

NT/byz. I think a mid-level introduction in textual criticism should provide a detailed explanation of the apparatus only of the current critical editions of the Greek New Testament, since students will automatically look for the most current version. In addition, I really question whether a mid-level introduction in textual criticism is the right place to critique the current versions of the critical editions of the Greek New Testament.

I am sure that the authors' intention to simplify the subject matter, to provide a smooth entry in the given field for first- and second-year students, is well meant. However, it also raises a fundamental question concerning their underestimation of students' capacity. I am skeptical of the recent trend of producing more and more simplified books at the cost of comprehensiveness. I do not share the authors' evaluation of the three standard introductory books on the NT text by Aland & Aland (1989), Metzger & Ehrman (2005), and Parker (2008) as far too detailed for first- or second-year Greek students (xiii). I would prefer upcoming revised editions of these books, rather than incomplete mid-level introductions on textual criticism, as the one I have here reviewed.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

DOMINIC BORNAND

Sæbø, Magne, ed. *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation. Vol. III: From Modernism to Post-Modernism. Part 2: The Twentieth Century—From Modernism to Post-Modernism*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015. 777 pp. Hardcover, EUR 150.00.

This volume completes the project *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament The History of Its Interpretation* (HBOT), edited by the Norwegian theologian Magne Sæbø, professor at MF Norwegian School of Theology. Since its initial planning around 1980, it now constitutes a major monument in Sæbø's contribution to scholarship. As he himself writes, the intention of the entire project was to contribute and further develop the tradition of Ludwig Diestel (*Geschichte des Alten Testaments in der christliche Kirche*, 1869) and Fredric W. Farrar (*History of Interpretation*, 1886). HBOT is not alone as a recent multivolume project presenting the history of interpretation of Scripture. Others that can be mentioned are the *Bible de tous les Temps* (1984–1989) by Roman Catholic scholars; Henning Graf Reventlow's *Epochen der Bibelauslegung* (1990–2001); the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scriptures* (2014), edited by T. C. Oden; the *Blackwell Bible Commentary* (2004–), edited by J. F. A. Sawyer, still to be completed; and finally the planned *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* edited by Hans-Josef Klauck et al.

The first volume, part 1 (HBOT I/1), *From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300)*, was published in 1996. It took us from the beginnings of Scriptural interpretation within the Bible itself up through Jewish and Christian Scriptural interpretation in antiquity. The second part (HBOT I/2) covers Christian and Jewish Scriptural interpretation in the Middle Ages. The second volume (HBOT II), *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*,

includes chapters on Scriptural interpretation in the Renaissance, Catholic Reforms, and the Reformation, and the establishment of the historical-critical method. The third volume, part 1 (HBOT III/1), *From Modernism to Post-Modernism* focuses on the nineteenth century, with the cultural context of biblical interpretation in this century, the increased knowledge of new areas, such as the historical, anthropological, sociological, and mythological context of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, a discussion of various geographical and confessional traditions, the development of the "History of Israel" school, higher and lower criticism, conservative approaches, and studies in the various sections of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, as well as the question of a "biblical theology" and the canon.

The second part of the final volume, HBOT III/2, follows much the same layout as the first (HBOT III/1). These two parts of the third volume allow comparatively more discussion of the timespan of the last two centuries, reflecting the expansion of the studies of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. It begins with some chapters addressing hermeneutical, linguistic, and institutional/social life questions. Then begins the topic of most of the chapters in this book, namely, the movement from a relatively homogenous scholarly field at the beginning of the twentieth century, finding a consensus in the historical-critical method and Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis, and a gradual development toward a more multifaceted field in studies of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, with a methodological pluralism both converging and diverging. Also here we find specific discussions of geographical and confessional traditions, together with special fields of study. The only chapter and theme I found missing among the chapters was one describing how archaeology has affected the studies of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Yes, Albright and his disciples and critics are mentioned and discussed in some of the chapters, as well as the importance of newer finds of extrabiblical manuscripts and inscriptions for the study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Still, much is left to be said about the importance of archaeology for biblical studies.

Both the themes covered and selection of contributors here, as in the previous volumes, reflect an awareness of the growing importance of Jewish scholars in the last century. Part two contains twenty-five chapters written by twenty-three contributors, some of the most well-known scholars in the present field of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. It is not possible to enter into a discussion of each chapter here. But there are some overall observations that can be made. In general, the articles present the material in a relatively neutral way, and the authors include their own contributions at large, proportional to other authors. Needless to say, the quality is generally very high, with maybe two to three chapters that should have been refined and polished somewhat more before being sent off to press. But reading the succinct and clear style of Jean Louis Ska is simply a pleasure. Further, David Carr gives a lot of background information on Pentateuchal criticism that cannot be learned from a mere review of literature. Only an author who is personally familiar with the scholars in this field can write as in this chapter.

The name, topics, and reference indices will be much-welcomed tools for scholars working on specific topics. The extensive bibliographies given in all the chapters, with short summaries of the various contributions in the main text, give a quick reference and overview of a specific field. Even if the editor calls a certain overlap “regrettably unavoidable” (17), I must say that I found this to be one of the strengths of the collection. Reading the various chapters, I found my own research interests enlightened from various perspectives and authors. Eckart Otto’s packed overview of the study of law and ethics, for example, is a treasure for any scholar interested in the field, even when one might disagree with specific points of the respective author. Further, Antti Laato’s chapter on Nordic scholarship gave me an overview of the field in my own geographic location that I had not had before. I suspect others will find a similar appreciation of the material made available in their own fields and affiliations.

It remains only to thank Sæbø and the other contributors, as well as recommend Hebrew Bible/Old Testament scholars to at least familiarize themselves with what is available in these volumes for their specific studies. In the words of Benjamin Jowett, quoted by Sæbø at the end, concerning the Bible: “The book itself remains as at the first unchanged amid the changing interpretations of it.” No doubt, an overview like the HBOT can truly be a bewildering experience. But taken a certain way, the history of interpretation and how Scripture has been received in multifarious ways, can help us become more attentive listeners and more acute, closer readers of the Word of God, which has spoken so meaningfully to successive generations.

Grimo, Norway

KENNETH BERGLAND

Stefanovic, Ranko. *Plain Revelation*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2013. 296 pp. Softcover. \$16.99.

Ranko Stefanovic is professor of New Testament at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. This is his second commentary on Revelation. The first, a verse-by-verse commentary entitled *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Andrews University Press, 2002), was more scholarly in its approach and went through two editions. This commentary is for a different audience. In his preface, Stefanovic describes his purpose: “To write a concise, user-friendly book on Revelation that would be accessible to all informed readers” (viii). He has achieved this purpose rather well.

Plain Revelation is quite readable and provides a concise commentary on Revelation that is accessible to the average reader who is generally informed on biblical matters. Stefanovic says that this commentary “is intended to be an introduction to my commentary, and can serve as a personal study guide, a study tool for small groups, and a textbook” (ibid.). His first commentary was a bit heavy, academically, for a more general audience. It worked fairly well for graduate classes on Revelation but not for typical readers. This one is much more suitable for a lay reader or even for college students taking a general