

2022 Nr. 195

ISSN 0178-2967
WWW.BIBLISCHE-NOTIZEN.ORG
WWW.BIBLICAL-NOTES.ORG

BN *Biblische Notizen* *Biblical Notes*

*Neue Folge. Herausgegeben von Kristin De Troyer und
Friedrich Vinzenz Reiterer, Salzburg, in Verbindung mit
Karin Schöpflin, Göttingen.*

Betreut am Fachbereich Bibelwissenschaft und Kirchengeschichte
der Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg.

Inhalt

- Bernd Janowski**, Fühlen, Denken, Wollen SEITE 3
Wilfried Warning, Das literarische Moment ... SEITE 29
Stefan Bojowald, , Eine koptisch-manichäische Parallele ... SEITE 49
Israel Finkelstein, A Battle between Joahaz and Hazael? SEITE 55
Daewook Kim, Interpreting Zech 13,1-6 ... SEITE 63
Robert D. Miller II, On the Identification of the Dragon Spring SEITE 79
Timothy Yap, Prophets as Traffic Controllers SEITE 87
Steffen Weishaupt, Aus dem Nachlass von Reinhard Nordsieck SEITE 101
Ruben van Wingerden, A Portrait of the Elder ... SEITE 113
Buchvorstellungen SEITE 127

HERDER FREIBURG · BASEL · WIEN

Matthias Armgardt / Benjamin Kilchör / Marcus Zehnder (eds.), *Paradigm Change in Pentateuchal Research* (BZAR 22), XXIV + 366 p., € 86,00, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2019, ISBN 978-3-447-11170-6.

For the past century and a half, the literary-critical analysis of the Hebrew Pentateuch has been dominated by the documentary hypothesis, as proposed by Julius Wellhausen in Germany, following on the earlier work of Wilhelm de Wette, Karl Heinrich Graf and Abraham Kuenen. The four original documents have been identified as J, E, D and P, in that chronological order, with the earliest around the middle of the monarchial period and the latest after the Babylonian Exile. Most twentieth-century scholarship on the topic has adopted and adapted the theory and the proposed number of sub-strata, editorial glosses and redactional processes have multiplied as the decades have gone by. Those few scholars who have seriously questioned the basic hypothesis have often been much derided and their work has rarely been given adequate consideration.

At a conference held in Riehen, Switzerland, in March 2017, a number of scholars attempted to question whether the time had not come to re-assess the Wellhausenian model and to raise the possibility that there might be alternative methodologies for understanding the emergence and development of the so-called “five books of Moses”. The participants came from different countries, had a variety of personal ideological positions, and were by no means proposing fundamentalist, theological positions that questioned the value of critical and scientific study. Rather, they were troubled by the treatment of the documentary hypothesis as an academic doctrine that might be adjusted but could not be challenged in its essence. Their overall approach was to suggest that literary analysis on its own might be misleading and that account should also be taken of the broader Ancient Near East, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, economics, law and the non-Pentateuchal books of the Hebrew Bible.

The volume begins with a preface written by the three editors in which they outline what they see as the defects of Wellhausen’s paradigm and explain how each of the seventeen contributions offers a distinct perspective on how these defects may be rectified and an improved paradigm achieved. They then summarize in considerable detail each of the essays, paying special attention to how the alleged P and D materials are treated and the degree to which post-exilic datings, and other aspects of the Wellhausenian propositions, cannot be maintained without serious difficulties. Georg Fischer of Innsbruck regrets the dichotomy between the diachronic and synchronic approaches and maintains that the time has come for a change of analysis. He is ill at ease with attempts to locate the original version of a text, with terminological sloppiness, and with unfounded speculation, and welcomes the recent trends towards a “greater degree of (self-)critical reflection and a humbler stance” (p. 5). Richard E. Averbeck of Deerfield, Illinois, summarizes the history of the documentary theory and opts for reading the Pentateuchal text as it stands, rather than searching out what to the contemporary mind (but not to the ancient author) may appear to be inner contradictions. In this respect, he particularly challenges John Barton of Oxford and argues that the genealogies are not later additions but an integral and authentic part of tribal history.

The Israeli scholar, Joshua Berman, highlights what for him represent nine methodological flaws in current source criticism, exemplifying his objections with a close examination of the flood narrative in Genesis 6-9. False claims about doublets are carefully targeted and John Emerton is censured for a basic “epistemological error” (p. 55) in insisting on a theory that allegedly unlocks textual difficulties and denying that “unscrambling the egg” may not always be possible. Koert van Bekkum of Leuven picks up the well-worn crux of the names of God in Exodus 3 and 6 and the alleged conflict between the accounts. He takes issue with the diachronic analysis that posits thematic tensions and textual inconsistencies and argues that diversity is not synonymous with contradiction. For him, the need is for “less distance between story and history” and an appreciation of the continuity between “diverse passages and traditions” (p. 72).

Matthias Armgardt of Konstanz, as a legal historian, draws parallels between the unfounded assumptions made by scholars of Roman law about interpolations in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, now corrected, and similar misconceptions in the treatment of Pentateuchal passages. Taking his methodological lead from Kenneth Kitchen, he challenges the view that the curse lists in Deuteronomy parallel a Neo-Assyrian vassal treaty of the seventh century BCE and prefers to date the origins of such lists in the second millennium BCE. Guido Pfeifer of Frankfurt tackles the subject as a scholar with expertise in “legal history in general and Ancient Near Eastern legal history” in particular (p. 93). The methodological danger, in his view, lies in disregarding the sources themselves and thereby making anachronistic presumptions and he sides with Berman’s view that aspects of history may remain beyond our reach.

Benjamin Kilchör of Basel is keen to point out the weakness of the view that the P materials postdate those of D by dealing with the topics of the place of worship, and the roles of the priests and Levites. He suggests that the unsubstantiated “exilic/post-exilic dating of P... is one of the main reasons why Pentateuchal research has reached an impasse” (p. 110-11). Markus Zehnder of Leuven, in the volume’s longest article, offers observations on the relationship between the blessings and curses listed in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. He examines closely the lexical or phraseological / syntactical connections between those texts themselves and between them and other biblical texts, as well as non-biblical items. He opts for a pre-neo-Assyrian date and tentatively suggests that Deuteronomy 28 may have been familiar with Leviticus 26. Eckart Otto of Munich returns to the notion that Deuteronomy should be interpreted as an integral part of the Pentateuch. He sees it as “the culmination and finale” (p. 182) and a key to understanding the Torah as a whole, while stressing the role of Moses as the mediator of the divine revelation.

Kenneth Bergland of Berrien Springs, Michigan, takes issue with the Wellhausenian idea that Jeremiah 34 has “not the faintest idea” (p. 189) about Leviticus 25. He counters this with the suggestion that the Jeremiah chapter represents a sophisticated blend of Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15, and, by establishing such a relative chronology, challenges the Wellhausenian idea of the originality of the prophets. Carsten Vang of Aarhus tackles the laws relating to the king in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 and their literary and historical background. He rejects any connection with Solomon’s excesses and with prophetic criticism, traces the Ancient Near Eastern background, and concludes that the passage in general, and v.15, in particular, makes best sense if placed in a pre-monarchic setting. Hendrik J. Koorevaar of Leuven, in describing what he regards as the necessary steps for dating the books of the Pentateuch, stresses that “historical criticism is in essence an atheistic ideology and inappropriate” for fair assessment of the Old Testament witnesses (p. 234). He prefers a historical-canonical approach and outlines the five elements relating especially to author, circumstance, location and content, that need to be observed in arriving at acceptable datings.

Lina Petersson of Uppsala shares with the reader some results of her doctoral dissertation concerning the language of the priestly narrative in the Pentateuch. Making use of the careful work of Moshe Segal, Avi Hurvitz and Robert Polzin, and of current studies in linguistics, she identifies those elements of the narrative that can indicate its linguistic characteristics and concludes that they belong to Standard Biblical Hebrew and not Late Biblical Hebrew. The details of the tabernacle as provided in the book of Exodus occupy the attention of Jan Retsö of Gothenburg who rejects the connection with the temple described in 1Kgs 6-8. He compares similar structures from the Near East and suggests that P has integrated “not only sacred traditions from the central highlands” (p. 279) but elements from other local cults. The data should be dated before the related criticism of around 600 BCE.

John S. Bergsma of Steubenville, Ohio, detects the implications of the pro-Northern tendency of the Pentateuch that was common to the Judean and Samaritan establishments after the Exile. He discusses sacred sites, Judah and Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh and the book of Jubilees and suggests that the Pentateuch was more supportive of Samaritan than of Judean claims. He concludes that its origins should be sought in the shared cultural traditions of Judah and Israel in the pre-exilic period. The essay of Sandra Richter of Westmont College, California, is dedicated to the question of the social and economic contexts of Deuteronomy and she argues strongly that the “mechanisms of production, consumption and distribution” do not support a dating in the Hezekian or Josian political reforms. Having examined closely the various possible periods, she suggests that the milieu was the rural life of the central hill country of the late Iron I and early Iron IIA eras. Pekka Pitkänen of Cheltenham, England, also addresses the social contexts of P/H and D and espouses the view that the former was “more or less produced by priests and D by Levites” (p. 333). For him, these traditions were then combined into Genesis-Joshua and the historical context is the period that saw the settling of the Canaanite highlands and the creation there of a new society.

The essays are generally well written and argued, with some offering convincing suggestions, while others are more inclined simply to raise problems and speculate on possibilities. Scholars who adhere to the documentary hypothesis may not accept the alternative proposals but those with open minds have certainly been given much food for further thought.

Stefan C. Reif, Cambridge