

BOOK REVIEWS / BOEKRESENSIES

Dale C. Allison, Hans-Josef Klauck, Volker Leppin, Choon-Leong Seow, Hermann Spieckermann, Barry Dov Walfish and Eric Ziolkowski, eds. *Dabbesheth – Dreams and Dream Interpretation*. Volume 6 of *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*. 1230 cols. Berlin, Boston: W. de Gruyter, 2013. Cloth. ISBN 978-3-11-018374-0, € 238.

The latest volume of the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* (www.degruyter.com/db/ebr, projected to run to over thirty volumes), volume six, covers the entries *Dabbesheth* to *Dreams and Dream Interpretation*. The intention of the *EBR* is not only to deal thoroughly with the biblical evidence (as e.g. also in the multivolume *Anchor Bible Dictionary* of 1992) but also and particularly to trace its varied reception history in the NT, in Judaism, in Christianity through the ages, in Islam, in literature, in the visual arts and in film. Volume six contains a number of interesting and significant articles for OT studies. The longer articles trace the full reception history in the above sub-categories. Of particular interest to OT Studies are the following entries:

“Dagon I. Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (2f, L. Feliu); “Damages, I. Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (24–26, D. T. Olson); “Damascus II. Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (30–32; R. Burns); “Damanation I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (43f; A. Klein); “Dan, Danites I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (59f, M. V. Blischke); “Dan” (61–63, D. Ilan, J. Greer; here one misses a reference to the OT extension of the promised land “from Dan to Beersheba”); “Dance I. Ancient Near East” and “Dance II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (63–65, 65f; U. Gabbay, C. Sun); “Daniel (Book and Person)” (86–95, D. Smith-Christopher; further entries devoted to Daniel are “Daniel II. New Testament,” 95, M. J. J. Menken; “Daniel III. Judaism,” 95–109, with subsections on Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism, P. W. Flint, Rabbinic Judaism, G. Stemberger, medieval Judaism, R. Chazan, B. Dov Walfish and M. G. Wechsler and modern Judaism, J. Davis; “Daniel IV. Christianity,” sections on Greek and Latin patristics and Orthodox churches, K. Bracht, medieval times and Reformation era, M. Delgado, modern Europe and America, B. McGinn – like in the previous volumes and most entries in this volume, Asia, Latin America and Africa apparently have nothing to contribute when it comes to the reception of Daniel!; “Daniel V. Islam,” 121–124, J. Hämeen-Anttila; “Daniel VI. Literature,” 124–128, M. Brummitt, “Daniel VII. Visual Arts,” 128–131, B. Kress, “Daniel VIII. Music,” 131–133, N. H. Petersen; “Daniel IX. Film,” 134f, D. Hume); “Daniel, Apocalypse of” (137–142, L. Di’Tommaso); “Darius the Great” (156–158, J. M. Silverman); “Darius the Mede” (158–160, S.– E. Jeong); “Daughter, Daughters I. Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (182–184; C. Sun).

Like the entries on “Daniel,” the cluster of entries on David is representative for the longer articles in *EBR*. It consists of “David I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament” (189–193, D. D. Pioske) and “David II. New Testament” (193–196, Y. Miura). “David III. Judaism” (196–207) is subdivided into Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism (P. W. Fine), Rabbinic Judaism (G. Langer), Medieval Judaism (J. A. Diamond) and Modern Judaism (J. Davis). The Christian reception of David (“David IV. Christianity,” 207–214) is subdivided into Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches (C. Reemts), Medieval Times and Reformation Era (A. Kosuch), Modern Europe and America (J. Deming and D. D. Pioske) – again no reference is made to the reception of the figure of David in other contexts! The remaining entries are “David V. Islam” (214–216, J. Hämeen–Anttila), “David VI. Literature A. General” (216–220 A. Swindell, again concentrating on Europe and Northern America), “David VI. Literature B. Modern Hebrew” (220–220, R. Ofer), “David VII. Visual Arts” (subdivided into Jewish presentations, 222–226, S. Sabar, and Christian representations, 226–230, L. Dirven – discussion stops with Rembrandt), “David VIII. Music” (A. General, 230–237, S. R. Havsteen, B. Jewish, 237f, M. D. Edelman); “David IX. Film” (238–242, R. Burnette–Bletsch). While this approach allows the combination of expertise from various scholarly disciplines, the readers are left to produce their own analysis and synthesis of the overall reception of the biblical material.

Other OT related articles in the first third of the substantial volume are “David and Goliath, Story of” (243–256, various subsections and authors); “David and Jonathan, Story of” (256–270, various subsections and authors); “David’s Champions” (270–273, C. Nihan, P. B. Fenton); “Day and Night” (277–283, various subsections and authors); “Day of Judgement” (283–299, various subsections and authors, including South African scholar J. A. du Rand on the NT); “Day of the Lord” (299–305, various subsections and authors); “Dead, Cult of the” (319–336, various subsections and authors); “Dead Sea Scrolls” (337–349, various subsections and authors), “Death, Dying” (354–403, various subsections and authors) and “Deborah (Judge)” (406–418, various subsections and authors).

The volume also includes entries on important figures or institutions for the interpretation of the Bible, including: “Dalman, Gustaf Herrmann,” 19f, J. Männchen), “Dahood, Mitchell Joseph” (6f, A. Gianto), “Dallas Theological Seminary” (17–19, G. Kreider), “Dante Alighieri” (147f; M. Eisner); “Darby, John Nelson” (153–155, G. Kreider), “Darwin, Charles I: Darwin and the Bible” (162–165, J. Moore). Substantial treatment is given to the comparative religions approach of Ahmed Deedat of Durban who uses the Bible to attack Christianity and to demonstrate the truth of Islam (455–459, J. Chesworth). Painters of biblical scenes (e.g. Salvador Dalí), composers using biblical material (e.g. Claude Debussy) and other interpreters (in its widest sense) of the

Bible whose name falls between “Dabbesheth” and “Dreams and Dream Interpretation” are also included.

Other South African contributors are P. Botha (“Divination III. Greco-Roman Antiquity,” 961–964, “Dreams and Dream Interpretation III. Greco-Roman Antiquity,” 1199–1202); P. G. R. de Villiers (“Dragon II. New Testament and III. Greco-Roman Antiquity,” 1148–1150) and D. Wardle (“Domitian,” 1076f).

Perhaps surprising in this volume of the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* are the entries on “Dalai Lama” (8f, B. Whitton), “Dalit Theology” (11–15, J. C. B. Webster) and “Daoism” (149–151; E. J. Harris).

In addition to up-to-date entries on the biblical material, the strength of the *EBR* is its emphasis on the reception. There it is a goldmine without parallel for what it offers, while its focus on Europe and North America needs to be supplemented urgently. For the reception of the OT in Early Judaism one might now also refer to J. J. Collins, D. C. Harlow (eds.), *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010).

Christoph Stenschke, Biblisch-Theologische Akademie Wiedenest and Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa, P O Box 392, Pretoria, 0003, Republic of South Africa. E-mail: Stenschke@wiedenest.de.

Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, Alexander Panayotov, eds. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*. Volume 1. Grand Rapids, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2013. 808 pp., cloth. ISBN 978-0-8028-2739-5. 90, \$/59 GBP.

Since their publication in biblical scholarship, Jewish studies and ancient history (and other disciplines!) have tremendously benefitted from the two volume collection *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* edited by James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–1986), this influential collection has now been supplemented by *More Noncanonical Scriptures Volume I*.

The substantial volume of over 800 pages opens with a foreword by James H. Charlesworth in which he outlines “The Fundamental Importance of an Expansive Collection of “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” (so the subtitle, xi–xvi). Charlesworth surveys historic collections of the OT pseudepigrapha, discusses the anachronistic nomenclature involved in their designation and argues for a “shared Judaism,” which he understands as follows:

A shared Land promised to Jews, a common Pentateuch, the Decalogue, ethnicity, the *Shema*, purity, and monotheism united

most Jews. Thus, we may imagine sects and groups related to an “established Judaism” centralized in Jerusalem and the Temple. The Jewish apocryphal works help us also perceive a “shared Judaism,” since Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, the Baptist groups, the Enoch groups, the Zealots, the Samaritans, and the Palestinian Jesus Movement shared many concepts and the earliest confessions (xiii).

Charlesworth next describes the two volumes *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* which he had edited and, the reception which they had in the scholarly community, but also their limitations. On the present collection Charlesworth notes:

Scholars will debate the criteria for inclusion, and certainly no one should imagine that all these texts are important for reconstructing the world of the Righteous Teacher, Hillel, Jesus, Paul, Gamaliel, Johanan ben Zakkai, and the Evangelists. The whole collection, however, does mirror the unparalleled influence of the Bible on Western culture and thought. They are a key to a better perception of the reception of the Bible (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) – an increasing interest of specialists. One also should keep an eye open for “pseudepigraphical texts” preserved in unedited Ethiopic manuscripts and collections of Old Irish apocryphal works but not included in *OTP* or the two new volumes. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* is a treasure trove. It brings to the attention of all today documents purporting to be ancient and to be composed by a biblical sage or by a biblical luminary (xv).

In the “Introduction” (xvii–xxxviii); Richard Bauckham and James R. Davila raise and discuss issues of terminology and its significance, the composition, transmission and study of the OT pseudepigrapha and describe the scope of this new collection.

Most of the texts in this volume and the one that is to follow have not been included in any other recent collection of pseudepigrapha. The texts represent a wide range of genres and origins. Many of them are complete or substantially complete, but a number are fragmentary, either because the manuscripts in which they survive are very poorly preserved or because they are entirely lost apart from references and quotations in the works of later writers. Some of the works in our corpus are already well known by specialists but not by the general public (xxvi).

They also describe the criteria employed for including texts: “texts for which a reasonable – if not necessarily conclusive – case can be made for composition before the rise of Islam in the early seventh century CE” (xxxviii); “texts of any origin, including Jewish, Christian, or indigenous polytheistic works” (xxviii); “we exclude for the most part texts that fit best in and survive

only in other thematically coherent or traditional collections of works that have been treated on their own terms” (xxix); “not including texts published already in the Sparks [H. F. D. Sparks, *The Apocryphal Old Testament*; Oxford: Clarendon, 1984] or Charlesworth volumes unless we have important new manuscript data or we believe that the text requires a new treatment for other reasons” (xxix); “we have included a number of texts that were written in the form we have them well after the seventh century, but which clearly preserve either earlier material or have a close relationship with such material” (xxx). In closing, the editors describe the importance of this collection and how it may be used.

The *first part* of the volume consists of *texts ordered according to biblical chronology* (on the order and arrangement see p. xxx). It contains the following texts. “Adam: Octipartite/Septipartite (Grant Macaskill with Eamon Greenwood, 3–21); “The Life of Adam and Eve (Coptic Fragments)” (Simon I. Gathercole, 22–25); “The Book of the Covenant” (James VanderKam, 28–32); “The Apocryphon of Seth” (Alexander Toepel, 33–39); “The Book of Noah” (Martha Himmelfarb, 40–46); “The Apocryphon of Eber” (James VanderKam, 47–52); “The Dispute over Abraham” (Richard Bauckham, 53–58); “The Inquiry of Abraham” (A Possible Allusion to the *Apocalypse of Abraham*) (Richard Bauckham, 59–63); “The Story of Melchizedek with the Melchizedek Legend from the *Chronicon Paschale*” (Pierluigi Piovanelli, 64–84); “The Syriac History of Joseph” (Kristian S. Heal, 85–120); “Aramaic Levi” (James R. Davila, 121–142); “Midrash Vayissa’u” (Martha Himmelfarb, 143–159); “The Testament of Job” (Coptic Fragments) (Gesa Schenke, 160–175); “The Tiburtine Sibyl (Greek)” (Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, 176–188); “The Eighth Book of Moses” (Todd E. Klutz, 189–235); “The Balaam Text from Tell Deir ‘Alla” (Edward M. Cook, 236–243); “Eldad and Modad” (Richard Bauckham, 244–256); “Songs of David” (G. W. Lorein and E. Van Staalduine–Sulman, 257–271); “The Aramaic Song of the Lamb” (The Dialogue between David and Goliath) (C. T. R. Hayward, 272–286); “Exorcistic Psalms of David and Solomon” (Gideon Bohak, 287–297); “The Selenodromion of David and Solomon” (Pablo A. Torijano, 298–305); “The Hygromancy of Solomon” (Pablo A. Torijano, 305–325); “Questions of the Queen of Sheba and Answers by King Solomon” (Vahan S. Hovhanessian with Sebastian P. Brock, 326–345); “The Nine and a Half Tribes” (Richard Bauckham, 346–359); “The Heartless Rich Man and the Precious Stone” (William Adler, 360–366); “Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Pashhur” (Darell D. Hannah, 367–379); “The Apocryphon of Ezekiel” (Benjamin G. Wright, 380–392); “The Treatise of the Vessels (Massekhet Kelim)” (James R. Davila, 393–409); “The Seventh Vision of Daniel” (Sergio La Porta, 410–434); “A Danielic Pseudepigraphon Paraphrased by Papias” (Basil Lourié, 435–441); “The Relics of Zechariah and the Boy Buried at His Feet” (William Adler, 442–447); “*Sefer Zerubbabel*: The Prophetic Vision of Zerubbabel ben Shealtiel” (John C. Reeves, 448–466); “Fifth Ezra” (Theodore A. Bergren, 467–482); “Sixth Ezra” (Theodore A.

Bergren, 483–497) and “The Latin Version of Ezra” (Richard Bauckham, 498–528).

The smaller *second part* of the volume consists of *thematic texts*. It contains: “The Cave of Treasures” (Alexander Toepel, 531–584); “*Palea Historica* (Old Testament History)” (William Adler, 585–672); “Quotations from Lost Books in the Hebrew Bible” (James R. Davila, 673–698) and “Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise” (Helen Spurling, 699–713).

Not included in the table of contents (p. x, just the texts with notes, not comments, bibliography, etc.) are “The Greatness of Moses (*Gedulat Moshe*) (714–725), “Legend ‘Hear, O Israel’” (*Haggadat Shema ‘Yisra’el*) (726–728); “History of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi” (*Ma’aseh De-Rabbi Yehoshua’ ben Levi*) (729–734), “Order of Gan Eden” (*Seder Gan ‘Eden*) (735–737); Tractate on Gehinnom” (*Masseket Gehinnom*) (738–741); “In What Manner is the Punishment of the Grave?” (*Ketsad Din Ha-Qever*) (742–745); “Legend of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (‘*Aggadat De-Rabbi Yehoshua’ ben Levi*) Aramaic Recension” (729–734); “Treatise on the Work of Creation” (*Baraita De-Ma’aseh Bereshit*) (748–750); “David Apocalypse” (751–753). Presumably the translations and annotation are the editors.’ The collection closes with an index of modern authors (754–762) and of Scripture and other ancient texts (763–808).

For each text, an introduction, a new translation, bibliography (subdivided into editions and studies) and, at times extensive footnotes, are offered. In some texts, extensive parallels from a broad range of ancient literature are noted. The structure of the introductions and the extent of notes and parallels vary.

Volume Two of Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures is in preparation. According to the “Introduction” of *Volume One* (xxxviif), it will contain the following texts (according to the “current list”):

Horarium of Adam (Arabic, Georgian, Syriac)
 Apocalypses of Adam, Sethel, Shem, Enosh, and Enoch
 (quoted in the Life of Mani)
 Book of (the Angel) Baruch (quoted by Hippolytus)
 Treatise of Shem (Aramaic and Judeo–Arabic fragments)
 2 Enoch (Coptic fragments)
 Enoch Apocryphon (Coptic)
 Book of Giants (Aramaic and Manichaean versions, with the
 Hebrew Midrash of Shemihazai and Azazel)
 Book of the Mvsteries (Sefer Ha-Razim)
 Surid Legend
 Abraham Apocryphon (quoted by Vettius Valens)
 Ladder of Jacob (Hebrew fragment)

Apocryphon of Jacob and Joseph
Testament of Naphtali (Hebrew fragments)
Joseph and Aseneth Apocryphon (quoted by Origen)
Oracle of Hystaspes (quotations)
Testament and Assumption of Moses (quotation fragments)
Words of Gad the Seer
Testament of Solomon (Vienna Manuscript)
Apocalypse of Elijah (Hebrew)
Apocalypse of Elijah (Greek quotation fragments)
Adjuration of Elijah (Sheva Eliyyahu)
Manasse Apocryphon (embedded in *Didascalia Apostolorum*)
Jeremiah Apocryphon
Baruch (quoted by Cyprian)
Visions of Ezekiel
Apocalypses of Daniel (Greek)
Apocalypse of Daniel (Syriac)
Danielic Prognostica
Oracles of Daniel
4 Ezra (Armenian translation)
6 Maccabees
7 Maccabees
8 Maccabees (embedded in the *Chronicle of Malalas*)
Revelations of Gabriel
Pseudo-Philonian Sermons on Jonah, Samson, and God
Apocryphon of the Seven Heavens
Signs of the Judgment
Quotations from unidentified Old Testament-related works
Alleged quotations from the Old Testament not found in extant texts

No date is given when the second volume is to be expected (“most of the content for the companion volume to this one is set,” xxxvii). The final words belong to the editors:

The OT pseudepigrapha are an important and much neglected part of the biblical tradition. The earliest of them were written down at the same time and in the same geographic area as the HB, and some are even cited therein. They continued to be composed and copied throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages and, indeed, new pseudepigrapha are still being written in the modern era. The corpus being published in these two volumes adds a great many texts to those already known from earlier collections, most notably those of Sparks and Charlesworth, and together with them provides the reader with virtually all known surviving pseudepigrapha written before the rise of Islam. Some of these compositions provide us with fascinating background material to the NT. Others are a rich source of information on the reception history of the HB by

Jews, Christians, and pagans through late antiquity. They frequently give us different perspectives from those found in writings of the same period which later acquired an authoritative status in Judaism (the rabbinic literature) and Christianity (the patristic literature). Together they present us with the sacred legends and spiritual reflections of numerous long-dead authors whose works were lost, neglected, or suppressed for many centuries. By making these documents available in excellent English translations and authoritative but accessible introductions we aim both to promote more scholarly study of them and to bring them to the attention of the vast lay audience who appreciate such treasures (xxxviii).

Christoph Stenschke, Biblisch–Theologische Akademie Wiedenest and Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa, P O Box 392, Pretoria, 0003, Republic of South Africa. E-mail: Stenschke@wiedenest.de.

Basil Hatim, *Teaching and Researching Translation*. 2nd ed. Applied Linguistics in Action. London and New York: Pearson, 2013. Paperback. 326 pages. Price US\$40.00 (Amazon). ISBN 978–1–4082–9763–6.

Basil Hatim is Professor of Translation and Linguistics at the American University of Sharjah, UAE. He is a world-recognised theorist in translation studies and an active practitioner in English/Arabic translation. He lectures widely and has published extensively in the fields of applied linguistics, text linguistics, translation/interpreting, and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). Clearly, Hatim is a theorist who practices what he teaches, and this book gives abundant evidence of his widespread trans-disciplinary experience and expertise.¹

The *Applied Linguistics in Action* instructional series aims to provide a university-level “map of the landscape” of a particular area of teaching and research within the wider discipline, providing an overview of its main ideas and approaches, competing issues, unsolved questions, pointers toward fruitful research, and principal resources. There is a special focus on *research* with the goal of stimulating readers to constructively critique established concepts and methods as well as to put what is being learned into reflective practice on a variety of suggested projects that explore new, and sometimes controversial facets of study in the field. In this book, Hatim selects some of the more helpful approaches in contemporary linguistics—those that may be more readily and productively “applied” in the study of language communication—and integrates these into an insightful exploration of the closely related sphere of

¹ I acknowledge with gratitude Prof. Hatim’s comments and suggested corrections to this review.

“translation studies.” He suggests that “the conceptual map of translation studies could be drawn differently and perhaps in more helpful ways” (xii)—in particular, from the specialized, utilitarian perspective of *text linguistics*, “a discipline. . . dealing with modern interdisciplinary concerns relating to text in context and how these issues intimately relate to each other in highly diverse and systematic ways, and are closely bound up with language in social life” (296).

Teaching and Researching Translation is divided into four major parts. In Section I (chs. 1–6), Hatim outlines the recent history, fundamental concepts, and key research issues in translation studies (TS), with special reference to the long-established dichotomy between “literal” and “free” renditions—that is, “distance from or adherence to the source text” (ST, xiii). Section II (chs. 7–13) presents a number of research models that stem from the approaches outlined in part I and provide a helpful framework for further investigation, with special reference to translation teaching and “three major aspects of how texts function and how they get translated” (i.e., textual register, interpersonal pragmatics, and social-semiotics) (xiv). Section III (chs. 14–15) offers a variety of suggestions for developing new communication-oriented methods in the fast-growing field of translation-based research. Section IV (ch. 16) then provides a number of useful “links and resources for translators,” which will enable readers to branch out on their own into areas of special interest. The book concludes with a “Glossary of text linguistics and translation terms” (*one of the best I have seen published*), an extensive listing of References, and a complete, subcategorised Index of topics. This second edition (the first was published in 2001) provides various updated material throughout the text and has added several new chapters. However, as in the case of most scholarly works in the field of modern translation studies, I missed a thorough discussion of the vibrant phonological factor, that is, the *oral-aural dimension* of communication and how this impacts upon especially the *practice* of translating as well as the critical *evaluation* of (written, published) translated texts.

Each chapter follows a similar pattern, consisting of an initial overview of primary goals (e.g., “This chapter will . . . describe how applied linguistics can contribute to the study of translating and translations. . . , page 3), a brief introduction of the subjects to be considered, an ordered sequence of subsections in which the relevant topics are discussed in greater detail, and suggestions for “further reading.” Included in each chapter are specially highlighted boxes that contain important “quotations” (from a sentence to a short paragraph) from experts in the field as well as similar boxed summaries, definitions, descriptions, or diagrams of key “concepts” that pertain to the subject being considered in the section at hand. Hatim writes clearly, organises well, and regularly defines the more technical terms or concepts that he introduces. The text is virtually free of errors and is lucidly formatted, with

different typefaces, styles, and indents being used to highlight or distinguish issues of importance or lists of related items.

Before I go on to a somewhat more detailed overview of the many diverse translation topics that Hatim discusses in his book, readers may wonder: of what possible relevance is a textbook on translation studies to specialists in the OT? Four reasons occurred to me upon reflection after reading *Teaching and Researching Translation*:

- (i) **Translation** – Most OT scholars regularly make a personal translation of the Hebrew text as part of their daily study routine, and they base their research, writing, as well as teaching activities on academic works that reference and/or specifically render the original text of the HB.
- (ii) **Publication** – Most OT specialists also apply their skills in the writing of scholarly papers, articles, books, or even commentaries that examine and make numerous, sometimes extended references to the Hebrew text and how it has been, or should be translated into the language of publication.
- (iii) **Assessment** – A lesser number of OT scholars are engaged in the actual translation of the Hebrew text into their mother tongue, or they are members of a review committee that is tasked with the evaluation and correction of preliminary draft versions.
- (iv) **Comparison** – At a more popular level, OT experts are often called upon to compare different versions of the Bible in their language and make a studied recommendation as to which version they feel is best for a particular church constituency, for example, youth, middle-aged, new readers, non-traditionalists, *etcetera*.

For all of these reasons, and there may well be more, I would venture to say that most of the subjects explored in *Teaching and Researching Translation* will be of great interest and possibly of considerable importance to all OT scholars. Of course, we do not need to be translation experts in order to carry out our normal academic activities. However, I suspect that the broad pragmatic (language-in-use), text-linguistic approach presented by Hatim will enable us to sharpen our critical awareness and supply additional insights as well as some practical tools to enable us to function more knowledgably and effectively in new areas of application—especially, as suggested by the title, with reference to interlingual *teaching* and communication *research*.

In partial support of the preceding claims (*which can be properly judged only by reading the entire book*), I will survey the various main subjects that are treated in its sequence of chapters, according to the book's four principal divisions. In most cases, these topics can only be briefly described, as items for information, but when appropriate I will include a quotation of special relevance, or offer a critical observation from a personal perspective.

Chapter 1 (*Translation studies and applied linguistics*) seeks to reveal some of the ways in which “applied linguistics, with its many and varied orientations, [can] inform translation research” (4). It does so, according to Hatim, by helping to raise critical awareness of some of the main problem areas that translation presents for all those who engage in it. These require a certain informed “reflective practice” that features a “theory–practice cycle” of action research, that is, “an initial idea, followed by fact–finding, action plan, implementation, monitoring and revision, amended plan, and so on” (10). The field of translation studies is “a house of many rooms” (11) that allows for a variety of perspectives when carrying out the “multi–faceted activity” of translation (13). In recent years, “critical linguistics,” with its emphasis on revealing the “ideology” of texts (their tacit assumptions, beliefs, and value systems), has become of increasing importance with respect to both “translation ideology” and “the ideology of translation” (13).

Chapter 2 (*From linguistic systems to cultures in contact*) explores the influence of the “equivalence paradigm” and its contribution to early translation studies, with special reference to Catford’s formal linguistic (“translation shift”) model as compared with Nida’s sociolinguistic (“dynamic equivalence”) approach. Contrary to the views expressed by many contemporary translation theorists, Hatim (*correctly*) concludes that “in terms of general relevance, the categories and techniques proposed by Nida have stood the test of time and proved to be applicable not only to Bible translation (for which they might have been primarily intended) but also to other text types. . . . research into other genres can also benefit from the wealth of insights which Nida’s work has provided over the years” (25). One prominent example of this is Nida’s practice–driven linguistic “process model,” consisting of the three steps of *analysis*, *transfer*, and *restructuring* (26–27). Hatim might have gone further in this survey to document Nida’s (and others’) later refinements from “dynamic” to “functional” equivalence translating.

Chapter 3 (*Equivalence: Pragmatic and textual criteria*) deals with the equivalence paradigm in terms of more detailed textual as well as pragmatic developments. Several important “equivalence frameworks” are discussed, in particular, the text–based translation models of Koller and de Beaugrande. This “textuality” turn in translation theory introduced new notions such as textual “dynamism” (evaluateness and markedness), communicative contexts, effectiveness and appropriateness, intertextuality, semiotic macro–structures, and the “genre–text–discourse” socio–textual triad (39). Included in this chapter (*somewhat surprisingly perhaps*) is an overview of Gutt’s cognitive linguistic, inferential approach known as “relevance theory,” with its emphasis on cognitive “context,” including the pragmatic pairing of conceptual effort and reward (“contextual effects”), and its distinction between “direct” and “indirect” translation with respect to how a source text’s “communicative clues” are handled in a given target text (TT). Hatim concludes that the RT

perspective tends to be “too sharply binary” in its categorization and also begs this fundamental question: “If maximizing relevance for a different audience is held to be the ideal in translation, why exclude from the theory those translation practices defined as descriptive, whose very purpose is to maximize relevance?” (47).

Chapter 4 (*Cultural studies and translator invisibility*) takes up a number of sometimes controversial issues in translation studies that concern the cultural factor and the degree to which this should either be either “foreignized” or “domesticated” in the transfer process. On the one hand, some theorists (e.g., Venuti, Gentzler, Berman) argue that in order to retain the “visibility” of the translator and the cultural distinctiveness of the original work, certain prominent formal features ought to be retained via a more correspondent rendition. This issue also comes to the fore in the case of “sacred and sensitive texts,” such as the Scriptures, where the question is: “should outward form be preserved, and what are the wider implications of such decisions?” (49). On the other hand, there are those who prefer to adopt a liberal “deconstructionist” agenda (*à la* Derrida) and thus to view ST meaning as “unstable” and the translation process as inevitably involving a “transformation” (rather than a “transfer”) process that must cater for the world view and value system of the target audience. This concern leads to a discussion of a prominent case in point, namely, “gendered translation” and “the feminist paradigm,” which may be “thought of as a practice in visibility [where] the cardinal concepts are: production, subversion, manipulation, [and] ‘transformance’” of ST meaning and the purging of all “patriarchal language” (57–58). However, as Hatim points out, “the process of transfer is, after all, not a theorist’s dream. It is an assumption which all readers of translations make,” whether that happens to be a convenient illusion or not (57). In any case, the more recent “cultural turn” in translation (49) has added another option in addition to a TL version being either (relatively) “literal” or “free” with respect to the ST’s form and content. This alternative is “neither,” and the translator accordingly assumes an “authorial role” as s/he “subverts” the original text in the process of “re–writing” it (58–59).

Chapter 5 (*From word to text and beyond*) explores several of the primary subjects treated in the preceding chapter in somewhat greater detail, in particular, “the cultural turn” and “translation as a re–writing process” (68). There is not a great deal of new material here; for example, Holmes’ notion of “translation as metatext” (writing *about* another text) might have been included in ch. 1, while the distinction between “modernizing” and “historicizing” translation could have been covered in ch. 4. The same goes for Lefevre’s proposals for a “manipulative” ideological re–writing of the ST, yet one that is based somehow on an “image” of the original author and his (her) work (68–69). However, Hatim makes this significant observation: “The general trend in translation studies is clearly towards cultural rather than linguistic transfer”

(67), which makes the issue of the translator's personal (or institutional) "ideology" in keeping with current socio-cultural (also –political?) norms and conventions (71) one of increasing interest and, in some quarters, also growing concern.

Chapter 6 (*Literary and cultural constraints*) covers issues relating to two important branches of translation studies: polysystem theory and *Skopos* theory. The former (e.g., Even-Zohar) proposes that all of the recognised varieties (genres, etc.) within a culture's entire literary system are in a state of changing interaction, with some text-types or traditions being more prominent and influential than others. "Translated works usually occupy a peripheral position" (74), especially in societies having a wealth of published literature, but they can assume much greater importance, for example in a culture where an indigenous written tradition is young or considered to be inferior to what is available in some more prestigious language. In any case, translators must always pay careful attention to the literary norms, models, and trends that are current and well-received in the TL. "Descriptive Translation Studies" (DTS, e.g., Toury) is a non-evaluative (*anti-equivalence*) approach that seeks to document these standards, conventions, and varied literary interactions, as well as to suggest where the society seems to be moving in these different respects and why. From a DTS perspective, "questions such as the acceptability of a translation as translation, and whether the translation is central or peripheral within the overall conceptual map [of a literary system], far outweigh considerations of correspondence and linguistic or aesthetic compatibility of source and target versions" (77).

The factor of translation *purpose* then comes to the fore in the functionalist movement best represented by "*Skopos* [Greek, 'goal'] theory" (e.g., Reiss, Vermeer, Nord). "The theory holds that the way the target text eventually shapes up is determined to a great extent by the function, or 'skopos,' intended for it in the target context" (79). The broad parameters of *Skopos* theory distinguishes three kinds of "purpose" (communicative, strategic, general), two types of "coherence" (intratextual, intertextual), and three types of "text" (informative, expressive, operative) (80–84). Other important features are notions such as "translational action" (e.g., Holz-Mänttari, involving a set of translation "roles and players," 83), "loyalty" with respect both ST author and proposed TT audience, and "adequacy" in terms of being "adequate for the job," namely, the translation "brief," or stipulated job commission (83). Almost as an aside, Hatim observes in this discussion that "at no stage has equivalence been abandoned or text classification altogether jettisoned" (86), thus upholding these more traditional translation values. Hatim concludes this chapter, the last of Section I, with a summary of closely-related linguistic approaches that inform and enrich his view of contemporary translation theory–practice: contrastive analysis, sociolinguistics,

psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics, text linguistics, culture studies, gender studies, and literature at large (87–91).

Chapter 7 (*Register-oriented research models*) begins Section II, which revisits many of the translation topics discussed in Section I, but with a more focused discussion now of some helpful research models and methods. Hatim begins by summarising his threefold focus on “communicative transaction” (register), “pragmatic action” (intentionality, implicature), and “semiotic interaction” (text, discourse, genre) (96). Translation dichotomies continue to be relevant in TS, but these constructs have been refined by developments such as *Skopos* theory and translation strategy, for example, Nord’s “documentary” (more formal) versus “instrumental” (freer) approaches (99), and methods of “quality assessment,” based on functional distinctions with regard to “text” as well as “language” and “strategies” such as House’s distinction between “covert” (TT-oriented) and “overt” (ST-oriented) methods. Hatim observes that “a great deal of Bible translation also falls within this [covert] strategy, and the cultural substance of the biblical text is often relativized to make the biblical message more accessible” (103). However, such a more “domesticating” approach does not seem to be as popular in 21st century practice, at least not in English, and one wonders what the situation is nowadays in other major (national, “official,” etc.) language settings.

Chapter 8 (*The pragmatics turn in research*) essentially reviews translation strategy with reference to the various pragmatic dimensions of relevance theory, to begin with, the problematic (*my term*) distinction between “indirect” and “direct” translation. Hatim poses another critical query for the proponents of RT: “What if the translator is particularly concerned with the *style* as well as the *content* of the message to be translated (that is, what if a translation situation involves the translator in dealing not only with *what* is said but also with *how* it is said)” (110). This leads to a discussion of the more important notion of stylistic “communicative clues” in translation—that is, “not just properties of the text, but features built into the text for the purpose of guiding the audience to the intended interpretation” (112). One wonders, however, by what means or on what basis are translators to arrive at such crucial discernment? Surely a considerable competence, even expertise, in both the SL and the various genres of ST would be required. Various types of potential communicative clue are then surveyed, including those that pertain to a text’s phonology, poetics, onomatopoeia (which would seem to be just a sub-category), semantic representations (pertaining to the “cognitive environment” underlying both the ST and the TT, 115), formulaic expressions, syntax (including deliberate structural patterns), and connotation (including issues that pertain to “register, dialect, accent,” 118). In the case of RT’s preferred type of rendition, a “direct translation,” there is a “need on the part of the target audience to familiarize themselves with the context assumed by the original communicator” (118). One major omission from Hatim’s overview of

pragmatic strategies is one that has, like RT, been further developed in the actual practice of Bible translation, namely, the contextualised “frames of reference” approach, as informed by cognitive linguistics.

Chapter 9 (*Focus on the text*) returns to further develop certain translation-related applications of Hatim’s specialised field of text-linguistics, for example, pragmatic semiotics, the notion of a hierarchy of textual correspondences, semantic redundancy versus salience, degrees of discourse dynamism, and how all of these factors interact in the activity of “text processing” (121–126). As a practicing translation consultant and teacher, I found this overview to be particularly helpful, including a listing of the principal “standards of textuality” (cohesion, coherence, situationality, intertextuality, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, 127) and the dynamic feature of “text hybridization” involving “managing” (argumentation) as distinct from “monitoring” (exposition) (128). The “genre-text-triad” is explored again in relation to the text-rhetorical conventions of appropriateness, argument strategies, and deeply embedded social attitudes, or “mentifacts” (131–133). This leads to a brief consideration of some “pitfalls in researching ideology” (e.g., distortions, determinism, over-generalisations) (134–136), which paves the way for the next chapter.

Chapter 10 (*Translation and ideology*) deals with the important distinction between the ideology of translation versus ideology in translation (or translation of ideology). The latter focuses on “how ‘ideology’ in the text to be translated is dealt with, and how best to convey this in translation” (138). The “ideology of translation,” on the other hand, investigates “how translations are made, or how they sound [perceptually], which shows allegiance to a particular translation method or tradition” (139). A pronounced ideological bias or bent will influence both *which* texts are selected for translation and also *how* they are rendered. After an exemplifying case study, or “model for analysis” (141–144), Hatim turns to a summary of “a feminist perspective” and several important ideologically-based “strategies” that may be manifested therein. These can be “author-centered” (e.g., commentary, resistancy, framing, annotation, 147–148) or “translator-centered” (e.g., commentary, parallel texts, collaboration, 148–149). In conclusion, Hatim makes the astute observation that “in declaring her hand, however, the feminist translator runs the risk of usurping textual power, an activity in which her male colleague has arguably been engaged for a long time” (149).

Chapter 11 (*Translation of genre vs translation as genre*) parallels the discussion of the preceding chapter with reference to the subject of literary “genre,” as viewed from the perspective of applied linguistics as well as cultural studies. The term genre refers to “conventional forms of text associated with particular types of communicative events,” for example news reports, editorials, cooking recipes (287)—even Bible translations! The concept of

genre may thus serve as a macro–sign that provides translators with an overall framework “within which appropriateness is judged and the various syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and semiotic structures handled” (152); this is the “translation of genre,” a *text–linguistic* issue. On the other hand, a particular translation may be evaluated on the basis of how closely it approximates what translated material in the language normally looks or sounds like; that is “translation as genre,” a *translational* issue (152). Both of these issues are of critical concern in the training of translators as well as in the preparation of effective training materials for translators. Hatim illustrates this by a consideration of the various *norms* (of higher–order) and *conventions* (a lower parameter) that have been used in translation studies (e.g., by Toury and Nord), both in translator training programs and also in the scholarly description and evaluation of published translations. “Professional norms,” for example, pertain to “the accepted methods and strategies of the translation process” according to conventional criteria such as accountability (*ethical* norm), communicability (*social* norm), and relationship (*intertextual* norm) (160). Each of these would be important considerations in drawing up the job commission (brief) for any Bible translation project.

Chapter 12 (*Empirical research in translation studies*) outlines and evaluates the current status of “corpus research” and “process research.” The former utilises three main kinds of language “corpora” (parallel bilingual, multilingual, and comparable) to investigate possible “translation universals” (163). For example, it is hypothesised that translations tend to exhibit particular stylistic patterns, to be more explicit, to incorporate more disambiguation, to be more standardised, and to favor certain common TL usages (164). After a brief appraisal of such corpus studies and their relevance for translation (165), Hatim makes a similar review and assessment of “process research,” which seeks to probe the mental activities and strategies involved in translating (166). Two main types of mental self–examination are used, namely, “Think Aloud Protocols” (TAP) and “Immediate Retrospection” (IR), and these may have either a psycholinguistic or a pedagogical orientation (166). The latter, for example, might take the form of generalised “self–reporting,” step–by–step “self–observation,” or “self–revelation” through free association (167). Hatim notes that such process research tends to be “incomplete” and suggests that more “text–type criteria” (e.g., genre, discourse) needs to be included in the total investigation process (171–172).

Chapter 13 (*Theory and practice in translation teaching*) is a more lengthy treatment of topics such as problem–based learning, translation didactics, error–identification pedagogy, and curriculum design, which would be of great interest to translation teachers and language instructors alike. Hatim begins this important unit with a listing of eleven crucial questions, such as, “Are translators or interpreters [*we must not forget this dimension of interlingual communication*] born or made?” – “What should be tested and how

should it be tested?" (174). Any serious translator–training program would need to reference the queries on this list when its curriculum is being established and evaluated. Hatim then considers the important issue of “directionality” in translation: Should translators work from their mother–tongue (language A) into a foreign language (B) or vice–versa—or, does it make no difference at all if one is certifiably “competent” in both A and B? The central issue may be summarised as follows: The main difficulty in translating into A is one of comprehending the source text, B, “since it is much easier to handle one’s first language’s linguistic and textual resources”; on the other hand, when translating into B, the real difficulty pertains to linguistic composition, since coping with comprehending the source text, A, “poses little if any difficulty” (178). *Would these correlates have any relevant application to advanced level teachers of biblical Hebrew (despite its being a “dead language”)?*

Hatim moves to a consideration of the differences between language teaching and translation teaching, with special reference to the factor of “translation errors”—their nature (“an error typology”), evaluation, and research potential (179–181). Several proposed “text typologies” for use in translation teaching are then evaluated with respect to scope (inclusiveness) and utility (practicality of use), for example, Emery (1991), Loh (1958), Chau (1984), Adab (1996), and one recommended by the author, Hervey–Higgins (1992), which features a “problem–based” approach that “focuses on the solution of real problems” (191). Finally, Hatim comparatively describes and assesses his own *Practical Guide* to English–Arabic–English translation (1997), which also espouses a discovery–oriented, problem–solving methodology based, not surprisingly, on text–typology (instruction, argumentation, and exposition). This is a graded didactic approach that moves from works that are “least to most evaluative” with respect to core issues such as cohesion, coherence, theme–rheme progression, modality, and text structure in relation to its function (193).

Chapter 14 (*Action and reflection in practitioner research*) begins Section III of *Teaching and Researching Translation*. This presents “a conceptual map for doing research in translation studies, with such areas as register, text, genre, and discourse analysis occupying centre stage” (199). A nine–step problem–solving method, the “action/practitioner research cycle,” is first summarised (201–203) and then applied with various emphases to a sequence of suggested topics and research questions. These engage diverse text–types and sociocultural contexts by means of 14 distinct study–projects (including aims, procedures, evaluation, and further research), which conveniently cover the book’s main subject areas and critical issues, such as ideology, textology, pragmatics, discourse practices, genre norms. Virtually all of the key topics considered in the preceding chapters helpfully appear for review and application in this section (203–233), which could form the basis

for any comprehensive course in advanced translation techniques and research methods.

Chapter 15 (*Setting a teaching and research agenda: The case of style translation*) highlights the title of this book in another practical review of its constituent topics and concerns, but now with specific reference to the all-important, but often inadequately discussed subject of “style.” Hatim’s aim is to present a broader, text–linguistic and pragmatic treatment which at the same time proposes a more adequate “framework for teaching and researching ‘style in translation’” (234). Three introductory sections that review salient issues pertaining to literal translation, textual dynamism (markedness), and register theory lead up to a consideration of “the ubiquitous nature of style” (241) by means of a series of documented “cases studies” (241–258) and “exemplar research projects” (259–263), all of which are based on well-known published literary works. This pedagogical perspective is reflected at the outset in Hatim’s functional definition of style “in terms of how the various ‘non-ordinary,’ marked, expectation–defying features of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings tend to contribute to the way genres, discourses or texts evolve (i.e. establish and assert their identity) (244, *although the term “evolve” seems to be misplaced in view of the purpose–dominated focus of this book, i.e., texts do not evolve, but rather are “created”—or “composed,” for a less theological term—in keeping with a specific author’s subject area, envisaged audience, and communicative objectives*).

Towards the end of his impressive presentation and exemplification of a concrete, linguistically grounded approach to the study of translation theory, practice, pedagogy, and research, Hatim makes the following concluding observations. In the light of much scholarly writing in the field of contemporary translation studies, these opinions are bound to be controversial and perhaps even roundly disputed, but they are experience–informed conclusions that I would also fully subscribe to: “As we near the end of this tour through translation studies’ ‘house of many rooms,’ we cannot help but notice how we are conceptually turning full circle back to where we started, to Catford, Nida and Koller, and to such basic distinctions such as ‘formal’ as opposed to ‘dynamic’ or ‘pragmatic’ equivalence, all revolving around the age-old distinction ‘free’ as opposed to ‘literal’ translation. . . . Equivalence is that unique intertextual relation that only translations, among all conceivable text types, are expected to show” (258–259). Like any national currency or monetary standard, *equivalence* is that convenient, albeit ill–defined, perhaps indefinable “standard” that translators and theorists alike must simply accept and reference out of expediency, if they are to function effectively at all.

Ernst R. Wendland, *Centre for Bible Interpretation and Translation in Africa* and the Department of Ancient Studies, Stellenbosch University. Email: erwendland@gmail.com.

Michael G. McKelvey. *Mose, David and the High Kingship of Yahweh: A Canonical Study of Book IV of the Psalter*. Gorgias Dissertations in Biblical Studies 55. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2010. 359 Pages. Hardback. € 45.90. ISBN 978-3-17-022549-7.

Die vorzustellende Dissertation wurde unter Jamie Grant (UK) erarbeitet. Sie reiht sich ein in die buchkompositorischen und „kanonischen“ Studien zum Psalter. Untersuchungsgegenstand ist das Psalterteilbuch IV (Ps 90–106). Dieses hat aufgrund der ihm zugewiesenen Bedeutung („Brückenfunktion“) innerhalb der Gesamtkomposition in den letzten beiden Jahrzehnten starke Beachtung erfahren. Entsprechend wurde es durch eine Reihe von synchron oder/und diachron angelegten Studien erarbeitet (Zenger 1991/1994, Koenen 1995, Brunert 1996, Howard 1997, Schnocks 2002, Ballhon 2004, Leuenberger 2004). McKelvey hat diese Studien zur Kenntnis genommen (von den wichtigen Arbeiten fehlt nur M. Kleer, »*Der liebevolle Sänger der Psalmen Israels*«, 1996), wenn gleich die Interaktion mit ihnen vergleichsweise gering ist und er vornehmlich US-amerikanische Psalmenstudien und –kommentare anführt.

In der kurzen Einführung nennt McKelvey seine Hauptthese: „The main suggestion of this work is that Psalms 90–106 have been organised as a reply to the previous three psalm books. Notably, these particular psalms appear to respond to the rise and fall of Davidic kingship that is traced in Books I–III“ (xvii). Es folgen methodologische Überlegungen. Vf. bezeichnet seinen Ansatz als „a distinctly synchronic approach“ und reiht seine Arbeit ein in Studien mit vergleichbarer Ausrichtung von Childs, Wilson, Howard, Sheppard, Mays, McCann, Creach, Zenger und Cole. Der Psalter besteht aus zwei Hauptteilen: Buch I–III (früher entstanden) und Buch IV–V (später angefügt, nachexilisch und nachmonarchisch). Ihm ist eine Fortlesung („narrative“) unterlegt, wobei die Betonung von davidischem Königtum (I–III) und JHWH-Königtum (IV–V) weniger in ablösendem Sinn denn in komplementärer Koexistenz (mit Howard) zu verstehen ist. Die Durchführung der Studie besteht darin, dass die Psalmen der Reihe nach in den angenommenen Untergruppen erarbeitet werden, und zwar nach folgendem Schema: Übersetzung, Themen und Theologie („primary thematic and theological ideas . . . considering the import of their message within the context of Book IV“), nochmals unterteilt in theozentrische und anthropozentrische Themen, weitere Elemente (z.B. wichtige Motive) und kanonische Relationen (besser: buchstrukturelle Relationen, denn die Bezüge konzentrieren sich auf benachbarte Psalmen und Psalmgruppen). Am Ende der Monographie werden das Buch IV insgesamt in den Blick genommen, knappe Überlegungen zur geschichtlichen Entwicklung genannt und theologische Schlussfolgerungen anhand der drei Stichworte: Mose, König JHWH und David gezogen. Kurzum: „Psalms 90–106 are best understood as a liturgical act of reorientation for a post-exilic audience, affecting the reader in several ways“ (322). Bibliographie und ein gemischter

Index (thematische Stichworte und Autoren – kein Stellenregister) sind beigegeben.

Die Stärke dieser Monographie liegt in der Erarbeitung der Buchkohärenz mit Hilfe von Begriffs-, Motiv- und Themenstudien. Die Hauptstruktur mit den Gruppierungen und Schwerpunkten ist plausibel, jedenfalls vertretbar: Ps 90–92 (Moses) | Ps 93–100 (König JHWH) | Ps 101–104 (David) | Ps 105–106 (Mose/Israel). Vf. geht davon aus, dass Präskript-Zuweisungen u.U. auch nachfolgende Psalmen mitbestimmen. Zudem gelingt es ihm, abweichende Indizien insofern zu integrieren, als er gewissen Psalmen (wie Ps 92; 94; 100; 101; 104) innerhalb ihrer Gruppen transitorische Funktionen zuschreibt. Gut gelungen ist die Herausarbeitung wesentlicher Motive und Themen, die für Teilbuch IV bestimmend sind. Dazu gehört der Rückgriff auf mit Mose verbundenen Überlieferungen und Funktionen (um nur Dtn 32 und seine Mittlerschaft zwischen Gott und Volk zu erwähnen). Zu Recht wird darauf hingewiesen, dass auch die JHWH-König-Psalmen im Zentrum nicht ohne mosaischen Bezüge sind (vgl. etwa Ps 99 und v.a. die meist nicht gewichtete Referenz auf JHWHs allzeitige Königsherrschaft am Ende des Schilfmeerlieds, Ex 15,18). Damit ist aufgezeigt, dass Mosebezüge und JHWHs Königsherrschaft nicht bezugslos nebeneinander stehen, vielmehr eine bereits in den Bezugstexten (freilich nur knapp) angezeigte Verbindung neu aufgenommen wird und in nachköniglicher Zeit verstärkt zum Tragen kommt (der universale Horizont in der Gruppe Ps 93–100 ist tendenziell etwas unterbestimmt). Das nach Ps 89 neuerliche „Erscheinen“ Davids in Buch IV (Ps 101; 103) und v.a. die damit verbundenen Aussagen gehören zu den herausforderndsten Problemen im Zusammenhang mit Buch IV. Ob das von McKelvey gezeichnete Doppelbild (Klage Ps 101f. und Lobpreis Ps 103f.) des davidischen Horizonts inmitten der mosaischen und JHWH-königlichen Hauptlinie hinreichend ist, bleibt zu diskutieren.

Einige kritische Bemerkungen sind freilich ebenfalls angebracht. So geht der Studie eine Sensitivität für die Psalmenpoesie ab. Selbst wenn die Betonung nicht auf dem Einzelsalm liegt, so ist doch schwer verständlich, weshalb die Übersetzungen der Psalmen nicht in poetischen Verszeilen dargestellt werden. Darüber hinaus ist die Monographie stark repetitiv. Eine Verdichtung wäre ihr gut angestanden. Zudem hätte dies ermöglicht, neben der guten Erarbeitung der Binnenstruktur andere, vernachlässigte Aspekte aufzugreifen. Wenn schon immer wieder betont wurde, dass Buch IV auf die vorangehenden Teilbücher und insbesondere Buch III reagiere, wäre ein genauerer Blick in dieses angezeigt gewesen. Das geschieht praktisch nicht, Vf. verbleibt in der „Binnenstruktur“ von Buch IV. Wäre dies geschehen, so hätte etwa gezeigt werden können, dass mit Mose verbundene Traditionen und Themen bereits im „Krisenbuch“ III erscheinen, Buch IV also nicht *ab ovo* beginnt, sondern im Psalter angelegte Linien aufgreift und modifiziert. Leider bietet Vf. auch keine Überlegungen über Verantwortlichkeiten und Kreise

hinter diesem Buch IV. Wenn Vf. das Buch am Schluss recht unvermittelt als „liturgical act“ zur Reorientierung einer Zuhörerschaft bezeichnet und im gleichen Satz vom „reader“ spricht (322), macht dies offenkundig, dass die Weise der Vermittlung nicht reflektiert wird. Schliesslich bleibt auch das Label „exilisch–nachexilisch“ blass, zumal jegliche (geschichtliche) Näherbestimmungen wie auch Zuordnungen zu vergleichbaren Texten aus dieser Zeit (wie etwa Neh 9) unterbleiben (knappe Hinweise zu Jes 40–66 finden sich). Eine stärkere Profilierung dieses Teilbuchs im Psalter sowie in der Zeit, in die es nach dem Vf. hineinspricht, hätte der Arbeit gut getan und vermieden, dass die propagierte Synchronie doch eine einen starken Hang zur Achronie hat.

Gleichwohl: Wer sich mit der Psalterkomposition, insbesondere Gestalt und Gehalt des Teilbuchs IV beschäftigt, tut gut daran, neben den anders akzentuierten Studien auch diese in die Hand zu nehmen. Sie hat ihre eigenen Stärken und ist als Ergänzung wie Korrektiv hilfreich.

Beat Weber, Lecturer in OT at Theologisches Seminar Bienenberg (Liestal), Switzerland & Research Associate of the Department of Ancient Languages, University of Pretoria, South Africa. *E-mail*: weber-lehnherr@sunrise.ch.

Mussa Samule Muneja, *HIV/AIDS and the Bible in Tanzania: a contextual re-reading of 2 Samuel 13:1–14:33*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2012. 243 pages. Price not mentioned. ISSN: 2190–4944; ISBN: 978–3–86309–115–6; eISBN: 978–3–86309–116–3.

The author clearly stated his major purpose (pp. 18, 19) in carrying out this research especially his realization of the role played by the Bible and how Christians try by all means to interpret it contextually. Muneja's research shows the leading role that the Bible can play in the public sphere in light of HIV and AIDS, although the way the Bible is applied can be liberative or oppressive. Muneja believes that churches have been struggling with the ancient biblical text in their bid to unearth relevant and non-judgmental meanings for persons living with the HIV virus and those affected by it. Yet for Muneja as shown in this book, several research findings done in Africa show that people slavishly trust their religious leaders as well as their biblical interpretations (p. 27). His research engages HIV and AIDS theologically from an African perspective but at the same time he uses the Tanzanian paradigm as his unique premise of debate within the field of Biblical Studies. He adopted several methods in his analysis of 2 Sam 13:1–14:33 and extensively used the reader-response criticism as part of his HIV and AIDS biblical hermeneutics.

The author's use of biblical characters and the involvement of the respondents actualized real life experiences of the weak and voiceless, for

example, women, people living with HIV and AIDS, children and the poor. His use of biblical characters is really an eye opener as the methods used unlocked some of the underlying contemporary cultural, political and economical challenges faced by women today. Even though the Bible does not clearly mention anything on HIV and AIDS and domestic violence, important links that fuel societal disorders and diseases can be related to the biblical characters as shown by Muneja. He used the major characters like Amnon, Tamar and Absalom, and minor characters like Jonadab, servants, reporters, King's sons, King David, Joab and the Woman of Tekoa as his building blocks in raising awareness against violence on women. However, I found it interesting and have reservations as to why King David should be regarded as a minor character instead of a major character. What is interesting is that Muneja's African contextual re-reading, reconstruction theological approach and social engagement of 2 Sam 13:1-22 examines vividly the trends of male power in different societal contexts especially the Tanzanian context and how it presently affects the disadvantaged females (pp. 41, 89, 93).

Muneja challenges African people to interrogate their political, religious, economic and civic institutions to get rid of systems that disadvantage other groups on the basis of religion, economics, gender, Bible, status, colour and geographical location. The setting of the research, although derived from the Bible also fits so well in the Sub-Saharan African setting of poverty, corruption, violence, rape, wars, diseases, HIV and AIDS and unemployment. The African setting of multiple challenges has several factors that contribute to such a paradigm, for example, some challenges are typically pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. Unfortunately, it is the weak and voiceless who continue to suffer. Muneja's major call is a revisit to this important memory on justice, love and respect shown by Jesus when he went further than expected by society and touched the untouchable lepers and bleeding women compassionately (p. 160). Muneja interestingly uses the character of David to call upon African governments to come up with policies that serve all the people. Muneja believes 2 Sam 13:1-14:33 can help address the challenges if properly interpreted, particularly if everybody takes a leading role in the fight for the justice of all (pp. 181-182, 190).

The author's belief in the research shows that HIV and AIDS have developed into a woman's face as it is mostly women who are heavily affected. Muneja argues (pp. 16, 17) that HIV and AIDS have become the primary cause of death among adults in his country and decimated the most productive age group, leaving behind misery, suffering and poverty. His observation can be related to most African countries like Zimbabwe. However, the irony of it is that most of the infected and affected are Christians who use the Bible for edification and as a rule of faith. Though the Bible is considered by many people as the "book of faith," it has become the "book of pain" for women as certain biblical texts are fondly used to fuel violence and ill treatment of

women thereby exposing them to HIV and AIDS. In some cases as raised by Muneja (p. 24), certain biblical texts (Deut 28:27–29 and Numbers 25:1–3) have been used as a tool of judgment on people living with HIV and AIDS (pp. 120–123), thereby promoting a theology of retribution. Muneja believes that we have to start with the Bible if attitudes are to be changed for the benefit of everybody. He argues that the level of stigmatization against people living with HIV and AIDS in Africa will not come to an end unless proper awareness campaigns that involve all stakeholders are made especially by the African governments and church leaders (pp. 143–146, 174–177). Muneja proposes in this book the need for a liberating and empowering biblical hermeneutics. Muneja's research has also shown that the society at large has been an agent of stigmatization to the ill and rape survivors. The Church's use of the Bible and African culture in some cases has become an albatross or an accomplice on the ill-treatment of women. Certain African cultural practices justify the sexual abuse of women, myths of sleeping with little girls with the assumption that it can heal AIDS, alleged cultural "rights" of husbands over their wives' bodies after paying *mahalillobola* or dowry (p. 115–117), take women as weak vessels and victims of circumstances (pp. 111–112). Muneja (p. 21) also gave the example of the Sukuma society's *Chagulaga mayu* (choose one among us) harvest festival where the unmarried women are expected to choose their lovers from among several men who have surrounded them. Sexual intercourse is the end result at a certain secluded place. The church with mostly men as leaders has uncritically adopted that mentality. This is also measured by the number of sermons preached or not preached on HIV or AIDS and gender-based violence (pp. 106–107, 136, 142–146, 163–165).

I would definitely recommend that this book be accessible in theological colleges and university libraries in Zimbabwe as it provokes debate and challenges biblical scholars, lecturers, Christian believers, pastors, theologians and students to engage the Bible cautiously and apply a "hermeneutics of suspicion." As rightly observed by Muneja in his research, the selected institutions in Tanzania lack a curriculum that integrates HIV and AIDS (pp. 106, 115, 165, 177) and the same trend can be noticed in Zimbabwean theological colleges. As a result, Muneja calls for the change of the curriculum used in theological colleges who still slavishly follow old and tired missionary oriented curricula (pp. 169–170). Muneja believes that there has not been a well expounded interpretive method to deal with biblical misinterpretations that cause stigma towards people living with HIV and AIDS (pp. 218–219) and a curriculum that addresses African paradigmatic issues, thoughts and challenges (pp. 220–221).

This book is really an interesting and critical piece of work that interrogates the place of the Bible in both the private and public spheres of Africans. He used several important sources in his compilation of information. However, the author did not resolve or highlight the challenges faced by men

who are also victims of rape. Zimbabwe has experienced a series of “ritual rapes” where men are violently abducted by women and raped for ritual business purposes. As a result, the narrative of Tamar can be representative of all victims of sexual abuse and not only women as alleged by author (pp. 93, 96–97, 99, 102, 125). Instead Muneja should have stood by his other claim or suggestion that it will be critically progressive to promote Biblical readings that are gender sensitive and which incorporates courses on AIDS in the mainstream curriculum so that pastors and church leaders may be equipped with the tools necessary for advocacy, thereby making the church become a special haven for all people (pp. 177–179, 218–219). It is good that he calls for African governments to empower women but that again should not result in the total disempowerment of men in reverse. His suggestion in this book for equality and justice must be the epitome of the reconstruction (pp. 196, 212–213, 217) in the biblical hermeneutical discourse.

Dr Francis Machingura, Lecturer, Curriculum & Arts Education Department, University of Zimbabwe, Faculty of Education, P.O. Box MP167, Mt Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Mark Sneed, *The Politics of Pessimism in Ecclesiastes – A Social–Science Perspective*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012. ISBN 978–1–58983–635–8, pp. x + 341.

Few biblical personas and their ideas have attracted such a variety of incommensurable interpretations as Qohelet. An overview of the history of interpretation of the book of Ecclesiastes shows that there is no consensus regarding its precise date, message, the identity and sociallocation of the author, the meanings of key terms and about the author’s theological agenda. Into this fray of diverse opinions comes the monograph by Mark Sneed, offering us a sociological perspective on the book’s pessimism and skepticism that seeks to overturn the popular view that Qohelet was either a liberal wisdom teacher or a precursor to modern existentialism. Not that Sneed pleads for a return to a traditional or conservative reading. Avoiding both liberal–critical and fundamentalist camps and their projections he steers a middle and balanced way that both admits the book’s heterodoxy and that also goes a long way in explaining many fundamental aspects of the text in its purported social context.

The monograph itself represents an extensively revised and completely ignored PhD thesis written just over two decades ago. Meanwhile, Sneed has made good use of this time to immerse himself in the theories of sociological biblical interpretation. Standing on the shoulders of a long line of thinkers, from Hegel and Marx through Max Weber on the one hand and their biblical scholarly followers on the other, Sneed sees in Qohelet a radical conservative. Yet by conservative here is not meant theologically backward in the modern

sense, but “primitive” in a non-pejorative religious–historical sense. This view follows apparently logically from the sociallocation Sneed has constructed for the author to make sense of much of what earlier interpreters of the book are alleged to have failed to explain adequately.

With regard to contents, the book starts off with an introduction discussing and distinguishing Qohelet’s pessimism and skepticism. This is followed in ch. 1 by remarks on the heterodoxy of the book where the author distinguishes inadequate “ideational” approaches as opposed to non-ideational ones. Many of the major commentators on Qohelet plus the pros and cons of their non-social scientific readings are discussed.

In ch. 2 the focus then moves on to the author’s main concern and area of expertise, namely the social sciences and readings of the book from perspectives therein. Included here are Marxian, post-colonial, Durkheimian, grand theories and anthropological approaches. In each case the plurality of subtypes of theories and approaches is taken cognisance of and the author is at his best in this area of interdisciplinary research given his ability to see the potential and problems of various readings of this genre.

After identifying his own sociological stance, Sneed offers in ch. 3 a social contextualisation of Qohelet’s person (assuming he was a historical figure) by discussing several aspects on Ptolemaic rule in Qohelet’s commonly accepted Hellenistic historical context. Historical details, as well as matters of administration, taxation, governance, stratification and Hellenization are on the menu. The focus here is completely on social determinants and any Greek philosophical influence on Qohelet is for the most part denied.

Chapter 4 then links up with ch. 3 and now deals with Qohelet and his audience against its Hellenistic backdrop. Here we encounter discussions of possible allusions to a social context in Qohelet’s own words, but somewhat more intensive and extensive than similar attempts in traditional commentaries. The age-old debate as to whether Qohelet was aristocratic or middle class as well as the nature of his participation in the world of scribes and intellectuals are the core concerns of the fourth chapter.

In ch. 5 Sneed offers a socio-literary and synchronic analysis of the book. He starts off by taking a closer look at the meaning of Qohelet’s key term *hebel*, both in the context of the HB in general and in the context of Qohelet’s own complex thought. This is linked to the concept of God in Ecclesiastes which is dealt with next. Here Sneed tries to show that theology is, contrary to popular opinion, central to the book and that Qohelet was theologically more reverential and positive than he is popularly construed. Again we find an emphasis on the idea that Qohelet was not a forerunner of the modern existentialist theologian but in fact, relative to other contexts in the HB and

despite all his radicalness, representative of the regression to a more primitive minimalist theology.

Chapter 6 flows naturally from the above as it places Qohelet in the context of theodicy. Commencing with the HB in general and its strategies of theodicy, Sneed goes on to focus on Qohelet's own attempt to justify the ways of God to humans. First up are the assets and liabilities of redefining the deity's standard of judgment. Then the social location of theodicy is constructed, which in turn is followed by a discussion of the non-salvific perspective of the book as well as of Qohelet's ways of attempting to minimise cognitive dissonance for himself and his audience given their reconstructed social location.

In Chapter 7 we encounter a detailed discussion of rationalisation in religion applied to Qohelet. Here various aspects of the phenomenon are discussed from a social-scientific perspective, including the relationship of rationalisation to irrationality, its processes, the matter of consistency, *etcetera*. Thereafter follow some thoughts regarding Max Weber and his view of religious rationalisation in the HB in general and in the context of the wisdom literature in particular. The ever-present and popular "doctrine of retribution" is dealt with and Qohelet and his contradictions are constructed as presenting an irrational response to an over-rationalised wisdom tradition.

Chapter 8 shows the reader that for Sneed Qohelet still has (or had) (social-)psychological relevance as it deals with what is called the "positive power of Qohelet's pessimism." This is done by comparing Qohelet's pessimism to generic varieties thereof and by showing how the lowering of expectations in Qohelet actually freed the tradition (or saved it) from extinction via cognitive strain in its attempts to make sense of social upheaval.

Chapter 9 then deals with the sociology of the book's canonicity and seeks to offer a solution to yet another puzzle that has vexed interpreters. First up is the degree of heterodoxy in Qohelet and this is followed by the thesis of canonisation as based on misperception.

Finally the book ends with a few pages of conclusions along with a bibliography and indices of ancient sources, modern authors and subjects.

On the plus side, Sneed has had ample time to refine his own sociological readings of Qohelet and the expertise, quality and illuminating nature of his personal perspective are clearly visible. His study is surely the most extensive and intensive up-to-date sociological reading of Ecclesiastes available. Almost all of the major problems besetting Qohelet interpretation are put forward convincingly as partly and potentially soluble from a sociological explanation. For his expert work and long-suffering appropriation of the biblical text, Sneed is to be commended

One possible drawback of a study of this nature, however, concerns the fact that the social contextualisation Sneed engages in is of necessity somewhat speculative. This especially in the sense of all historical contexts being in the end scholarly constructs open to revision. Hence reconstructing Qohelet and his social context and trying to discern the influence of the latter on the former remain as potentially open to eisegesis as purely ideational readings. Combine this with what comes dangerously close to sociological reductionism – and the social-scientific fallacy of thinking that the book's meaning is explained when its social context is clarified – and it almost looks as if the author might even have ended up falling into the same projectionist trap of his ideational predecessors. Being a sociological critic, Sneed was obviously going to conclude that sociological readings should be at the top of the exegete's priority list.

Another potential problem involves a possible case of unwitting autobiographical projection by the author. Note how the main aim of the books seems to have been to locate Qohelet as an intellectual in turbulent times when the status of his guild fell considerably. Just as Sneed could show Qohelet was always to some extent cast in the image of the interpreter in the case of names like Crenshaw and Fox, one is left to wonder whether the middle class disenfranchised intellectual that Qohelet seems to Sneed is not itself also partly a projection of Sneed's own sociological profile. This might have been an ungrounded claim, were it not for the way in which Sneed does not neglect to point out his own situation of being largely ignored and unheralded in the academic and social community in which he finds himself (on several occasions to the point bordering on painful bitterness and self-absorption). That does not mean he must therefore of necessity be wrong about Qohelet (sometimes one sees better being in similar situations), it just makes the theory somewhat psychologically suspect.

In the end, Sneed's monograph, whatever one makes of it, is a solid piece of work, evidencing a scholarly lifetime of immersion into Qohelet's thought and to sociological biblical criticism. It offers an alternative explanation of Qohelet's heterodoxy that any interpretation of the book that takes its alterity serious should not ignore. The research is overall quite balanced and the reasoning or the most part erudite and sound. Readers like myself with meager background in sociology will be able to follow the author's train of thought as the style of writing is lucid and flowing, with explanations of the many points of view offered. In most instances alternative views are never simply naively dismissed or recommended. Instead, both the strong and weak points of theories treated are sufficiently acknowledged. That being said, it is not a book for a newcomer to Qohelet's discourse and only intermediate and advanced readers can appreciate the intricate, alternative and informative perspectives it offers.

Jaco Gericke, North-West University (Vaal Campus), Faculty of Humanities, Subject Group Theology and Philosophy, Vanderbijlpark, 1900, email: 21609268@nwu.ac.za.

Peter van der Veen und Uwe Zerbst, *Volk ohne Ahnen? Auf den Spuren der Erzväter und des frühen Israel*. Holzgerlingen: Hänssler, 2013, 350 Seiten. Hardcover, Euro 29.95. ISBN 978-3-7751-5467-3.

Nach *Biblische Archäologie am Scheideweg? Für und Wider einer Neudatierung archäologischer Epochen im alttestamentlichen Palästina* (2002) und *Keine Posaunen vor Jericho? Beiträge zur Archäologie der Landnahme* (2005) ist dies das dritte von Van der Veen und Zerbst gemeinsam verantwortete Buch. Die Fragezeichen in allen drei Titeln zeigen an, dass die Autoren gerne vermeintlichen Konsens hinterfragen, in diesem Fall den Konsens, dass man den biblischen Erzvätergeschichten heute praktisch keinerlei historischen Gehalt mehr zugesteht. Wie schon die beiden vorhergehenden Bücher ist auch dieses süffig zu lesen, sehr schön aufgemacht und reich (diesmal sogar farbig) bebildert. Zitate sind immer auf Deutsch übersetzt.

Teil 1 ist eine Heranführung ans Thema, hauptsächlich mittels eines forschungsgeschichtlichen Abrisses zur Frage nach der Historizität der Stammväter Israels. Dabei werden die 1970er Jahre als „Wasserscheide“ bezeichnet: Nachdem in der Mitte des 20. Jhd. noch viele Gelehrte die Frage nach dem historischen Gehalt der Stammvätergeschichten positiv beantwortet hatten, ändert sich hier die Forschungslage. Auf bibelwissenschaftlichem Gebiet gerät die Neuere Urkundenhypothese ins Wanken, besonders durch Beiträge von J. Van Seters und R. Rendtorff. Auf archäologischem Gebiet wird das „Abrahamitische Zeitalter“ der albright'schen Schule aus diversen Gründen aufgegeben. Diese Gründe werden dann in den Teilen 3–6 diskutiert. Zuvor aber wird in Teil 2 auf zwei Seiten die Themenstellung und Methodik des Buches dargelegt.

Teil 3 ist der vielleicht wichtigste Teil des Buches, da er den wesentlich neuen Beitrag der Autoren zur Fragestellung enthält, nämlich eine eigene chronologische Arbeitshypothese für die zeitliche Einordnung der Stammväter Israels. Die Autoren arbeiten schon länger an der These, dass die absolute Chronologie Ägyptens, an welcher die relative Chronologie der Levante im 2. Jt. hauptsächlich geeicht wird, wesentlich verkürzt werden müsse. Ähnliches fordern sie hier auch für die mesopotamische Chronologie, wobei der Nachrechnung astronomischer Konstellationen eine besondere Bedeutung zukommt. Sie folgen darin David Lappin, der dies in zwei umfangreichen Aufsätzen im Anhang begründet. Während beispielsweise die angenommenen Lebensdaten Hammurabis sich konventionell zwischen 1848–1806 (lange

Chronologie) und 1696–1654 (ultrakurze Chronologie) bewegen, führt Lappins Neu beurteilung zu einer Chronologie, die man als „ultra-ultrakurz“ bezeichnen könnte (1629–1586). Dazu kommt, dass die Autoren für Ex 12,40 der LXX folgen und 215 Jahre als Angabe der Aufenthaltsdauer Israels in Ägypten annehmen. Zusammen führt dies zu folgenden Eckdaten: Abraham hat hauptsächlich während der FBZ IV/MBZ I in Kanaan gelebt, den Übergang zur MBZ II aber noch erlebt. Jakob hat vor seiner Übersiedlung nach Ägypten in der MBZ II gelebt.

Ausgehend von dieser chronologischen Arbeitshypothese wird dann in Teil 4 der altorientalische Kontext untersucht. Tatsächlich passt das für besagte Zeit rekonstruierte Klima gut zum biblischen Befund: Das Ende der Dynastie von Akkad, des Alten Reiches in Ägypten und der FBZ in Palästina scheint im Zusammenhang mit einer klimatischen Verschlechterung zu stehen. Auch Kanaans Siedlungsstruktur, die sich für FBZ IV/MBZ I und MBZ II deutlich unterscheiden lässt, passt recht gut mit dem biblischen Befund überein, und zwar nicht nur in Bezug auf die einzelnen Städte, sondern auch mit Blick auf die Verschiebung des Siedlungsraums der Stammväter vom Negev (Abraham, Isaak) nach Norden (Isaak, Jakob). Sodann werden die verschiedenen Berührungen der Stammväter mit Ägypten untersucht. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wird Josef gewidmet. Für seinen ägyptischen Namen Zafnat-Paneach (Gen 41,45) schliessen sich die Autoren der Erklärung K. Kitchens an, Zafnat als ägypt. *Djed(u)-en-ef* (= „der genannt wird“) und Paneach als *ʾipi-ʾanch(u)* (= „Ipi lebt“) zu deuten, was als Kurzform *ʾipi* im Mittleren Reich häufig belegt ist. Sie verweisen denn auch auf einen Skarabäus (Ashmolean Museum, AN 1892.295) aus der 12./13. Dynastie, auf welchem ein „Vermögensverwalter der Kornspeicher“ namens *ʾipi* bezeugt ist.

In Teil 5 diskutieren die Autoren den ausserbiblischen Befund für die Völker, die in den biblischen Stammvätertexten erwähnt werden. Dabei zeigen sie, dass die oft gemachte Behauptung, bei der Erwähnung der Hethiter, Philister und Aramäer handle es sich um Anachronismen, so nicht haltbar ist. Teil 5 enthält als Gastbeitrag von G. Reinhold einen Exkurs zur Frühbezeugung Arams in Schriftquellen des 3./2. Jt. aus dem syrischen und mesopotamischen Raum.

Teil 6 behandelt schliesslich einige einzelne Themen, die für oder gegen den historischen Gehalt der Texte ins Feld geführt werden. So zeigen sie in Anschluss an einen neueren Beitrag von M. Heide (*UF* 42, 2010), dass domestizierte Kamele, wenn auch nicht in grosser Menge, durchaus schon bis ins 3. Jt. zurück belegt sind und somit ihre Erwähnung nicht unbedingt anachronistisch ist. Sie verweisen auf die Arbeit K. Kitchens zu den Strukturen von Vertragstexten im Alten Orient, die sich in verschiedenen Zeiten voneinander unterscheiden lassen. Die Verträge der Stammväter (Gen 21,22–32; 26,26–31; 31,43–53) entsprechen der Struktur von Texten aus Mari und

Leilan im frühen 2.Jt. Der Sklavenpreis von 20 Schekel für Josef (Gen 37,28) schliesslich entspricht den Preisen, die in altbabylonischen Texten (u.a. Codex Hammurabi) und in Texten aus Mari belegt sind, während die Preise später aufgrund von Inflation stetig anstiegen, im neuassyrischen Reich auf 50–60 Schekel, im Persischen Reich sogar auf 90–120 Schekel. Teil 6 wird mit einem Exkurs von M.–J. Paul zu Sozialen Gewohnheiten und Bräuchen der Erzväterzeit abgerundet. Auf zwei Seiten folgt in Teil 7 eine kurze Zusammenfassung.

Dem Buch sind drei Anhänge beigefügt. Anhang A greift die textkritische Frage zur Dauer des Aufenthalts Israels in Ägypten in Ex 12,40 nochmals auf. In einem textkritischen Beitrag begründet H. Koorevaar, warum dem masoretischen Text hier der Vorzug zu geben ist. Darauf antwortet P. van der Veen mit einer nochmaligen Begründung der kürzeren Aufenthaltsdauer der LXX und der Samaritanischen Tradition.

In Anhang B analysiert D. Lappin 39 potentielle Monddaten aus der 12. Dynastie Ägyptens und kommt zum Schluss, dass die beste Übereinstimmung eine Datierung der Periode in die Jahre 1694–1644 v.Chr. ergibt, was rund 130 Jahre später ist als im konventionellen Schema.

In Anhang C analysiert D. Lappin die Datierung der Ersten Dynastie Babylons auf der Grundlage der Venus–Tafeln des Ammizaduga und überlieferter 30–Tage–Mondmonats–Reihen. Als bestes Resultat für Ammizadugas Jahr 1 ergibt sich nach seinen Berechnungen das Jahr 1483 v.Chr., was deutlich später ist als bisherige Vorschläge und zu einer angenommenen Regierungszeit Hammurabis von 1629–1586 führt.

Wer der Forschungsmehrheit seit den 1970ern nicht gefolgt ist, und den biblischen Stammvätertexten noch immer einen historischen Gehalt zugesteht, wird in diesem Buch Gründe finden, warum das durchaus eine vertretbare Position sein kann. Allerdings sind die Argumente kaum zwingend genug, um jemanden vom historischen Gehalt der Stammvätertexte zu überzeugen, der nicht schon zumindest offen dafür ist.

Das Buch ist in Aufbau und Argumentation nachvollziehbar und auch dann informativ, wenn man nicht überall überzeugt wird. Aufgrund der Breite des darin verarbeiteten Materials kann es gut auch als Nachschlagewerk und Einführung in verschiedene Fragestellungen dienen.

Vieles darin steht und fällt natürlich mit der chronologischen Arbeitshypothese. Das ist zugleich die Stärke und die Schwäche des Buches. Es gelingt den Autoren, zu zeigen, was für den historischen Gehalt der Stammvätergeschichte gewonnen ist, wenn man ihrer chronologischen These folgt. Doch wer wird dieser These folgen? Die textkritische Entscheidung, der LXX in Ex 12,40 den Vorzug zu geben, wird viele nicht überzeugen. Mit Blick

auf die vorgeschlagene Verkürzung der ägyptischen und mesopotamischen Chronologie ist es schwierig, sich ein Urteil über die Plausibilität der Nachrechnung astronomischer Konstellationen und der daraus gezogenen Schlussfolgerungen von David Lappin zu bilden, wenn man selbst weder auf chronologische Fragen noch auf astronomische Datierungsmethoden spezialisiert ist. So bleibt dem Nichtspezialisten wohl nichts anderes übrig, als die derzeit recht breit geführten Diskussionen zu chronologischen Revisionen weiter zu verfolgen.

Obwohl das Buch ein breites Spektrum an Fragen, die im Zusammenhang mit der Historizität der Stammväter Israels relevant sind, abdeckt, ist eine Dimension kaum angesprochen. So würden viele Bibelwissenschaftler argumentieren, dass die Geschichten mit den zwölf Söhnen Jakobs die späteren Verhältnisse in Israel spiegeln. Die konkurrierenden Ansprüche der Stämme Juda und Ephraim würden dann in der Josephsgeschichte literarisch behandelt: Geht das Erstgeburtsrecht, das Ruben, Simeon und Levi verspielt haben, auf den viertältesten Sohn Juda oder auf Josefs Erstgeborenen Ephraim über? Oder setzt Jakobs Stämmesegen in Gen 49 nicht die späteren Verhältnisse im Land voraus? Es wäre interessant, was die Autoren zur These, dass diesen Texten spätere politische Konstellationen in Israel zugrunde liegen, zu sagen hätten.

Man darf gespannt sein, ob dieses Buch eine neue Diskussion über Fragen zur Historizität der Früh- und Vorgeschichte Israels auszulösen vermag. Zu begrüßen wäre eine solche Diskussion jedenfalls.

Benjamin Kilchör, Evangelische Theologische Faculteit Leuven (Belgium), Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule Basel (Switzerland) und Dept. of Ancient Languages an der University of Pretoria (South Africa), Strandbadstrasse 1, CH-8620 Wetzikon (Switzerland). *Email:* benjamin.kilchoer@sthbasel.ch

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