

Popko, Łukasz. *Marriage Metaphor and Feminine Imagery in Jer 2:1–4:2: A Diachronic Study Based on the MT and LXX*. *EBib* 2/70. Leuven: Peeters, 2015. 655 pp. Softcover. EUR 98.00.

Any scholar who is seriously involved in the study of the book of Jeremiah should consult Popko's work for four main reasons. First, his book excellently summarizes the history of diachronic studies and the current state of scholarship with regard to the redaction history of the book of Jeremiah. Second, Popko's work investigates one of the dominant themes developed in the first third of the book of Jeremiah: the gender relations in their different social forms between YHWH as a man and Judah as a woman (father-daughter; husband-wife). Third, the publication investigates how the Greek Text (GT) and the Masoretic Text (MT) relate to each other based on theme development, argumentation, and general text-genesis. Fourth, Popko's work tries to limit hypothetical a priori to a minimum, while using linguistic, literary, and contextual (ANE literature) data in order to direct his reasoning and conclusions. Herein, Popko delivers fresh insights into the textual meaning and the hermeneutic processes for the present scholarly debate about the book of Jeremiah.

The main aim of this work is twofold. On the one hand, it seeks to investigate the meaning of the different feminine imagery utilized for describing Judah (daughter, wife, prostitute). On the other hand, it investigates the hermeneutical dynamics that must have led to the different handling of feminine imagery in the GT and the MT in Jer 2:1–4:2. Both aims serve each other. Utilizing the framework of creation-Yahwism vs. history-Yahwism (16–17) developed by Francolino Gonçalves, Popko seeks to approach the debate about the primacy of GT and MT with a new tool: marriage metaphor. If a text tradition utilizes the marriage metaphor more emphatically, a typical phenomenon of the later history-Yahwism, it's a strong hint of it being a later development in the redaction history of the book of Jeremiah.

With 655 pages, Popko's publication is massive and divides itself into seven chapters. In the introduction (15–68), two different forms of Yahwism (the older creation-Yahwism and the younger history-Yahwism) are introduced. The methodological utilization of these concepts for diachronic studies is suggested. To clarify the potentiality of the study of marriage metaphors as a typical phenomenon of history-Yahwism, Popko summarizes the history of diachronic studies and shows the circular reasoning often encountered in classical historic critical works of the past. Therefore, a differential exegesis, in which both GT as well as MT are studied as equally important text traditions, is suggested. The exegesis focuses on the utilized female imagery and compares the differences of GT and MT. This differential exegesis then leads to the next, and longest, chapter (69–270). In a detailed way, all verses that contain female imagery are studied and the differences between GT and MT are worked out. Not only are the BHS and the critical Göttinger Septuagint consulted, but Popko also brings into the discussion the Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate in order to explore whether the Hebrew or the Greek text tradition was followed in other ancient translations.

After the exegetical insights and the text-differences have been collected, the next two chapters are dedicated to studies of female imagery in MT (271–322) and GT (323–352). Each of these chapters attempts to clarify how the female imagery is utilized in each text-tradition. The fifth chapter (353–428) is designed to bring the redaction critical perspective to the study of Jer 2:1–4:2 and propose layers of redactional work in a suggested chronological order. Popko arrives at his redaction-critical conclusion based on the assumption that the marriage imagery belongs to history-Yahwism that was developed in the later stages of the prophetic tradition. This assumption is further supported by the assumption that the longer MT edition of Jeremiah is regarded as a later development of the older GT *Vorlage*. Bringing these two assumptions together helps to explain why the marriage metaphor is present through most of MT's version of Jer 2:1–4:2, while it is, for the most part, absent in the GT (cf. 358).

After proposing different redactional layers in their chronological order, the sixth chapter (429–552) focuses on all feminine metaphors in Jer 2:1–4:2 by answering specific questions: What type of woman is described? What type of relationship can be detected between the woman and YHWH? What makes a feminine metaphor a marriage metaphor? etc. Compared to the previous chapters, this chapter goes much deeper into the matter of the social and theological functions of the different female metaphors. The chapter also engages with ANE literature, comparative studies, and inner biblical contextual studies, allowing for a nuanced and comprehensive understanding. Whether one finds Popko's conclusion about the redaction history convincing or not, this chapter has value in and of itself, as it informs any methodological approach to Jeremiah, providing important insights. The author addresses all these important questions in different subsections (e.g., "What does precisely the woman's 'youth' mean?", "How is inheritance ensured for a daughter?", etc.). In the last chapter, the author concludes his findings and summarizes his arguments about (a) the primacy of the shorter GT tradition over the longer MT tradition, (b) the rationale for the editorial move from feminine metaphors (GT) to dedicated marriage metaphors (MT), and (c) the importance of differential exegesis.

The author has put a lot of effort into his research. There is no doubt that he has broad knowledge and an excellent set of skills for collecting and analyzing all necessary materials. Independent of one's own methodological approach to the book of Jeremiah, Popko's work is important and will enrich the present research on the book of Jeremiah. Especially helpful are the second chapter containing the differential exegesis of Jer 2:1–4:2 and the sixth chapter in which the different feminine metaphors are explored. These are excellent chapters as they can function as a reference guide.

There are, however, some questions as to the author's lines of argumentation and analysis. As it is crucial for his conclusion to see a major difference between GT and MT (and their respective *Vorlagen*), one must sometimes wonder whether the conclusion is somewhat forced. At the end of the second chapter, the author argues that, in contrast to the short version (GT), the long version (MT) is more positive towards the fate of the pagan nations (265).

Jeremiah 2:19 and 3:17 are used as examples. However, in Jer 2:19, neither the MT nor the GT speak about the foreign nations and, in 3:17, both texts foretell the gathering of the nations at the “Lord’s Throne.” While there are smaller differences between the shorter and longer versions, they do not express a different attitude towards the nations. Also, when the author stresses that, in Jer 2:14, the GT refers to Israel in masculine terms (δοῦλός), it would have been helpful to also stress that the MT refers to Israel with three different masculine terms (דָּבָרָה, אִיָּהּ, הָיָהּ). Thus, both texts refer to the same participant with the language of female prostitution and masculine nouns/verbs/pronouns.

Throughout the author’s work, the different rendering of Jer 2:2 in MT and GT functions as a core argument for the absence of the marriage metaphor in the GT (the author claims that the GT has the marriage metaphor only in Jer 3:6–11). While the MT utilizes the marriage metaphor in Jer 2:2, the GT is claimed to refer to a daughter rather than a wife. Several observations and arguments lead to this conclusion. While the author’s reading makes sense, other readings that attempt to see the marriage metaphor in the GT’s version of Jer 2:2 cannot be as radically excluded as desired. The author argues that the narrower meaning of the Greek ἐλέους for דָּבָרָה shows that the GT no longer allows for the idea of the people (as wife) being in a loving-kindness relationship with YHWH (as husband). According to the author, ἐλεος can only mean “pity,” “compassion,” and “mercy” and excludes “loving-kindness” (one of the potential meanings of דָּבָרָה), so the GT can only speak of YHWH’s compassion for his daughter (and not the wife’s love for YHWH). However, the vast majority of דָּבָרָה occurrences are translated by the Greek root ἔλεο, including those cases where the Hebrew entertains the meaning of loving-kindness (e.g., Ruth 1:8, 3:10). That the root ἔλεο- can include the meaning of love in OT and NT is also indicated by BDAG (316). The author does mention that Aquila’s version translates “love of your espousals” (309). This fact, however, raises the question of where and how Aquila related to the *Vorlage* of the GT (did he get this idea from a MT *Vorlage*?). However, this question is neither asked, nor is an attempt made to answer it. As a final example, one could bring to the reader’s attention how Popko uses Philo’s quotation of Jer 3:4 (348–349). Philo renders Jer 3:4 differently (πατέρα καὶ ἄνδρα τῆς παρθενίας σου/“father and husband/man of your virginity”) than the GT (πατέρα καὶ ἀρχηγὸν τῆς παρθενίας σου/“father and governor of your virginity [200]). The author explains that Philo must have “decided to modify the quoted text of Jer<sup>LXX</sup>” to make it fit his specific philosophy. While this is a possibility, one could also assume that Philo could do so because parts of the community understood the image of the marriage from their reading of the GT (even before Jer 3:6–11).

While it is possible to receive Popko’s work as a coherent argument for his specific claims, one could also align the data he has presented in a way that still supports Fischer’s argument for the primacy of the MT over the GT. Ultimately, however, Popko’s work will play an essential role for further diachronic research and the study of the interplay of different female metaphors in the book of Jeremiah. The scholarly community will benefit from this publication

through its clear data explication, and the reader will be inspired to reevaluate his or her own position with regard to the relationship between GT and MT.

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Ross, Allen P. *A Commentary on the Psalms: 90–150*. Kregel Exegetical Library. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2016. 1024 pp. Hardcover. USD 32.48.

Compared to their undermined standing in biblical scholarship a century ago, the Psalms have finally taken their rightful place in the mainstream of biblical studies. The increased interest in the history, poetry, and message of the Psalms has produced numerous books and commentaries on the Psalms in recent years. This book is the last of the three-volume commentary on the Psalms by Allen P. Ross in the Kregel Exegetical Library series. The book completes the author's splendid contribution of almost three thousand pages dedicated to the study of the Psalms. Yet, Ross frankly admits that "no work on the Psalter can be said to be complete" (11). This commentary is written for those who may not have expertise in biblical languages and scholarship (*ibid.*). The author does not discuss certain subjects in detail and sometimes avoids them altogether (for example, form-critical questions and historical-critical questions). Nevertheless, when it is indispensable, Ross surveys the works of some critical scholars or addresses differing scholarly views, such as introducing Mowinckel's cultic interpretations (79–81), or the dates when certain psalms and psalm superscriptions were written.

A commendable feature of this book is the author's personal translation of the Psalms, which is supported by elaborate explanations in the footnotes. Ross attempts to preserve and highlight the dynamic nature of Hebrew poetry, rather than to wrap it with more theologically accurate language. For example, he renders Ps 90:2b as "or you gave birth to the earth and the world." Most people would agree that it is unusual to say that God gave birth to the world, but the special appeal of poetry lies in its freedom of expression. Ross does not want to undermine the fact that "in poetry it is not impossible to use such language to describe God as the source of all life" (29). Ross engages both the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Septuagint in the study of various textual variations and emendations (textual criticism). He often discusses alternate translations (early translations like Syriac and Latin, and modern translations), and the differences between the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Septuagint. The book thus makes use of scholarly work to enhance biblical exposition of the message of the Psalms. Ross approaches them as Scripture rather than merely ancient poetic texts. He does not speak much about them; instead, he seeks to elucidate the message of the Psalms and let them speak for themselves. Many readers will praise this approach. A three-page index of Hebrew word studies and a forty-one-page selected bibliography are given at the end of the book to provide helpful and practical resources for anyone studying the Psalms.

Since Ross's method is expository, the study of each psalm follows these steps: First, the introduction; second the commentary in expository form (the main part of the study of the psalm); and third, the message and