deplorable trend in current research, where scholars are simply "doing their thing" alongside one another without even bothering to aspire to reach a synthesis. At the same time, it should also be pointed out that

several individual essays may be recommended for their profound discussion of a specific issue, such as the very clear survey of the genesis and demise of the theory of a Deuteronomistic History by Römer, or the excellent overview of the structure, composition and significance of 1 Esdras by De Troyer. Finally, the introduction and conclusion of the – otherwise very technical – essay by Trebolle and Ulrich should be compulsory reading for every student working on the Hebrew Bible, as it neatly points out that many scholarly papers are flawed from the start because they fail to take sufficiently into account the textual history of the biblical books. Several other contributors to this volume would have benefitted from heeding their warning.

H. DEBEL

Burkart M. ZAPFF. *Micah* (International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament). Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 2022. (17,5×24,5), 258 p. ISBN 978-3-17-025442-8 (print); 978-3-17-025443-5 (pdf); 978-3-17-025444-2 (epub). €89.00.

As Micah is often treated as one component of the Twelve Prophets, a fully-fledged commentary on this book in particular is most welcome, notwithstanding several other such commentaries that have been published in recent decades. What sets this commentary apart is its explicit distinction – in line with the series as a whole – between a synchronic and a diachronic approach. Zapff's synchronic approach holds Micah to be the "center and node point" in the "great drama involving Zion, Israel, and the nations" that is related in the Book of the Twelve (19, 21). Such a statement evidently presupposes the order of the individual prophets in the Masoretic Text, as Zapff readily admits – but that is simply what is to be expected from a synchronic approach focused on the final text as it became canonical in the Hebrew Bible. As to the diachronic approach, Zapff is clearly writing against the backdrop of recent research into the literary development of the Book of Twelve, although he does not explicitly refer to supposed literary precursors such as a hypothetical "Book of the IV" consisting of Hosea, Amos, Micah and Zephaniah. In fact, he seems rather reluctant to accept links to Zephaniah, whereas he strongly argues for Micah's being linked to Hosea, Amos and Isaiah – which seems to put him in the company of scholars envisaging a "Book of the III" to which Zephaniah was only added at a later stage, or even a "Book of the IV" in which the core of the later Book of Isaiah still occupied the later place of Zephaniah. As to the literary development of the actual Micah Document – as he prefers to call it – Zapff resists a straightforward distinction that relegates, in the wake of Bernhard Stade's oft-cited 1881 article, chapters 4-7 in their entirety to later exilic or postexilic editorial hands. In a similar vein, he does not accept the attribution of Micah 6–7 to some anonymous "Deutero-Micah" from the North. Instead, he proposes a three-stage model with only a very limited first stage that may go back to the historical Micah, whom he considers to have been a kind of village elder from the Judean hill country. More specifically, only the "poem of the cities" in Mi 1,8.10-16, describing an Assyrian advance that may be connected to the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE, can in his view be firmly located at this stage, although Zapff does not exclude that some

social-critical sayings in chapters 2–3 (e.g., Mi 3,1-4) that were later edited to align them with other prophets may also originate with the historical Micah. Strictly speaking, there was not yet a "Micah Document" at this stage, only a poem and some brief sayings that would later be incorporated in such a document. Only at the second stage did a "Micah Document" emerge, and it would have aimed from the outset to associate Micah with Hosea and Amos, in order to extend their message of judgment on the Northern Kingdom to Judah, as well as with Isaiah, Micah's somewhat older contemporary from the South. As such, Zapff believes that the two passages modelled on Isaiah 2 (Mi 4,1-3 and 5,9-13) and the extended Israel-oriented oracles in Mi 6,1-16 would have been genuine parts of this document, which in his view dates only to the Persian period. The third stage extends into the Hellenistic period and links Micah to other components of the Book of the Twelve, particularly Jonah and Nahum, with the return of a remnant of Jacob and judgment on disobedient nations as its most prominent themes. To be sure, this does not exclude the possibility of further isolated additions and continuations, the latest of which Zapff locates in the Maccabean period. Although this three-stage model has a sound basis in the text itself and is at many points in line with recent research, one may wonder whether it is always possible to exactly pinpoint the origins of each and every word, as Zapff tends to do. In addition, the question may be raised as to whether the second stage should necessarily be considered as a single, large-scale revision, or may also be conceptualised as a series of independent editorial processes within the emerging Book of the Twelve. For example, it is not unconceivable that Mi 6,1-16 originates from another hand than that of passages linking Micah to Isaiah. In like fashion, the links to Hosea and Amos in Mi 6,1-16 do not exclude the possibility that the passage may belong with chapter 7 to a more encompassing *Fortschreibung* that links Micah to various other prophets from the larger corpus of prophetic books. Finally, Zapff is definitely to be congratulated for discarding the "biographical approach" that allots every line of text that does not obviously date from a later period to the historical prophet. His distinction between the historical figure that may have given his name to the prophet, on the one hand, and the figure of the prophet as it emerges from the literary work that bears his name, represents the only viable way for prophetic studies to move forward – at least in the humble opinion of this reviewer.

H. DEBEL

Renate BRANDSCHEIDT – Theresia MENDE. *„Gewaltig und heilig, gepriesen als furchtbar" (Ex 15,11): Fragen zum Gottesbild des Alten Testaments*. Grünkraut, D & D Medien, 2020. (14,4×21,8), 252 p. ISBN 978-3-86400-028-7. €22.90.

À quoi pourrait ressembler une série de discours antimarcionites au XXI^e^ siècle? Voici justement la transcription de conférences radiophoniques prononcées en Allemagne 90 ans après la mort d'Adolf von Harnack, historien de l'Église qui remit en valeur la figure de Marcion et qui a profondément marqué la théologie contemporaine. Ces conférences destinées au grand public ont pour ambition l'étude des caractéristiques les plus scandaleuses que le langage et les récits

bibliques prêtent ou semblent prêter à Dieu, aussi bien dans le Nouveau que dans l'Ancien Testament: jalousie, colère, vengeance, violence mais aussi cruauté, partialité et misogynie.

Après avoir évoqué les débats du christianisme primitif sur la représentation biblique de Dieu, montrant l'ancienneté de cette question très actuelle, les deux théologiennes adoptent une stratégie radicalement différente de celle des théologiens tardo-antiques. Il est intéressant à ce titre de constater que l'index scripturaire de cet ouvrage ne présente pour ainsi dire pas de point de contact avec celui du *Contre Marcion* de Tertullien. Loin du ton sarcastique de celui-ci, qui ne manquait pas de tourner en ridicule chaque élément de la construction intellectuelle de Marcion, Renate Brandscheidt et Theresia Mende tirent leur force de conviction de ce qu'elles prennent au sérieux la répulsion que tout un chacun peut éprouver en lisant certains versets ou récits bibliques. Elles fondent cette répulsion dans la description des mécanismes humains correspondant à la jalousie, à la colère, à la vengeance, etc., mais aussi dans la réprobation de ces attitudes par la Bible elle-même. Elles cherchent alors quel aspect de Dieu et de sa relation avec les hommes l'expression permet de révéler. Adaptés à exprimer l'expérience de Dieu comme personne vivante, loin de toute discours abstrait (39), ces anthropomorphismes sont employés par analogie quand il s'agit du Tout-Autre (45). Par exemple, appliquée à Dieu, la jalousie n'est pas liée à une peur parfois maladive de perdre et ne devient pas un poison du cœur mais exprime une caractéristique de sa relation à l'homme, à savoir l'incompatibilité radicale avec l'idolâtrie païenne.

Les A. font remarquer que les différents vocables étudiés ont un rapport différent avec la notion de Dieu: alors que la jalousie et la vengeance disent quelque chose de son être, la colère correspond bien plutôt à une intervention provisoire, suivie du pardon et destinée à préparer la conversion. Cela justifie pleinement le fait d'aborder indépendamment chaque notion (au risque de la répétition, qui a ici une vertu pédagogique et pratique: chaque chapitre peut se lire indépendamment, selon la forme originelle des conférences radiodiffusées), ce qui permet du reste de passer en revue un grand nombre d'aspects de la Bible qui choquent habituellement les lecteurs. Tandis que certains chapitres passent en revue un assez grand nombre de textes courts dans lesquels la notion est explicitement présente, d'autres s'arrêtent plus longuement sur des passages particulièrement difficiles: les plaies d'Égypte, le combat de Jacob, le sacrifice d'Isaac, la figure de Job, etc.). Le recours aux outils de l'exégèse moderne (en particulier la mise en contexte historique et théologique des récits bibliques), permet de souligner les méprises d'une lecture anachronique, sans toutefois nier l'âpreté du texte et le danger de toute lecture idéologique, et d'introduire le lecteur à une compréhension plus profonde. Il en résulte une représentation de Dieu pleine de relief: transcendant et infiniment proche, éperdument amoureux de sa créature et d'une exigence absolue envers elle, ennemi implacable du mal et ami du pécheur.

Pédagogique sans être simplificateur (et munie d'une bibliographie adaptée, c'est-à-dire succincte et uniquement dans la langue de l'ouvrage), ce livre s'inscrit sciemment dans une perspective pastorale et spirituelle plus que théorique, comme le soulignent les fins de chapitre, synthèses en forme d'exhortations spirituelles ambitieuses. Il rejoint le lecteur actuel notamment par l'attention aux mécanismes psychologiques et par une confrontation honnête avec les difficultés d'un langage qui peut sembler inaudible. Plongeant le lecteur dans la Bible – constamment citée

et analysée –, ce livre est aussi agrémenté de belles reproductions d'œuvres d'art commentées. À destination du grand public, il pourra être lu avec profit par des étudiants en théologie, et même inspirer exégètes et théologiens par la clarté de sa synthèse. Il mériterait d'être traduit en français.

A. LORRAIN

Eric C. MOORE. *Claiming Places: Reading Acts through the Lens of Ancient Colonization* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, II/535). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2020. (16×24,5), XIII-270 p. ISBN 978-3-156985-2. €94.00.

Throughout the Book of Acts, the earliest Christian witness/proclamation, be it to Jews or non-Jews, regularly leads to the establishment of communities of Christ-followers. Paul, the missionary *par excellence*, is portrayed not only as a persuasive speaker and miracle worker, but also as busy founding and nurturing congregations. In this monograph (based on a 2017 doctoral dissertation at Emory University), Eric C. Moore relates certain aspects of the earliest Christian mission as portrayed in Acts to the long tradition and efforts of colonisation in the ancient Mediterranean world. Moore identifies in Luke's account a number of common cultural beliefs concerning the foundation of new communities which might shed fresh light on Paul and his mission in the portrayal of Acts.

Moore starts with a succinct introduction to colonisation as a framework for reading Acts (1-26) and locates his approach in current research on Acts (studies of the genre and of the geography of Acts). He also surveys research on ancient cult/community foundation (studies of colonisation and related accounts, studies of Paul and of Luke-Acts). With regard to his approach to reading Acts, Moore argues that Acts should be understood through the phenomenon of ancient colonisation and representations of it in literary and material forms as a story about community replication. Form a precise point of origin, that is, Jerusalem, the Jesus movement expands to different cities. Luke describes this process of replication in different ways: "Persecution often serves as the impetus for expansion […] Divine manifestations (oracles, visions, the Holy Spirit, angels) combine to authorise, guide, propel, and consolidate expansion" (1). This process of replication involves the spread of the Christian cult and the formation of communities. While Jerusalem is the point of departure, Luke's "character references to the ancestors and prophecies push those origins back further still, connecting the new communities to an ancient salvation-history and its protofounders" (3). In this process, the main non-divine protagonists, that is, Peter and Paul, operate as founders.

In chapter two, Moore describes colonisation as an analytic framework (27-87). He addresses colonisation in the ancient Mediterranean world as a variegated phenomenon, different colonisation motifs (origins, divine sanction/approval, founder figures), various colonisation accounts from the archaic and the classical periods (the relationship between the *metropolis* and the colony, religious sanctions), the Hellenistic period (including Alexander the Great as a founder according to Arrian, Plutarch and Ps.-Callisthenes) and the Roman period (the foundation of Rome according to Livy, Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, whose

accounts serve as case studies). According to Moore, there is ample evidence that a "concern for origins, divine sanction, and the role of founder(s) pervades narratives about colonization in the ancient Mediterranean world. This is the case even though the specific articulation of these preoccupations varies as a function of the historical era and the interests of individual authors". This suggests that "the colonization lens offers an illuminating way to read Acts of the Apostles. Not only does Luke's narrative treat a comparable subject, the replication of a cult community, it utilizes common colonization motifs to do so. Indeed, like colonization accounts, Acts seeks to legitimate the foundation of communities scattered throughout the ancient Mediterranean world" (87).

Chapter three examines "The Origins of the Cult Community in Jerusalem in Acts 1–5" (88-123) Discussion includes the founder(s), origins and divine mandate of the community in Acts 1–2 and the colonising mission within Jerusalem as portrayed in Acts 3–5. The antiquity and religious significance of Jerusalem confers legitimacy on the colonies founded by Christ-believers later in Acts. That this founding of the Christ-cult in Jerusalem happens, in its initial stage, through the Galilean disciples who had come to Jerusalem with Jesus is not sufficiently accounted for. Should Jerusalem rather be seen as their divinely ordained first foundation?

Chapter four describes the church in Syrian Antioch in its double identity (124-167). After sketching the pivotal role of Antioch in Acts and its socio-historical situation, Moore argues that its Christ-believing community should be seen as a colony of the Jerusalem community (origins in the crisis in Jerusalem after the death of Stephen, foundation through cult transfer, constitution as a "mixed" community, oversight through Jerusalem). However, the Antiochene community is also depicted as a mother city of "second-generation" colonies founded through the mission enterprises emanating from there from Acts 13 onwards. Again, there is evidence of divine sanction of these colonising ventures (through the initiative of the Holy Spirit, Acts 13,1-3) and the establishment of community institutions such as leadership and religious institutions.

Chapter five (168-216) interprets the missionary endeavour in Pisidian Antioch as an attempt by the Antiochene founding figures, Paul and Barnabas, to replicate the cult community of Antioch in Pisidian Antioch, considered the "little Rome" of the East. In this way, "the establishment of a colony in this second Antioch anticipates the replication of the Christian community in Rome, the culminating point of Luke's narrative", 217; the foundation of the community in Rome is never mentioned in Acts, the culminating point is Paul's encounter with the leading Jews of the city! After a brief socio-historical and architectural sketch of the city, Moore finds the rhetoric of "second-generation" colonisation in Paul's synagogue speech, which is interpreted as a colonising message for Antioch (Acts 13,23-41). In this speech, Paul's only longer missionary speech in a Jewish context which is to be taken as exemplary and programmatic for this proclamation in this context and also elsewhere, Moore finds a recapitulation of the ancestral prehistory (Acts 13,17-22) and a particular colonising message for Antioch (13,23-41). Elsewhere in the study of Acts, one would simply speak of the proclamation of the Gospel. In this, Moore finds a particular rhetoric of "second generation" colonisation, which seeks to legitimate the replication of the cult community in the wider Mediterranean world. Other students of Acts would observe the parallels with the proclamation of Peter in Jerusalem. The outcome of this ministry is the

foundation of a mixed community. After the conclusions, the volume contains an abridged chart of Greek, Hellenistic and Roman colonies (221-228).

In this analysis, the Christian movement in Acts "resembles a colonising network, whose members are bound to a common identity and a mother community in Jerusalem" (219). The different occurrences of divine sanction emphasise the divine initiative and approval of the events which propels forward the expansion of the Christian cult. Through this particular way of portraying the origins in Jerusalem and the ensuing events in Antioch and elsewhere,

> Acts validates the network of Christian communities via a memorable tale of beginnings, which employs motifs that were ready at hand, reflecting culturally patterned ways of construing community origins. These motifs embroider the foundation "histories" of many of the cities visited by Paul in Acts. Like Philo before him, Luke leverages colonization *topoi* in order to legitimate minority communities embedded in these great cities of the Roman Empire. According to Acts of the Apostles, the earliest Christian communities – no less than their civic hosts – boasted memorable origins, divine sanction, and illustrious founders (220).

It would be interesting to inquire whether the pattern established by Moore for Pisidian Antioch is also discernible for the other places and congregations established by missionaries from Syrian Antioch, that is the churches which Paul and his travel companions founded elsewhere. Does the pattern only work for Pisidian Antioch (if it really does) or is it to be presupposed elsewhere as well? Moore demonstrates that some parts of Acts can be read in this way and perhaps might even have been understood in this way by some of its intended readers. While the pattern presented here works well for the foundation of the community in Antioch in Syria, it is less convincing for Jerusalem (as it stands in the present reading) and even less for Pisidian Antioch. The analysis of Paul's speech in Pisidian Antioch according to this "colonisation framework" appears rather forced to me. The author does not interact with post- or decolonial readings of Acts, as one might have expected. For a similar approach see also James C. Hanges' *Paul, Founder of Churches* (WUNT, 292), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

C. STENSCHKE

Jörg FREY – Jens SCHRÖTER – Martin WALLRAFF (Hgg.). *Paulusmemoria und Paulusexegese: Römische Begegnungen* (Rom und Protestantismus: Schriften des Melanchthon-Zentrums in Rom, 5). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2023. (14,5×22,5), VI-433 S. ISBN 978-3-16-162239-7. €69.00.

Die Beiträge dieses Sammelbandes reflektieren die Verbindungen und Beziehungen von Paulus zu Rom in historischer und wirkungsgeschichtlicher Perspektive. Sie gehen zurück auf ein gemeinsames Kolloquium der Universität Zürich, der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin und der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München in Rom im Jahr 2019. Der Band knüpft an den früheren Sammelband zu literarischen und archäologischen Beziehungen zwischen Petrus und Rom an (J. Frey, M. Wallraff, Hrsg., *Petrusliteratur und Petrusarchäologie: Römische Begegnungen*, RuP 4; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020). Zur Ausrichtung schreiben die Herausgeber:

> Mehr als für andere christliche Identitätsmarker gilt bei Paulus: Ein angemessenes Verständnis ist nur möglich, wenn die biblischen Texte und ihre Wirkungsgeschichte, die historische Person und ihre Relevanz für die Entwicklung des Christentums in ihrer Wechselwirkung und Verschränkung gesehen werden. Die Verbindung „Paulus und Rom" ist in diesem Geflecht vielleicht nicht die historisch wichtigste, aber eine wirkungsgeschichtlich und intellektuell besonders reizvolle (9).

Nach der knappen Einführung der Herausgeber, „Römische Begegnungen mit Paulus im Spiegel von historischer Memoria und biblischer Exegese" (1-9; Überblick über die literarischen und archäologischen Quellen sowie historische Entwicklung) beginnt der Band mit Markus Öhlers Beitrag „Römisches im Römerbrief? Auf der Suche nach den Adressaten und Adressatinnen" (11-40; neuere Forschungsansätze im Überblick, die Christusgläubigen in Rom und ihre Erkennbarkeit, Gemeindestrukturen und soziale Stellung, die Starken und die Schwachen aus Röm 14f; laut Ö. ist nichts an der Darstellung der pln. Theologie im Röm typisch für die Stadt Rom). Michael Wolter diskutiert „The Reason for Romans" (41-62; die These W. Wiefels und ihre Rezeption, die besonderen Merkmale des Röm im *Corpus Paulinum* als Schlüssel zu dessen Proprium, die zweifache Ausrichtung des Briefs auf die nichtjüdischen Christusgläubigen in Rom und das nicht-christliche Judentum, Anlass und Zweck des Röm als literarisches Unterfangen, um das Vertrauen der stadtröm. Christusgläubigen zu gewinnen, der Konflikt zwischen den Starken und den Schwachen; vgl. die Einleitung zu Wolters EKK Kommentar zum Röm).

Stefan Krauter vergleicht „Vater Abraham und *pater Aeneas*: Eine Auseinandersetzung mit einem neuen Interpretationsvorschlag zu Röm 4" (63-69; Prüfung der imperiumskritischen These von N. Elliott, 2008; Röm 4 als Auseinandersetzung mit röm., genauer mit augustäischen Vorstellungen von Aeneas als mythischem Vorvater Roms; Ähnlichkeiten und charakteristische Unterschiede zwischen Abraham und Vergils *pater Aeneas*; als Gegenmodell zu Aeneas dient Abraham allerdings nicht). Jens Schröter schreibt zu „Rom in der Apostelgeschichte" (97-127; Rom und die röm. Christen in der Frühzeit des Christentums, der lange Weg des Paulus nach Rom, Bedeutung der Schlussszene der Apg, die Bedeutung Roms in der Apg; „Die programmatische Schlussszene zeigt […], dass Lukas das Kommen des Paulus nach Rom als Grundlage dafür nimmt, der Stadt eine besondere Rolle in der Geschichte des Christentums zuzuweisen", 125).

Jan Rüggemeier beleuchtet „Die römische Gefangenschaft des Paulus: Das evozierte Raumbild in Apg 28,11-31 aus erzählwissenschaftlicher und lokalgeschichtlicher Perspektive" (129-164; nach Skizze des Forschungsstands und Methodenreflexion fragt R., wie sich das von Lukas evozierte Raumbild – die angemietete Wohnung des Paulus – von der Gefangenschaft des Paulus in die urbanen Wohnverhältnisse der röm. Metropole einzeichnen lässt sowie nach der Zusammensetzung der stadtröm. Gemeinden; u.a. „Welche sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Implikationen ergeben sich aus einer entsprechenden Unterbringung des Paulus für die ‚Christen' in Rom? Wer hätte für die Miete und Verpflegung des Paulus potentiell aufkommen können?", 133, für Letzteres dürfte Lukas ein kollaboratives Zusammenwirken der röm. und italischen Gemeinden voraussetzen).

Clarissa Paul widmet sich „Paulus als Heiler in der neutestamentlichen Apostelgeschichte und in der Apostelgeschichte Raffaels" (165-204; Analyse der bibl.

Charakterisierung und des achten Teppichs der Tapisserie-Serie Raffaels für die Sixtinische Kapelle, der der Szene in Apg 14,8-13 gewidmet ist; die Wahl dieser Heilung ist treffend, um Paulus im Bildprogramm der Sixtinischen Kapelle in seiner Rolle als Heiler zu porträtieren, 204). Luc Bulundwe schreibt zu „Rome as ‚*lieu de memoire*' in 2 Timothy" (205-233; verstanden als Abschiedsrede etabliert der 2Tim Rom als Ort der Erinnerung für alle, die Paulus treu und ergeben folgen wollen; die Stadt wird zum Ort der Erfüllung der pln. Mission und Paulus ein Vorbild für das entstehende Christentum).

Die übrigen Beiträge des anregenden Bandes untersuchen verschiedene literarische und archäologische Aspekte und Beispiele aus der nachneutestamentlichen Rezeptionsgeschichte des Nexus zwischen Paulus und Rom: Michael R. Jost, „Spuren des Apostels Paulus im 1. Clemensbrief: Römische Reminiszenzen zwischen lebendiger Tradition und literarischer Rezeption" (235-254); Thomas J. Kraus, „‚Heimsuchung des Nero' – das Martyrium des Paulus und die Akten des Petrus" (255-287); Josef Lössl, „Paulus in der Theologie des zweiten Jahrhunderts: Das Beispiel von Tatians *Rede an die Griechen*" (289-314); Elisa Victoria Blum, „Paulus und Rom im 3. Jahrhundert: Eine Spurensuche in den Briefen nach Karthago" (315-342); Martin Wallraff, „Eucharistie und Memoria: Zur Raumgestalt und liturgischen Verwendung der spätantiken Paulusbasilika in Rom" (343-360); Friederike Bäumer, „Paulus zwischen Rom und Konstantinopel: Eine Untersuchung des Schreibens von Papst Gregor I. an Kaiserin Constantina (ep.4,30) über die Reliquie des Apostelfürsten" (361-384) und Pierre Sfendules, „Als Paulus' Grab brannte: Preußens Beitrag zum Wiederaufbau der Paulsbasilika in Rom" (385-410).

C. Stenschke

Frantisek Ábel (ed.). *Receptions of Paul during the First Two Centuries: Exploration of the Jewish Matrix of Early Christianity*. Lanham, MD – Boulder, CO – New York – London, Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2023. (16×23,5), ix-505 p. ISBN 978-1-9787-1581-3. £112.00.

This collection of essays had its origin in a conference held at the Protestant Lutheran Faculty of Theology of the *Comenius University* in Bratislava, Slovakia (see https://fevth.uniba.sk/en/departments/department-of-new-testament) in September 2022. Previous conferences in Bratislava focused on *The Message of Paul the Apostle within Second Temple Judaism* (2020) and *Israel and the Nations: Paul's Gospel in the Context of Jewish Expectation* (2021). The current volume focuses on Paul in his historical context and the reception of Paul's Jewish heritage in the first two centuries. Ábel notes:

> Included are the specifics of contemporary Jewish phenomena, particularly within the successive generations of Jesus-followers during the first two centuries CE – both inside and outside the corpus of New Testament writings. When speaking of the historical context, one has to take into consideration both the aftermath of the Jewish War and its impact on the development of the Jesus movement and the early Christian-Jewish relations in the period that immediately followed. We are sure that the study

> of the impact of Paul's Jewish legacy on the early Jewish-Christian relations – especially at a time when interest in reception history has increased significantly – will underpin the relevancy and importance of this research project (1).

The essays indicate that after the first Jewish war (66-73 CE) the reception of the authentic Paul was transformed more and more into the tradition *about* Paul. This change of perspective was based on and established by the second and third generations of non-Jewish Jesus-believers who understood Paul as a convert from "Judaism" to what was to become "Christianity" (2).

Part One addresses important aspects of research on Paul in his historical context. It contains the following five essays: James H. Charlesworth, "Correcting Some Misperceptions About Paul" (11-33); Michael Bachmann, "Observations on the Reception of the Pauline Expression 'Works of the Law'" (35-73); J. Brian Tucker, "The Perception of Paul's Social Influence in the Corinthian Correspondence" (75-96); Paul B. Duff, "'Jezebel', Paul, and the Problem of Mixed Marriage: A Contested Reception of 1 Corinthians at the End of the First Century?" (97-122; that is, in the Book of Revelation) and Joshua D. Garroway, "The Triumph of Paul in Portraits of Peter" (123-135; Peter in Mark, Luke and 1 Peter, all three writings portray Peter in ways that demonstrate the ultimate triumph of Paul).

Part Two is devoted to the early reception of Paul in the deutero-Pauline Letters. Stefan Krauter writes on "The Pastoral Epistles and the Jewish Paul" (139-156). Kathy Ehrensperger examines "The Role of Women in Teaching and Learning: Pauline Trajectories in Acts and in the Pastorals?" (157-179). Karl Olav Sandnes addresses the "Colossian 'Philosophy' and Torah: Paul in a New Context (Col 2:6-23)" (181-201, "As Pauline interpretation, the epistle has digested important aspects of Paul's theology in letters whose authenticity is not disputed. […] the negative view of the law and its role as being both false and an enemy defeated would likely have raised Paul's objections", 195). Kenneth Atkinson writes in "The 'Man of Lawlessness' as an Eschatological Enemy in 2 Thessalonians and Its Second Temple Period Jewish Background" (203-221). Neil Elliott interprets "Ephesians as the Quintessence of Pauline Deracination" (223-249).

Part Three covers aspects of the early reception of Paul in the Book of Acts. It contains five studies, namely, Jiří Lukeš, "From Pharisee to Ascetic: The Shift of the Image of the Apostle Paul in the Literature of the Genre of Acts" (253-277; concluding that according to Acts, Paul's Judaism, "is a constant element that, despite the adversity of the authorities and numerous disputes with members of his nation in various localities, has not weakened and is central to his identity", 269); Ruben A. Bühner, "Paul's Torah Observance according to Acts in Light of Recent Reconfigurations of Paul's Jewishness" (279-295, Bühner argues that in the Lukan portrayal, Paul can be labelled as zealous for the law; at the same time, "Paul should be understood as a representative of a moderate form of diaspora Judaism. That is, as a Jew who willingly integrates himself in many ways into the non-Jewish majority society and has no qualms with having close contact with non-Jews, including various forms of table fellowship. Only under this specific condition can it be said, that the Paul of Acts is Torah observant", 288); István M. Ledán, "The Image of Paul in Acts's Missionary Speeches" (297-317), "In the speeches of Acts, the reader is easily able to recognize the Paul he/she knows from his authentic letters", 312); Valéria Terézia Dančiaková, "Paul in Acts

16:18-21 in the Context of Roman Law" (319-335) and Gabriele Boccaccini, "Justification and Salvation in Paul and Acts: A Reading 'Within Second Temple Judaism'" (337-353; arguing that "The Paul of Acts might be distant from the Paul of Christian theology, but he is – surprisingly? – very close to the historical Paul when his experience and theology are read 'within Judaism'", 350).

Part Four consist of three studies of other receptions of Paul. Eric Noffke asks: "How Pauline Is the Gospel of John?" (357-378); Pavel Paluchnik interprets "The Epistle to the Hebrews as a Consoling Appeal to Ostracized Jewish Christ-followers: Reception of Jewish Paul in Hebrews" (379-418). Frantisek Abel addresses "Ignatius's Perception of Paul and Jewishness in the Antiochian Context: Another Piece of the Mosaic" (419-454).

Part Five offers a critical evaluation of different receptions of Paul during the first two centuries from a second temple Judaism research perspective. Hans Förster contributes "Correcting Some Misperceptions About New Testament Translation: A Response to a Presupposition in James H. Charlesworth's 'Correcting Some Misperceptions about Paul'" (457-468, a response to the first essay in the volume, pp. 11-33 and offering guidance on how to deal with seemingly contradictory statements within Pauline letters). In closing, Jewish philosopher of religion Daniel Boyarin offers some "Perspectives on Perspectives", which consists of an at times rather critical evaluation of most of the presented contributions (469-480, including a plea to no longer use the term Judaism with reference to the first century CE).

With regard to both the historical context and the reception of Paul's particularly Jewish heritage, the essays of this volume offer a fresh perspective and are likely to shape the debate on the recent *Paul within Judaism* debate.

C. STENSCHKE

Edmondo F. LUPIERI – Louis PAINCHAUD (eds.). *"Who Is Sitting on Which Beast?": Interpretative Issues in the Book of Revelation. Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Loyola University, Chicago, March 30-31, 2017* (Judaïsme ancien et origines du christianisme, 29). Turnhout, Brepols, 2024. (15,5×23,5), 336 p. ISBN 978-2-503-60258-5. €75.00.

This volume revolves around the women, the beasts, and the cities of the book of Revelation. The women, of course, are Jezebel of Thyatira (who "calls herself a prophetess and is not" – Rev 2,20-21), the woman who appears in heaven giving birth to a son (12,1-18), the harlot who rides a beast into the desert (identified as the great Babylon – 17,1-6), and the bride of the Lamb (that is, the New Jerusalem – chs. 21–22). Then there are the principal cities, figurative and literal: Babylon (chs. 17–18), Jerusalem (passim) , and the New Jerusalem (chs. 21–22). Finally, the contributors focus on the beasts, from chs. 12-13: the dragon who pursues the woman, the beast from the sea (who receives authority from the dragon), and the beast from the land (the false prophet). As the title suggests, the volume inspects these images or elements and the relationships between them. It especially tries to resolve the problems of interpretation surrounding these images, and to do so "in

the Jewish context of its composition and in the light of the scriptures" (10). It does so largely on a historical critical and, toward the end, a reception critical basis. The structure of the book is straightforward: the first part – a single chapter from Luca Arcari – provides context, the second focuses on the women and the cities, the third covers the dragon and the beasts, and the final part consists of two chapters looking at the reception of the ideas. This book can be fruitfully reviewed from a number of perspectives; in this review, a principally theological angle is taken.

One of the primary obligations on every reader of every book is to observe, as best as they are able, its communication objective: What does the writer mean to convey? What does the author wish people to learn or to do as a consequence of having read it? This is no less true with apocalypses. As Adela Yarbro Collins has observed (here in Louis Painchaud's paraphrase), "the function of apocalypses is always to convince their recipients to adopt a particular course of action" (259). There are several useful ways of getting at this "core meaning" in every text. As Scott Brevard notes in his contribution, again quoting Collins, "[t]he dominant trend in contemporary scholarship on Revelation has been to approach the text in a historical-critical manner in an attempt 'to specify the referents of apocalyptic imagery in as unambiguous a manner as possible' within their 'hypothesized original context'" (269).

This is the approach adopted by most of the authors in this book. According to Luca Arcari, the volume's first contributor, "[…] we [should] contextualize John's Revelation among the different groups and factions of first century Judaism(s) as they emerge in the stereotyped discourse carried out in the first part of John's work, at the same time placing it in the wider contexts of the Roman imperial cities as they emerge outside the literary construction of our text" (46). In short, he argues that John is attacking what he perceives of as deviant ways of being Jewish – notably Christians rejecting important aspects of Jewish ritual practice – and doing so against his particular background and the local context of an urbanized Patmos.

Stéphanie Audet, in her excellent and finely argued paper, likewise makes a strong case that Revelation must be read against the backdrop of the Jews' exodus from Egypt as told in the book of Exodus. She concludes that the women (plural) in Revelation in fact represent a woman (singular) in Revelation: [Christian] Israel in her various stages of religious history. Edmondo Lupieri arrives at a similar conclusion: that "there is only one woman in Revelation, who appears under different aspects, marking the different points of her trajectory in the general history of salvation". That is to say, Babylon represents Jerusalem, which itself represents the Jewish priesthood that was eating pagan idol sacrifices. Robert Di Vito writes a fascinating and well-reasoned revisionist study of ritual prostitution in Israel and the Ancient Near East, concluding that the woman riding the beast in Revelation must have a Jewish identification. Likewise Iain Provan contends that "what Revelation is really about [is] the ongoing, long-fought battle, spanning the length of the Christian Bible, between God (on the one side) and those political and religious powers (on the other) that oppose even while sometimes appearing to serve God". "What Revelation is fundamentally about", he continues, "is the resolution of this conflict in the coming of the kingdom of God and of the New Jerusalem – to which old 'Babylon' is simply a foil" (129). Daniele Tripaldi continues in the same vein, as do the remainder of the authors in parts 1-3.

I review these entries from the book's first two sections to underscore the generally historical-critical approach of the book's contributors and the value that this approach brings to us when we seek to understand what John would have his readers understand. After all, as Rev. 1:3 conveys, blessed are those who read the words of the prophecy, those who hear it, and those who take it to heart.

As powerful as the historical-critical hermeneutic can be, it has certain shortcomings. As Brevard underscores in this volume following a long line of scholars, the original context may in fact be inaccessible to us, or heavily and legitimately contested. The present volume, for example, challenges the validity of one putative historical context – the Greco-Roman mythological or historical context – proposing instead to replace it with a Jewish prophetic context and the Hebrew Bible more broadly. Virtually all of the authors look mainly to Hebrew, or at least Jewish, sources of inspiration and Jewish identity markers. This is made plain in the *avant-propos* in the volume's first pages, but also given voice in the final paragraph of Louis Painchaud's second of two contributions: "To understand the Apocalypse of John, we must turn our eyes away from Rome and its emperors and, like John in the dark years following the fall of the holy city, turn them to Jerusalem prostituted by her rebellious leaders, and listen to the voice of the prophets that had foretold its ruin and its salvation" (261). Even so, much scholarship compellingly contends the opposite. The work of Steven J. Friesen comes to mind, and more recently (and with a different nuance) that of Luc Bulundwe. This division within the academic community highlights the inevitability that an impasse will be reached in reading any given text when the proponents of various historical milieux contend over which context will most unambiguously reveal the text's "true" or "original" meaning.

So what is a reader to do? What must we do when we are seeking whatever blessing flows from accurately understanding the words of the prophecy and taking them to heart? A second approach to answering this question is proposed in Part Four of the book. Brevard notes in his contribution that texts "aren't limited to their original contexts" but take on fresh vitality as they enter new contexts. It is only thus that old texts continue to speak with any relevance in new times. Consequently, he undertakes a revealing study of how the meaning of Babylon the Great was understood throughout the patristic period, looking specifically at Irenaeus, Tertullian, Victorinus, Tyconius, Oecumenius, and Andrew of Cappadocian Caesarea. Megan Wines's study of William Blake's nineteenth-century reception of the women figures of Revelation takes a similar approach – a study all the more interesting because Blake anticipates one of the key observations in this volume: namely, that the identity of the woman of Revelation is one, not many.

Writing as someone who has expended considerable effort employing various critical approaches, especially reception criticism, I am sympathetic to this hermeneutic. Even so, I often feel that the reception critical approach results in a very thin product, one that tends, like historical critical approaches, to simply stick to "just the facts" and lead merely to historically situated interpretations – not the sort of readings that one can, as John of Patmos wishes us to, "take to heart". In all these critical approaches, the vitality, the power, the fire, of the text before us seems somehow quenched. The power that continues to draw us to Revelation (and indeed other ancient texts) is diminished the moment we start to nail down, in very narrow and concrete ways, "what they mean". The living message

somehow becomes dead letter, even when the dead letter is articulate, academically rigorous, and intellectually persuasive.

This returns us to Iain Provan's contribution, which offers a promising path forward for the reader of Revelation who is seeking to let it still speak today in a way that would be identifiable to the original author. Provan argues that in reading Revelation, it is most important to keep "the generalities, rather than the particularities" foremost in mind (129). Instead of focusing on this detail or that, instead of losing sight of the forest as we focus on the trees, we would benefit from remaining open to the general message that the author would have his audience take away, even if its details appear hazy to us nearly 2000 years later. While Provan ultimately also assumes a Jewish context for the Apocalypse – and he and everyone else in this volume may be right about that – I'd like to take his approach and apply it in another direction. And in so doing, rescue the text from becoming what we scholars may turn into a critically enclosed museum piece, the meaning of which is locked away from the rest of the world by academics like us.

The "generalities", as Provan calls them have at least as much to do with the author's and original recipients' interior spiritual condition as they do to their external conditions and historical contexts. Take the forcefully repeated entreaties for personal repentance issued throughout chapters 2 and 3. Take the virtuous life encouraged and extolled throughout the text, even when such a life will result in death. Take the mystical participation in God and union with God suggested at key moments in the text, from the rewards to the overcomers in the letters to the seven churches, to the divinization of the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem as they rejoice in the vision of God. These main, "general" messages of Revelation – internal and external purity, separation from sin and triumph over the world and its corruption, a proper relation with other faithful believers, a determination to prevail against the devil and his allies, the attainment of final deiformity – are transparent to anyone who reads the book. These points are obvious and true to all readers, regardless of the book's and its readers' original or subsequent historical, political, social, or religious contexts.

These are the "generalities" that lie at the heart of Revelation's message. And these are the messages about which we scholars, wielding our critical tools and prone to disciplinary myopia, must be particularly careful not to set aside. Focusing on details to the exclusion of attaining a general understanding of a situation is a danger that we as academics are particularly prone to. In a well-founded, honest, and legitimate attempt to understand the contexts and details of Revelation's messages, we can grow unable to get a general understanding of the situation that John and his first readers would have been particularly sensitive to, and which the text makes manifestly clear even on a superficial reading.

One wonders what John and his early audience would think after reading this volume – or indeed anyone who would have considered themselves sympathetic to his message. As fascinating, thought-provoking, and truly illuminating as this book can be at times – and in this it fulfills its own implicit objective of being a critical study – I'm constantly reminded that this book focuses so completely on the macro and political context that it nearly fully de-centers the profound and straightforward interiority, spirituality, and indeed theology as such that lies at Revelation's beating heart. This in itself does not undermine the book's utility, which remains great. I mean only to use this as an opportunity to remind us, not just as textual scholars, but as theologians, to remember what has made Revelation so powerful and durable from antiquity until today.

I conclude with a reflection from an interview with the New Testament scholar Joël Delobel, professor emeritus at KU Leuven ("A Conversation with Professor Emeritus Joël Delobel: On Biblical Studies and the Nature of Theology", https://theo.kuleuven.be/apps/press/theologyresearchnews/2020/06/29/a-conversation-with-professor-emeritus-joel-delobel-louvain-biblical-studies-and-theology; accessed 8 Oct., 2024). One of his principal complaints about biblical textual criticism was that it was, above all, a "technical approach", a "very detailed study of the vocabulary of the biblical authors" but one that "did not sufficiently take into account the *theological* content of the gospels". "This literary perspective", he continued, "is important, but one that I think should not be used to displace the theological importance of the gospels". In other words, as crucial and as indispensable as criticism is, criticism – whether textual, historical, literary, reception, or any other – takes us only so far. As Delobel said near the end of the interview, "[i]t's in the interpretation where theology begins". In short, literary criticism corrects and completes textual criticism, and literary criticism, or indeed any sort of criticism, stands to be corrected and completed by an informed theology. Delobel, of course, maintained the need for cross-fertilization between critical study and theology. Both are indispensable, and therefore theology cannot be properly left out of the reading project. The point of scripture, as interpreted throughout the ages, is to inform the struggle toward knowledge of God, participation in God, and union with God both individually and on a social dimension. The rest – the critical engagement, as vital as that is – is but preparation work. This book falls into the category of preparation. But, as with delicious food, stopping with preparation alone is to miss the point and to rob ourselves of beautiful, true, and sublime experiences of the realities that lie glowing within the text.

And so, the book may be wholeheartedly recommended inasmuch as it prepares the scholar, the exegete, and the student to get to the experiences that Revelation's author sought to elicit. In the final verses of Revelation, John describes the sole activity of those who have attained to the New Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb: καὶ ὄψονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ – "they shall see His face". This, I submit is the proper aim of Revelation, of theology as a whole, and of all the critical exercises, this volume included, that lead us to it.

N. Betz

Kurt Erlemann. *Alte Kirche: Entwicklungen – Kontexte – Vermittlung* (UTB, 6194). Tübingen, Narr Francke Attempto Verlag, 2023. (15×21,5), 442 p. ISBN 978-3-8252-6194-8. €35.00.

In this book Kurt Erlemann (Wuppertal) offers a survey of the history and theology of the church as it took shape during the first five centuries of its existence. Clarity and user friendliness are the author's first goals. The book is first and foremost a didactical work for Bachelors- and Masters-level students but may also prove useful for more advanced users. It is written in a very accessible style with tables, maps, graphs and diagrams. Throughout the book QR-codes lead the user to additional material. An extensive appendix at the end of the book (381-442) offers a list of abbreviations, a bibliography, a glossary, a list of councils and synods and several indices (thematic, keyword, scriptural).

The book consists of an introductory first chapter, followed by five chapters that each cover one century. Each chapter begins with a chronological table that presents major political events, events in the early church and varia (“Sonstiges”). This table offers a gateway to the century that will be discussed. For each chapter/century Erlemann follows the same structure: (1) historical context (Roman Empire, Judaism, rise of Christianity); (2) the broad religious context (e.g. imperial cult, pagan cults, philosophy, Gnosticism); (3) intertwining (“Verflechtungen”): how did emerging Christianity interact with that context?; (4) developments within the (organisation of) the church); (5) theological topics; (6) major writings; (7) a brief presentation of some key figures. Each chapter has for each section the same subdivisions. This results in a clear but somewhat artificial, atomised structure with brief subsections of subsections yet it is useful for following any theme through all chapters: in each chapter section 4.6 deals with gender, 5.2 with trinitarian theology and 6.3 with texts of marginalised groups.

This is a concise, classic, survey of the history and theology of the early church in its context. Competently conceived and clearly written, it will serve students who want to acquaint themselves quickly with the subject.

J. LEEMANS

Andrew HOFER. *The Power of Patristic Preaching: The Word in Our Flesh*. Foreword by Paul M. BLOWERS (Patristic Theology). Washington, DC, The Catholic University of America Press, 2023. (15×23), 389 p. ISBN 978-0-8132-3653-7. $34.95.

Described as a successful “combination of close historical-critical scholarship and subtle hagiography” in P.M. Blowers’ foreword (xxii), A. Hofer’s new monograph provides a compelling overview of patristic preaching of the Word, through the lens of seven early Christian authors. These preachers with different linguistic, exegetical, and cultural backgrounds – three writing in Greek, three in Latin, and one in Syriac – offer ample material for a manageable yet rich exploration of late ancient homiletic activity.

Intended primarily for those involved in preaching and evangelisation, the book also seeks to appeal to students of Early Christianity (38). Its overarching principle is that “in patristic preaching, we find the Word in our flesh” (3, 311). Through their particular life experiences and homiletic practices, Hofer shows how each of the homilists displays a transformation in his own life and envisions a similar transformation in that of his audience. Their preaching is considered through three touchstones – incarnation, deification, and proclamation (14, 311). Both through their homilies and their own exemplary lifestyle, patristic preachers convey the Word in their own flesh (3). Hofer contextualises patristic preaching or “proclamation” within the context of rhetoric and emphasises the importance of biblical role models of proclamation for these ancient homilists.

Each chapter opens with a brief biblical reflection from a prominent Christian leader and preacher, connecting contemporary concerns and practices with those of late antiquity, and thereby demonstrating the relevance of these early Christian authors for our own time. Chapter by chapter, the seven are treated with special consideration of one specific virtue. Hofer also offers a biographical overview of each preacher, detailing how their particular homiletic activity was shaped by their

own experiences and the needs of their congregations. The work abounds with carefully selected quotations of patristic and biblical material, at times forming a concatenation of the sources that allows the reader to experience *the power of patristic preaching* firsthand.

In *chapter 1*, Hofer examines the virtue of holiness as addressed in Origen's preaching, particularly in his *Homilies on Leviticus* (CPG 1416) and his *Homilies on the Psalms* (CPG 1428). A previous version of the chapter was published as *Origen on the Ministry of God's Word in the "Homilies on Leviticus"*, in *Nova et Vetera* 7/1 (2009) 153-174. *Chapter 2* focuses on Ephrem the Syrian and emphasises the virtue of humility in his *Commentary on Genesis* and the *Homily on Our Lord*. An earlier version of this chapter was published as *The Humble Speech of the Lord: Revelation and Conversion according to St. Ephrem*, in *Pro Ecclesia* 17/2 (2008) 224-242.

In *chapter 3*, the preaching of Gregory of Nazianzus, specifically in *Orations* 2 and 38-40 (CPG 3010), is explored from the perspective of purification and faith. The chapter is reminiscent of Hofer's monograph *Christ in the Life and Teaching of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Oxford Early Christian Studies), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013. Several topics are expanded upon with a specific interest in the homiletic activity of the Cappadocian. In *chapter 4*, Hofer studies the virtue of hope of salvation in John Chrysostom's oeuvre. Special attention is given to the homilist's programmatic statements in *On the Priesthood* (CPG 4316) and to his actual preaching in the *Homilies on 1 Corinthians* (CPG 4428).

Chapter 5 discusses the virtue of love in Augustine of Hippo's *On Christian Teaching* (CPL 263) and in his *Homilies on John* (CPL 278). In *chapter 6*, the *Sermons* (CPL 1657) of Leo the Great are considered through the lens of charity and love of the poor. Against earlier studies by B. Ramsey (*Almsgiving in the Latin Church: The Late Fourth and Early Fifth Centuries*, in *Theological Studies* 43 [1982] 226-259) and especially B. Neil (*e.g.*, *Models of Gift Giving in the Preaching of Leo the Great*, in *JECS* 18 [2010] 225-259), Hofer argues that Leo's preaching is not derogatory of the poor, nor does it dehumanise them for the sake of the salvation of the rich through charity. Rather, it is argued, the poor have Christ present in them and their shared humanity is recognised (270-271). In *chapter 7*, the acceptance of one's own weakness is explored through Gregory the Great's works, especially his *Pastoral Rule* (CPL 1712) and *Homilies on Ezekiel* (CPL 1710).

Overall, the book is well-informed and assiduously engages with the patristic sources, making it an excellent source for inspiration and stimulation for modern preachers and people interested in early Christian preaching.

M. CUIJPERS

Samuel FERNÁNDEZ (ed.). *Fontes Nicaenae Synodi: The Contemporary Sources for the Study of the Council of Nicaea (304-337)* (Contexts of Ancient and Medieval Anthropology, 10). Paderborn, Brill Schöningh, 2024. (16×24), XXXVI-302 p. ISBN 978-3-506-79640-0 (hb) €88.17.

The Council of Nicaea (325), the first ecumenical council, is a landmark in the history of the Early Church. In specialised scholarship and general surveys on the

history of church councils, canon law or the history of the church and theology Nicaea 325 is unfailingly given its due. Many publications focus exclusively on Nicaea. One thinks of Colm Luibheid's synthesis for a wide readership (*The Council of Nicaea*, Galway, Officina Typographica, 1982, VI-146 p.), Henryk Pietras's book (*Council of Nicaea (325): Religious and Political Context, Documents, Commentaries*, Rome, Gregorian Biblical Press, 2016) and the multi-authored *Cambridge Companion to the Council of Nicaea* (ed. Young Richard Kim, 2020). A recent monograph shows how the reception of Nicaea was not only influential in the mid-fourth century but also afterwards (M. Smith, *The Idea of Nicaea in the Early Church Councils AD 431-451* [Oxford Early Christian Studies], Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018). Add to this review of research the countless journal articles and book chapters dealing with one or another aspect of the Council and it is almost inconceivable that to date we still do not have a solid, comprehensive scholarly monograph about it. Samuel Fernández (Professor of Theology at the Pontifica Universidad Catolica de Chile) set out to fill this lacuna and as first fruits and foundation for his monograph, he published the book reviewed here: the *Fontes Nicaenae Synodi* (FNS).

The goal of the book is "to provide as complete a collection as possible of documents contemporary to the events concerning Nicaea" (xvii). The general introduction (xvi-xxvi) unpacks what is included and on what grounds. Fernandez follows two basic rules. First, he focuses on the Council of Nicaea as an event that had many issues on its agenda. Nicaea was much more than an important stage in the history of the church and theology, known in shorthand as "the Arian crisis". This non-reductionist approach accounts for the broad chronological span adopted: between 304 (the beginning of the events leading to the Melitian schism in the Alexandrian and Egyptian church) and 337 (Constantine's death, which marked the end of the earliest phase of the reception of Nicaea). Second, he looks for the most reliable information available, which he finds in the documents. Some of these have been directly transmitted (e.g. papyrus letters or collections of canons) but most came down because they were quoted within a polemical framework (by authors such as Eusebius, Athanasius, Hilary and others). Fernandez frees these documents from their framework to study them on their own terms. Once "decontextualised", these documents that are contemporary to the events they describe provide (paradoxically enough) trustworthy evidence precisely because of the polemical context in which they functioned: because of the ongoing discussions one could not afford to misrepresent or misquote them. "In short, *Fontes Nicaenae Synodi* attempts to bring together all the documents referring to the topic dealt with by the Council of Nicaea that were written between 304 and 337 and are preserved in other works, with the aforementioned exceptions [JL: excluded are the works of Marcellus of Ancyra, Asterius of Cappadocia, Eustathius of Antioch and the list of signatories]" (xxi). The result is a collection of 80 documents that are presented in chronological order. Few documents can be dated with precision and very few contain a precise date but the combination of documents that can be more or less securely dated by applying the principles of relative chronology leads to a trustworthy result (argued in detail on pp. xxiii-xxxiii). The book offers for all 80 documents the original text and a translation with explanatory notes.

This is a model of a sourcebook by a leading scholar in the field. The basic options chosen are sound, laid out with clarity and rigorously applied. For each text many explanatory footnotes are provided as well as references to the place(s) and editions where the documents have been included. When the same document has been transmitted by different sources and within different narratives all these sources are indicated and, if applicable, the different versions of the same document are given. At the end a rich bibliography is included. This excellently curated collection of documents will be an indispensable source for all further research on the Council of Nicaea and the issues discussed there. The methodological reflections behind it and the broad, non-reductionist view of its subject are a commendable example to be followed by anybody aspiring to make the definitive sourcebook on any given topic in the history of Christianity.

J. LEEMANS

Grégoire de Nysse, Homélies sur le Cantique des cantiques. II *(Homélies VI-X)*. Texte grec de H. Langerbeck (GNO VI). Traduction par Mariette CANÉVET. Introduction et notes par Mariette CANÉVET et Françoise VINEL (Sources Chrétiennes, 644). Paris, Cerf, 2024. (19,5×12,5), 311 p. ISBN 978-2-204-15753-7. €49.00.

The Homilies on the Song of Songs are usually considered one of Gregory of Nyssa's late, mature, spiritual writings. In fifteen homilies he covers the Song of Songs up to 6,9. The biblical book is read allegorically as a description of the process the human soul goes through to attain union with God. The spiritual exegesis of Song of Songs is the common thread through the Homilies but along the way other theological issues are foregrounded: ecclesiology, Christology, soteriology, and theological anthropology. Mariette Canévet and Marie Anne Vannier, two leading scholars on these texts, are in the process of publishing them in Sources Chrétiennes in three volumes, each comprising 5 homilies. In 2021 the first five were published (SC, 613), this volume covers V-X and the third and last one will complete the work. Besides a brief general introduction and some longer explanatory notes at the end, the book offers a reprint of H. Langerbeck's GNO edition of 1960 with a French translation and ample notes to the text. The scriptural apparatus of the GNO edition is by and large reproduced while the text-critical apparatus with *variae lectiones* is not. It is wise to keep using the GNO edition alongside others (this one in SC but also the English one by R. Norris (SBL.WGRW) or the German one by F. Dünzl (Fontes Christiani). In these three editions the authors and translators have included much of their own research, moving beyond what Langerbeck has to offer. Conversely, Langerbeck tends to be very thorough in indicating possible influences on Gregory in his *apparatus fontium*. These references are at times vague and far-fetched, surprisingly illuminating in other instances. In sum, this second instalment of the SC edition of Gegory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* is a valuable addition to Nyssen scholarship and is a must-have for any serious student of this foundational work.

J. LEEMANS

Anthony Dupont – Raul Villegas Marin – Giulio Malavasi – Mattia Cosimo Chiriatti (eds.). Sancti Viri, Ut Audio*: Theologies, Rhetorics, and Receptions of the Pelagian Controversy Reappraised* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 336). Leuven – Paris – Bristol, CT, Peeters, 2023. (16×24), x-385 p. ISBN 978-90-429-5186-0. €78.00.

Sancti uiri, ut audio is an edited volume on Pelagianism. Its editors and contributors are experts in this area of research, with most having published groundbreaking studies on Augustine and the Pelagian controversies. The collected volume has its roots in a conference on Pelagianism that took place in Barcelona in 2021 ("The Pelagian Controversy and Its Aftermath. From Ancient Heresiology to Modern Scholarship"). The volume is devised as an edited volume and not as a volume of conference proceedings. This fact is reflected in its list of contributors, which includes scholars who did not present papers at the earlier conference. Perhaps most notable among these authors is Otto Wermelinger, an authority on the study of Pelagianism ever since the publication of his seminal *Rom und Pelagius* (1975). Likewise, this book is not a "handbook of" or "companion to" Pelagianism. In fact, several of the contributors and editors are currently collaborating on *The Oxford Handbook of the Pelagian Controversy*, scheduled for publication in 2025. The volume *Sancti uiri* thus has a different scope, and that is to provide a broad array of contributions that reflect the diverse research interests and expertise of its contributors.

The chapter by Wermelinger is the first of the volume, and sets the tone for what follows. Wermelinger summarises the state of research on Pelagianism, points to promising new ventures and provides an insightful overview of "Pelagian" writings, with mention of relevant studies and the best critical editions available (15-21). The remainder of the volume is divided into thematic sections. The first treats theological matters at stake in the controversy (Dupont, Yates, Evans, Lamberigts). The second section deals with rhetoric (Toczko, Janssen, Ribreau, Nisula) and the polemical/historical circumstances of the Pelagian controversies (Chronister, Torres, Escribano Paño). The third and final section contains contributions on the reception of the Pelagian controversies (Malavasi, Marín, Drever) and on the textual transmission of several anti-Pelagian texts (Drecoll, Partoens). The volume closes with several tidy and well-organised indices.

What is apparent from this volume is a collegial approach. For example, Chronistler mentions in his acknowledgements (111) that he was able to consult articles by Dupont and Malavasi, editors of the volume, ahead of publication. Such collegiality evidently adds to the scientific rigour of the volume's articles. At several junctures throughout the book, authors refer to the contributions of their colleagues within the same volume, and occasionally profit from the advancements made by their colleagues. Perhaps the most telling example is the new edition proposed by Drecoll for the anti-Pelagian texts of the Quesnelliana collection (255-277). This new edition is acknowledged by Wermelinger (11) and by Janssen (203, n. 36). Such cross-references improve the consistency within the volume. This consistency is not always equally realised. In the contribution by Escribano Paño, anti-Pelagian texts from the Quesnelliana are still cited according

to their PL edition. On p. 192, n. 95, the citation from a letter of Aurelius of Carthage contains a reading that is not retained in the edition by Drecoll (cf. p. 276; on the quality of the PL edition, see also pp. 256-257). Overall, however, the editorial work is excellent and the language is clear throughout the various contributions. Anyone interested in the Pelagian controversy will find a treasure of innovative research in this volume.

A. VANSPAUWEN

Leah PAYNE. *God Gave Rock & Roll to You: A History of Contemporary Christian Music*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2024. (23,5×15,5), X-241 p. ISBN 978-0-19-755524-8. $30.00; £22.99.

This concise study surveys the developments in popular Christian music in North America in the past century. During this period – in addition to other developments not in view here – so-called "worship music", mainly in English, also came to dominate large sections of Christian churches way beyond the contexts and countries which initially gave birth to this new and immensely popular form of Christian music. Payne, once herself involved in the production and marketing of contemporary Christian music (3) not only introduces and describes these developments but also analyses them critically. She argues that the rise of this particular kind of Christian music is inextricably tied to the making of predominantly white evangelical Christianity in North America. Because of this focus, the volume also offers broader insights into evangelical concerns and culture in this part of the world and elsewhere.

Payne sets out with a highly critical description of the close link between this particular form of contemporary Christian music and the "industry" of American evangelicalism (1-6). She seeks to trace "how white evangelical caregivers in the United States came to see Christian spins on American popular music – even transgressive genres like death metal – as invaluable tools for moulding their children socially, spiritually, and politically" (2) and how this kind of music came to "serve as a shorthand for white evangelical orthodoxy and social action, prized for its capacity to disseminate evangelical messages about what it means to be Christian and American" (2).

This introduction is followed by analyses of the different periods of this music: "'The Magic Power of Song': The Roots of Contemporary Christian Music (1897-1950)" (7-19; the roots of the contemporary Christian music movement in the "business" of early twentieth-century revival); "'The Game of Life': The Cold War Origins of Contemporary Christian Music (1951-1970)" (20-37; discussion includes the evangelical attempts to "sanitise" popular music); "'The Now Generation': Creating Contemporary Christian Music (1970-1978)" (38-56, the Jesus-people movement and Jesus music, the influence of apocalyptic notions, the role of evangelists like Billy Graham); "'Hearts in Motion': The Polish, Professionalism, and Political Activism of Contemporary Christian Music (1979-1991) (57-90; including the role of Christian book stores and the buying power of white evangelical parents; the artist Amy Grant and the model evangelical life; Sandi Patty, special music, the star-spangled banner; the band Petra, the role of rock music and the "war" for America's young people; and the role of con-

temporary Christian music as encouraging and demanding active responses to the Gospel); "'Jesus Freaks': Youth-Group Bands and the Power of Christian Rock (1992-2000)" (91-116); "'God' Pop and the 'Personality Trend': Christian Contemporary Music Youth Culture Goes Mainstream (1992-2000)" (117-136, discussion also includes tendencies and instances of personality trend in such worship contexts); "'God's Not Dead': The Waning of Contemporary Christian Music and the Waxing of Worship (2001-2012)" (137-167) and "'#LetUsWorship': The Soundtrack of Evangelical Discontent (2012-2021)" (168-195). The epilogue, "Blow the Trumpet in Zion" (196-202) briefly surveys the latest events in this context (the final days of the first presidency of Trump and that of Bolsonaro in Brazil, the "surprisingly old-school revival" at Asbury University). The remainder of this monograph consists of notes and indexes.

With this survey, Payne provides an easy-to-read analysis of contemporary Christian culture and spirituality in mainly Protestant North America. Through the lens of its music (content, marketing, popular impact), Payne provides a detailed description and trenchant critique of the mainly white evangelical versions of Christianity across different denominations. She shows how these versions were influenced by popular culture, impacted this culture and sought to influence and shape the wider public discourse. While it would be easy to dismiss much of what is described here (certainly other perspectives would need to be included for the full picture) as typically "North American", the volume invites European readers to reflect on similar, even though less pronounced, phenomena in their context (for instance, the songs that have come out of the *Communauté de Taizé* in France) and their stances on what came to be called public theology. Payne's analysis and thesis, that is, the close link between a certain type of music and a particular Christian culture/confessional expression of the Christian faith, is not novel, neither are Christian attempts at using the popular music of different periods for Christian purposes. Indeed, it could be argued that the music of each day and age is an expression of the wider dogmatic and spiritual concerns of the churches in which this particular kind of music arose, is cherished and from where it also spread elsewhere.

C. STENSCHKE

Felix ROLEDER. *Die relationale Gestalt von Kirche: Der Beitrag der Netzwerkforschung zur Kirchentheorie* (Praktische Theologie heute, 169). Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 2020. (15,5×23), 370 S. ISBN 978-3-17-038158-2. €49.00.

Dieser Band greift auf das in anderen Bereichen entwickelte und bewährte Instrumentarium der sozialen Netzwerkforschung zurück, um von dieser Warte aus den kirchentheoretischen Diskurs in der Praktischen Theologie in den Blick zu nehmen und zu befruchten. Dies ist möglich, da religiöse Praxis und kirchliches Leben auch von ganz unterschiedlichen zwischenmenschlichen Interaktionen und sozialen Kontakten leben, ohne die das Funktionieren kirchlicher Organisationen gar nicht möglich ist. Der Fokus liegt dabei auf den Vorkommen von rel. Handeln in Alltagsnetzwerken, auf der gesellschaftlichen Funktion von Religion als einem wichtigen sozialen Gut und der unumstrittenen Bedeutung von sozialen Kontakten

für das kirchliche Leben. Als Theologe und Soziologe ist der Verfasser, Juniorprofessor an der Universität Hamburg, bestens qualifiziert um an der Schnittmenge von Praktischer Theologie und der Sozialpsychologie zu arbeiten.

Nach einführenden Überlegungen zur relationalen Gestalt von Kirche und den angewandten Methoden der Untersuchung (14-44; die Beschaffenheit, das Zustandekommen und die Folgen von Netzwerken, „Mit der Netzwerkforschung lässt sich Religion im Alltag in den Blick nehmen", 17), beschreibt Roleder zunächst sog. Alltagsnetzwerke als Kontexte von und für Religion und Kirche (45-83; Überlegungen zum sozialen Ort rel. Praxis im Alltag, rel. „communities" in Alltagsnetzwerken sowie soziokulturelle Unterschiede in Alltagsnetzwerken).

Im dritten Kapitel untersucht der Verfasser rel. Einfluss durch soziale Netzwerke. Dazu gehören die Effekte von Netzwerken auf die individuelle rel. Entwicklung (85-115). Behandelt werden zunächst empirische Befunde zu sozialem Einfluss bei der rel. Entwicklung von Einzelnen. Ferner wird eine Typologie der Prozesse rel. Einflusses durch soziale Netzwerke geboten. Rel. Einfluss bzw. die Diffusion von Religion/christlichem Glauben geschieht dabei weniger als *simple* sondern als *complex contagion* (im Sinn eine „Ansteckung"), etwa durch mehrere Kontaktpersonen bzw. Netzwerke und wiederholte Kontakte/Begegnungen.

Kapitel vier beleuchtet den Zusammenhang von Religion, Kirche und Sozialkapital, das auch aus intakten zwischenmenschlichen Verbindungen besteht (117-195, rel. Ressourcen in sozialen Netzwerken, nicht-rel. Ressourcen und ihre rel. Grundlagen). Dabei ist eine freundschaftsgenerierende Bedeutung kirchlichen Lebens zwar wahrnehmbar, aber bevölkerungsweit bleibt sie vergleichsweise gering. „Für einen Teil der regelmäßigen Kirchgänger sind kirchliche Freundschaften allerdings durchaus von Bedeutung. Gleichzeitig scheint doch auch über die Hälfte der mindestens monatlichen Kirchgängerinnen keinen einzigen engen Sozialkontakt in der Kirche gefunden zu haben" (135).

Das fünfte Kapitel skizziert soziale Netzwerke bei und im Umfeld von formalen Angeboten der Kirche (197-276). Dazu gehört das sog. Netzwerkmarketing, also das persönliche Hinweisen auf, Weiterempfehlen von und Einladen zu kirchlichen Angeboten (Theorie und Empirie sozialen Marketings bei kirchlichen Angeboten, die Marketingaktivität der Akteurinnen, ein Blick auf Einladeverhalten der Mitglieder und Gemeindeentwicklung in den USA sowie die Handlungsinteressen und -möglichkeiten von rel. Organisationen). Ferner geht es unter dem Stichwort „Vernetzte Verbindlichkeit" um soziale Netzwerke und ihre Funktion und Bedeutung in der Teilnahmebindung, d.h., bei der Bindung von Teilnehmenden an kirchliche Angebote (Roleders eigenes Modell einer Teilnahmebindung – Bausteine sind die Zufriedenheit mit Programmen und Organisationsprozessen, soziale Einbettung, Qualität der Sozialkontakte, Homogenitätsprinzip –, sowie die Entwicklung der Teilnahmebindung unter US-amerikanischen Gemeindegliedern).

Roleder diskutiert auch verschiedene Netzwerkressourcen (etwa das netzwerkbasierte Gewinnen von ehrenamtlichen Mitarbeitern und Spendern) und die sog. Netzwerkemergenz, nämlich die Entstehung und Entwicklung sozialer Netzwerke bei und im Umfeld kirchlicher Angebote. Dazu gehören das Entstehen sozialer Einbettung in kirchliche Kontaktnetzwerke sowie sozialer Einbettung unter neu hinzugekommenen Personen. Die Handlungsimplikationen wären die Schaffung von Gelegenheiten für Geselligkeit, Fokussierung der Interaktionsqualität, Respekt vor dem Bedürfnis nach sozialer Distanz und das Reagieren auf Minderheitensituationen.

Das abschließende sechste Kapitel fasst den Beitrag der Netzwerkforschung zur Kirchentheorie zusammen (277-326; Netzwerkforschung und die soziale Vielgestaltigkeit von Kirche, Netzwerkforschung und Kirche als Organisation, Netzwerkforschung und die Akteure von Kirche, Netzwerkforschung und Kirche in der Gesellschaft). Der Band endet mit drei Anhängen, einem Glossar zu Begriffen und Konzepten der Netzwerkforschung sowie Literaturverzeichnis.

Durchgehend zeigt Rohleder die große Bedeutung sozialer Netzwerke für die Kirche und bestimmte Aspekte ihres Handelns. „Religiöses und kirchliches Leben manifestiert sich […] in Geflechten aus einer Mehrzahl an zwischenmenschlichen Interaktionen und Kontakten“ (14). „Der besondere Beitrag der Netzwerkforschung zur Kirchentheorie besteht damit in der fokussierten Wahrnehmung dieser Relationalität von Kirche“ (326). Ob es für die hier präsentierten wichtigen Erkenntnisse des theoretischen Unterbaus in diesem Umfang bedurft hätte, scheint fragwürdig; vielleicht ist dies auch der verbreiteten Empirie-Verliebtheit der neueren Praktischen Theologie geschuldet. Viele der von Roleder zusammengetragenen Daten lassen auch aus anderen Perspektiven auswerten. Zu ergänzen wäre noch die Bedeutung solcher Netzwerke für das Apostolat der Kirche und der Blick auf das übergemeindliche Miteinander in der eigenen Kirche oder im Kontext der Ökumene. Die Implikationen für ehrenamtliche und hauptamtliche Mitarbeitende der Kirche sind immens. Auf menschlicher Seite hängt enorm viel von sozialer Kompetenz und der Bereitschaft und Fähigkeit von Christen ab über die Befriedigung eigener rel. Bedürfnisse hinaus in soziale Netzwerke ganz unterschiedlicher Art einzusteigen, sie voranzubringen und zu erweitern. Zu fragen wäre auch, was dies für die theologische Ausbildung bedeutet und wie diese Kompetenzen schon früh abgefragt und systematisch gefördert werden können.

C. Stenschke

Geoffrey Legrand. *L'éducation religieuse par les symboles: Une chance pour le dialogue interconvictionnel et interreligieux?* Préface de François-Xavier Amherdt (Théologie pratique en dialogue/Praktische Theologie im Dialog, 67). Basel, Schwabe Verlag, 2024. (22×15,5), 243 p. ISBN 978-3-79-654963-2. CHF38.00.

This book is Geoffrey Legrand's thesis for his accreditation to supervise research. He worked under the supervision of Professor François-Xavier Amherdt and defended his accreditation at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Fribourg.

Although twentieth-century models of religious education emphasised the use of symbolic didactics, it must be said that this style of teaching is no longer favoured today. Legrand's contention is that a religious education that uses symbols would encourage and help interconvictional and interreligious dialogue. At first glance, the book thus seems to be aimed at those who are interested in religious education and its didactics. However, it will also be of interest to readers who want to know more about symbols in general. Legrand's accessible style gives the reader an insight into Ricoeur's hermeneutics, and into his vision of symbols, while providing precise descriptions of all the authors mobilised in the book.

To illustrate this point, the book is divided into three parts. The first is a preliminary study. More descriptive, this section is essential for the reader to

understand the context in which the book is written. In explaining the framework of religious education in Western Europe today, the author identifies three key concepts in Lieven Boeve's writings: detraditionalisation, pluralisation and individualisation. These concepts allow the author to explain the postsecular and post-Christian context we are living in. After describing the main challenges facing religious education – young people's right to have access to religions, spiritual guidance for young people, the inclusion of the religious dimension in civic education and education for dialogue – Legrand sets out to understand what religious education stands for. Drawing on the works of Martin Rothgangel and of Bert Roebben, he argues that when religious education is taught to young people, whatever their religion and spirituality, it must take account of their intrinsic religiosity and provide answers to the existential questions they ask themselves. The last chapter of this first part presents various models of religious education. Legrand focuses on Roebben's model because he considers it to be the most relevant today: it responds to the challenge of identity and plurality while incorporating the dynamics of older models.

As Legrand explains, the second part of this book is organised into three parts: symbolising, interpreting and dialoguing. In his search for a definition of the symbol, he arrives at the cautious first conclusion that the symbol requires interpretation. Relying on the work of Jean Chevalier, Adrian-Mario Gellel, and others, with particular attention to the work of Paul Ricoeur, Legrand reviews the hermeneutic-symbolic dynamic. This openness allows the author to come to the tentative conclusion that it would not be appropriate to limit ourselves to symbols alone, but that this work of interpretation can be extended to the text and therefore also to the biblical text. Legrand examines the work of Paul Tillich and shows how the symbol can work as a bridge between revelation and religious experience. He extends the Tillichian thesis by comparing it with the works of Christoph Theobald and of Lieven Boeve. This allows the author to show that a purely ontological approach to the symbol is insufficient today, and that it is necessary to take alterity into account in order to truly understand and interpret the symbol. Legrand then focuses on dialogue and what is required for it to be successful, continuing the logic of alterity by defending a dialogue that is open to others but in which each person knows their own tradition.

In the last section, Legrand presents three didactic models and one pedagogical model. He begins with the Symboldidaktik, which today no longer corresponds to a postmodern society, despite the efforts of theologians such as Georg Baudler and Peter Biehl to adapt it. He then introduces the hermeneutic-communicative model, and its particular application to the Flemish theologian Didier Pollefeyt. This model, which favours a hermeneutic of symbols, has gradually reappropriated Ricoeur's concept of "second naivety". The third model, the mystagogico-communicative, advocated by Bert Roebben, places the students and their religious experience at the centre of the approach by confronting them with "key questions". Finally, the dialogue pedagogy model takes into account the plurality of its environment and implements an interreligious approach. At the end of this book, it is clear that the symbol is an opening to transcendence that abounds in possibilities. Learning to interpret both symbolically and textually is characterised by an adaptability to different didactic and pedagogical models; for the author there is no doubt that "a 'grammar' of the symbolic" should be developed.

F. XHONNEUX