

Giraffe in einem Boot (S. 61) hätte man noch Cannuyer 2010: 50–194 anführen können; die Interpretation als Sonnentier, die Verf. unterstreicht, wird allerdings auch bestritten (McDonald 2012: 231–33). Bemerkenswert sind an einer Lokalität drei Abbildungen von Echnaton—ohne Beischriften (S. 87–89), die sicherlich von nicht-königlicher Hand stammen und für die es nur eine Parallele im Tal der Königinnen gibt.

Alles in allem handelt es sich um ein vielleicht zu opulent ausfallendes Buch im Folio-Format, das mit Papier großzügig umgeht; der erste Band der Reihe war noch bescheidener ausgefallen. Wie jener zeugt auch dieser von der stupenden Belesenheit des Verfassers. Zu befürchten ist allerdings, daß die vielen und teilweise weit hergeholtten Querverweise in der Ägyptologie kaum rezipiert werden. Der kleine Amunpriester Pahu würde sich jedenfalls sicherlich über diesen Prachtband wundern, der zum Teil ihm gewidmet wurde.

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Rethinking Biblical Scholarship. By PHILIP R. DAVIES, Copenhagen International Seminar. Changing Perspectives, vol. 4. Durham, UK: ACUMEN PUBLISHING, 2014. Pp. xv + 253. \$99.95. [Distributed by ISD, Bristol, Conn.]

This stimulating and provocative book by Philip Davies is a collection of sixteen articles and essays, published between 1990 and 2008, and arranged under four headings: I, Method; II, History; III, Prophecy and Apocalyptic; and IV, Canon. The book is given a brief, but useful, introduction by Niels Peter Lemche, which summarizes the basic themes of Davies' work and places it within the context of this scholar's controversial academic career. Davies' approach to biblical studies comes out most clearly in part I on Method, in which, in the first essay, "Do Old Testament Studies Need a Dictionary?" he calls much of the language used

by biblical scholars "Academic Bibspeak," which is a mixture of religious language and the terminology of academic studies with which it is entirely incompatible. In its place Davies proposes the use of critical language completely devoid of any theological (i.e., mythological) overtones.

In chapter 2 he makes the useful distinction between history as something that happened in the past, historiography as an attempt to recount events of the past, and metahistory as the study of various historiographic attempts to recover the past. This leads in chapter 3 to his discussion "What is a 'Minimalist' and Why Do So Many People Dislike It?" The charge of being a minimalist is made against him by religious conservatives because they want to retain a theological perspective within the academic study of the Bible, which Davies strongly rejects. His reason is that historians, by the very nature of their discipline, are minimalists in which religious bias has no place. Davies then illustrates this difference in chapter 4 with the discovery of the Tel Dan inscription, in which the "biblical maximizers" claim to have found a reference to the "house of David," a claim that he argues is very doubtful.

In part II Davies sets forth five historical problems related primarily to dating "historical" events or biblical texts about such events. In chapter 5 he discusses when the term "Israel" became the common designation for Judah, inclusive of Benjamin, with its capital in Mizpah, which reflects the Neo-Babylonian period. In chapter 6 Davies argues that the association of Yahweh with Cyrus (Isa. 45:1–7) does not belong to the Neo-Babylonian period but is to be dated sometime in the fifth century. Chapter 7 argues for the rise of Judaism in the Hellenistic period. Chapter 8 places the story of Josiah's reform along with the book of Deuteronomy in the fifth century B.C.E. Chapter 9 makes use of Manetho and Hecataeus of Abdera to date the story of the exodus from Egypt in the Hellenistic period.

In part III there are five studies on prophecy and apocalyptic, which include two studies on the written forms of prophecy and three studies on the rise of apocalyptic as a rival to prophecy. The suggestion is that both written prophecy and apocalyptic belong to the same late period of time in the Hellenistic age. The collection of studies concludes in part IV with two essays on the development of the Jewish canon.

The strength of this collection of articles, in my view, lies in the clear articulation and defence of the historical-critical method, and the author is fully justified in supporting its "minimalism," which rejects the contamination of such critical study by religious concerns. In its clear articulation of this matter in this book and in other works during his career he has made an important contribution to biblical studies. However, in the application of this method in the rest of the book, when he attempts to date specific texts and writings to historical periods vaguely identified as Persian or Hellenistic, the evidence is very weak, with little regard for other historical possibilities. I will cite one example among many.

In chapter 13 he uses a comparison between Genesis 6:1–4, which recounts the sexual union between mortal women and the “sons of god,” and a similar more elaborate version in 1 Enoch 6–11 in support of a late date for this biblical unit and its attribution to P. However, he completely ignores my earlier treatment of this episode in Genesis and its very close comparison with the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (Van Seters, *Prologue to History* [Louisville, 1992]: 149–58), which would support a much earlier date for the Genesis story and would seriously undermine the entire argument of this chapter. Historical criticism requires the serious appraisal of *all* the relevant historical evidence. Notwithstanding these few critical remarks, Davies has done much to help us rethink biblical scholarship and for this we are grateful.

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‘Durch Dein Wort ward jegliches Ding!’ / ‘Through Thy Word All Things Were Made!’: 2. Mandäistische und samaritanistische Tagung. Edited by RAINER VOIGT. Mandäistische Forschungen, vol. 4. Wiesbaden: HARRASSOWITZ VERLAG, 2013. Pp. x + 393, illus. €98.

When still a graduate student, this reviewer gave a presentation on some intricacies of Samaritan Aramaic phonology at a University of Heidelberg research seminar. The late Professor Klaus Beyer, Nestor of Aramaic Studies in Germany, was present and—amicable as always—shared some of his thoughts on the late Prof. Rudolf Macuch, whose name had naturally come up a number of times throughout the talk: “I always wondered,” said Beyer, “why Macuch chose to concentrate his scientific efforts on two areas so wide apart as Mandaic and Samaritan languages. But then again, they share a number of common denominators: Both are located at the extreme eastern and western ends, respectively, of the Aramaic-speaking world of Late Antiquity. Both were spoken by religious minority groups that survive, in very small numbers, unto this day. And both lack laryngeals and pharyngeals.” It is impossible to know whether Beyer’s rationalization of Macuch’s choice of research topics is correct, but is it this very peculiar choice that dictated the contents of the twenty-three articles on different aspects of Mandaisms (about two-thirds of the book) and Samaritanism in the volume under review, which originated in the Second International Conference of Mandaic and Samaritan Studies in Memory of Prof. Rudolf Macuch. For reasons of space, we cannot review all articles in detail. Rather, we shall concentrate on particularly noteworthy items.

Ionuț Daniel Băncilă opens the volume with “Die Stellung der mandäischen Version des 114. Psalms im Qolasta: Eine semantische Kontextualisierung” (pp. 3–44). While this surprising parallel between the psalm and a Mandaic prayer has been treated before, e.g., by

Jacob N. Epstein and Jonas C. Greenfield, it is worthwhile to return to this and similar parallels every now and then, if only to expose researchers from other fields to them. After all, such small and very specialized disciplines like Mandaic and Samaritan studies have many hidden pearls to offer to mainstream fields like theology or history.

Gaby Abu Samra, “A New Mandaic Magic Bowl” (pp. 55–69), publishes the transliteration and translation of a Mandaic incantation bowl housed at the library of the Holy Spirit University in Kaslik, Lebanon. As Abu Samra remarks (p. 59), the formula “upon the wreath of the light of air I am standing . . .” is a staple in Mandaic epigraphy. Ohad Abudraham, “Three Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the Yosef Matisyahu Collection,” *Leshonenu* 77 (2015): 59–98 (82–83) (Hebrew), has now provided a comprehensive list of attestations.

Matthew Morgenstern and Tom Alfia, “Arabic Magic Texts in Mandaic Script: A Forgotten Chapter in Near-Eastern Magic” (pp. 163–79): Non-Muslim Arabic, sometimes written in foreign scripts, is a priceless source for historical Arabic dialectology, since the language of such texts is usually less influenced by the standard language than Muslim Arabic. No wonder, then, that Morgenstern and Alfia point to various vernacular features (pp. 169, 171–72).

Werner Arnold asks “Gibt es einen samaritanischen Dialekt des Arabischen?” (pp. 249–55) and answers in the affirmative. Even though the Samaritan Arabic dialect resembles the local dialect of Nablus, it still preserves some typically Damascene Arabic features, apparently relics of the language of the many Samaritans who fled from Damascus to Nablus in the aftermath of the massacre of 1625.

Magnar Kartveit, “The Origin of the Jews and Samaritans according to the Samaritan Chronicles” (pp. 283–97), rigorously tests the reliability of the Samaritan Chronicles as historical sources for the biblical and Hellenistic periods, with negative results. However, the historiographical material can offer genuine information on the Byzantine period (see the reviewer, *JAOS* 135 [2015]: 189–207) and the Middle Ages.

Frank Weigelt provides an excellent overview of “Die exegetische Literatur der Samaritaner” (pp. 343–90), which replaces the respective entries in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan D. Crown (Tübingen, 1989), and *A Companion to Samaritan Studies*, ed. Alan D. Crown et al. (Tübingen, 1993). He adds a sample edition of Šadaqa b. Munağğā’s commentary on Genesis (here vv. 3:1–8), but this is a drop in the ocean: Most of the Samaritan Arabic exegetical literature remains unpublished.

Mandaic and Samaritan Studies are small disciplines that have a lot to offer to historians, Bible scholars, and Semitists. Hopefully, this felicitous volume will succeed in making the exciting Mandaic and Samaritan sources known to a wider audience.

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