

## Boekbesprekings / Book Reviews

**Boccacini, G (ed) 2005 – *Enoch and Qumran origins: New light on a forgotten connection***

Publisher: Eerdmans. Pages: xviii + 454. Price: US\$40.00

**Reviewer: Prof Dr P M Venter (University of Pretoria)**

The Enoch Seminar is listed in Wikipedia. The Seminar is a joint venture of the Department of Near Eastern Studies of the University of Michigan, the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, and the Michigan Center for Early Christian Studies, under the directorship of Gabrielle Boccacini, professor of Second Temple Judaism and Christian Origins at the University of Michigan. This seminar takes the form of biennial workshops restricted to discussions on papers prepared and circulated in advance to the invited members of the Seminar. Since its first meeting in Sesto Fiorentino, Florence, Italy (19-23 June 2001), five international meetings had been held (all in Italy) and two graduate conferences in the United States of America. In all, six volumes have been published on the Seminar's proceedings. The 2005 publication is the result of the second seminar in Venice, Italy (1-4 July 2003).

The subject of the second meeting in Venice was "Enoch and Qumran Origins". Fifty three scholars participated in the seminar. Five workshops were held, each dedicated to the work of a specialist on Enoch. Papers discussed during the five sessions are presented in the five parts of the publication. These parts follow an introduction (pp 1-14) in which the editor of the publication, Gabriele Boccacini, outlines the background to the establishment of the Seminar. Renewed interest in the Old Testament Epigrapha led to an invitation by the University of Michigan to specialists from the United States of America, Europe and Israel to take part in an interdisciplinary series of biennial seminars on this form of literature and its authors. This second seminar focused on the relation between Enoch literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Part one (pp 17-72) on "Dream Visions and Daniel" deals with John Collins' work on the social setting of Enoch and his theory that several different groups were responsible for second temple apocalyptic literature. In the eight contributions constituting this section the problem of the relationship between the traditions associated with Daniel and Enoch is discussed. In his response to these contributions, Collins highlights the problems experienced in identifying groups and reconstructing the apocalyptic milieu during the time of the second temple. This part is concluded with a useful reference to published works – also included at the end of each of the other parts of the publication.

Part two ("Enoch and Jubilees", pp 73-182) consists of 14 contributions broadly discussing the studies of James VanderKam on the relationship between Enoch and Jubilees. Various issues are discussed, e.g. does Jubilees depend on 1 Enoch, or *vice versa*?, how does Jubilees relate to different strands of the Enochic tradition? During the fourth proceeding of the Seminar (8-13 July 2007 at Camaldoli) all papers were dedicated to Jubilees. In his response VanderKam points out that Enoch and Jubilees are related, although hardly in complete agreement. It is concluded that Jubilees "exercized a documentable influence on the sectarian texts found in the Qumran caves" (p 170).

Part three (pp 183-246) deals with the "Apocalypse of the Weeks" (1 Enoch 93:1-17). The issue of the relationship between the Apocalypse of the Weeks, Enochic works and Qumran documents is not discussed in all the contributions in this section. In a ninth chapter George W E Nickelsburg provides a response to these discourses on the Apocalypse of Weeks. He relates this section of Enoch to a reform movement in Judaism during the

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Hellenistic period, a period characterized by a proliferation of individuals and groups who shared a feeling that all was not in order in Israel.

The Groningen Hypothesis, advocated and defended by Florentino García Martínez, forms the topic of part four ("The Groningen Hypothesis revisited", pp 247-326). This thesis on the origins of the community that wrote the scrolls found at the Dead Sea, is thoroughly discussed in eight papers, thus testing its validity. In his response, Martínez reacts to each contributor separately. What he finds interesting, is that in general different scholars perceive the Groningen Hypothesis in different ways.

The last part revisits yet another hypothesis ("The Enochic-Esene Hypothesis revisited", pp 327-435). This section deals with Gabriele Boccaccini's theory on mainstream Judaism during the second temple period, known as the Enoch-Essene hypothesis. In response to the fourteen contributions on his thesis, Boccacini acknowledges that one has to guard against oversimplification, but at the same time also has to resist overskepticism. Hypotheses on the social context are needed to understand the contents of Enoch.

In a final chapter ("Summary and Conclusions: The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch Matters: New Paradigms for understanding pre-70 Judaism", pp 436-454), James H Charlesworth indicates the achievements of the Enoch Seminar and the challenges for the future. The meeting advanced the understanding of Judaism before 70 CE. It opened up research in how and in which way Jews, including Jesus, may have been influenced by Enochic Judaism. The study of the book(s) of Enoch as demonstrated in the different contributions stimulates appreciation for the world of thought and the genius of the early Jews during the Second Temple period.

This publication is a reflection of the research and academic debates up to 2003 pertaining to the study of the collection of books referred to as One Enoch. As the leaders in this field were involved in the Venice Seminar the discussions do get rather technical at times. The publication cannot be presented as an introduction to Pseudepigraphical literature, but is rather aimed at those who already have basic knowledge of Enoch and second temple literature.

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### **Craffert, P F 2008 – *The life of a Galilean Shaman: Jesus of Nazareth in anthropological perspective***

Publisher: Wipf & Stock. 451 pages. Price: US\$52.00

**Reviewer: Prof Dr R J Miller (Juniata College – Pennsylvania, USA)**

This important, potentially seminal book makes two basic arguments. "The one is that based on developments in historiographical discourse, an alternative interpretive framework can be conceptualized for historical Jesus research, and the other is that within this framework, the historical Jesus of Nazareth can be seen as a Galilean shamanic figure" (p 420). The book comes in three parts. Part One, "A paradigm shift in historical Jesus historiography", argues for an "anthropological historiography" based on ontological pluralism and a recognition of multiple worldviews, grounded in the conviction that reality is socially and culturally constituted. Anthropological historiography aims for a culturally sensitive reading of ancient texts that seeks to make sense of them from the subjects' cultural system, while also interpreting these texts using cross cultural models. Craffert argues that historical Jesus (HJ) research is trapped in positivism, despite earnest efforts to avoid it, because the gospels are "read straight, as if they are talking about events and phenomena in the world of modern