

or "holy man." Keegstra's antisemitism arose out of a rejection of the Enlightenment and modern society, with its social mobility, religious pluralism and bewildering changes. The Jews, in this worldview, became symbols of modernity and darkness; to attack them was to protect tradition and Christianity.

In the introduction to *Antisemitism in Canada* Davies notes that no comprehensive history of this dark aspect of Canadian life has been attempted. As he readily admits, much work needs to be done on this subject even in the areas covered by the various essayists in this volume. So much more then for those regions which are not covered, notably Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Maritime region. Davies states clearly that his aim is to stimulate just such research and not to present this volume as final and conclusive.

I highly recommend this volume as an important contribution to a field which has been left too long in the shadows of Canadian history. If the study of modern, ideological antisemitism moves beyond the realm defined as religious studies, scholars of Canadian religion are not thereby justified in ignoring it. While not identical to modern antisemitism, the Christian anti-Judaic heritage has lent stories, themes and symbols to its contents. Furthermore, it has promoted spontaneous reflexes and habits of the mind which have facilitated the acceptance of modern forms of antisemitic ideology. This book should be of special interest to scholars working in the field of Jewish-Christian relations, church historians, and sociologists of religion as well as to church members and pastors interested in correcting this anti-Jewish distortion of the Christian message and in righting past injustices.

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*Converting the Past: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Moabite Historiography, Oudtestamentische Studien, Deel XXVII.* By Klaas A.D. Smelik. Leiden/New York/Koln: E.J. Brill, 1992. ISBN 90-04-09480-6. Pp. viii+209.

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In *Converting the Past*, Klaas Smelik deals with the question of method in historical research. He is not concerned with the "theological problem of whether historical accuracy is obligatory for belief in the reliability of the Bible or not..." (3). Smelik believes the controversy between the "maximalist" option (i.e., those who argue that every detail in the biblical account is historically accurate, unless the contrary has been proven) and the "minimalist" option (i.e., those who consider as historically reliable only those passages of which the historicity can be established) has missed the mark. Smelik maintains, on the contrary, that attention to the genre of the biblical literature that reports to be historical is crucial for understanding the Bible's limitations in preserving accurate historical information. For him, "the question of the literary genre is of great importance when determining the historicity of a text" (5).

*Converting the Past* is divided into five chapters. In chapter I, Smelik justifies his emphasis on literary genre, proposing that any analyses of biblical texts must

be considered in their relationship with other texts from the ancient Near East. These latter texts, Smelik claims, were not concerned with historical accuracy *per se*. Ancient authors were concerned with historiography but not in the same sense as that of modern historians. Claiming that the main historical genres in ancient Near Eastern literature were building inscriptions and chronicles, Smelik argues they were written not to record the past but rather to glorify the king who was far more important than the question of historical accuracy. In addition to building inscriptions and chronicles, ancient authors produced texts “in which the past is supposed to have been recorded, although they are mainly based on fiction” (9). To Smelik, these texts support his theory that some ancient authors wrote fictional history by subordinating “historical truth” to “propaganda” in order to achieve particular ideological aims. Thus, caution in using historiographic sources from the ancient Near East for historical research must be exercised (10).

Smelik applies these insights to biblical texts because “the question of literary genre is equally important when considering scriptural passages...” (11). By assuming that in Israel similar historiographic genres were in use as in the other regions of the ancient Near East, Smelik’s thesis, “the purpose of these narratives is not to entertain but to account for the historical and political situation in which both the authors and their readers were living...” (15), informs his claim that the biblical authors wrote stories about the past in order to ensure a new future for their people. These authors were not concerned with historical problems but with the welfare of their people, “first threatened by war and later by dispersion. This approach is probably the reason why their work was included in the Bible...” (22).

Chapters 2–5 are devoted to a systematic, dialogical analysis of four sets of biblical texts. Smelik’s method divides historical research into three successive stages. The first stage analyzes the biblical texts from a historical point of view. In the second stage, the general situation within the period concerned is established on the basis of extrabiblical sources. The last stage synthesizes the results of the first two stages in order to reach a proposed historical reconstruction. Each detailed analysis yields provocative results.

Smelik argues against the existence of a self-contained Ark narrative in “Hidden Messages in the Ark Narrative: An Analysis of I Samuel iv-vi and II Samuel vi.” He claims that this body of text was composed as integral parts of Samuel. The story of the Ark’s capture by the Philistines is, in effect, an allusion to the pillage and destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Smelik concludes it was composed during the seventh century BCE under the influence of Jeremiah 7. The three themes of the Ark/Temple, replacement, and succession are intertwined in 2 Samuel.

Arguing, in “King Mesha’s Inscription: Between History and Fiction,” that there has been a lack of a detailed literary analysis of this pericope based on the understanding of its “building inscription” genre, Smelik analyzes this text into a five-fold division: Introduction (vv. 1–4); Military Operation (vv. 4–21); Building Activities (vv. 21–28); Conclusion (vv. 29–31) and an End Appendix (vv. 31–end). He concludes his analysis with a historical reconstruction surrounding Mesha’s rebellion, his conquest of northern Moab “without much military resistance on the part of the Israelites” (91), and his subsequent expansion south of Amon.

Smelik argues in "King Hezekiah Advocates True Prophecy: Remarks on Isaiah xxxvi and xxxvii/II Kings xviii and xix," that Isaiah 36–37 was composed in the Persian period in reaction to the destruction of the Temple and the subsequent deportation of the elite. Hence, there is no historical value related to and about the events of 701 BCE. These chapters, instead, are the literary counterpart to Isaiah 7. They act as an editorial bridge within the book with thematic links to both Isaiah 1 and 2. Chapters 36–37 were composed as a literary unit. Embedded in them are two messages by Rabshake and a letter from Sennacherib exemplifying the device of three-fold repetition to intensify the suspense concerning the fate of the arrogant Assyrian king who confuses Yahweh with idols. Smelik concludes that the Hezekiah narratives "have a historical background but a rather different one that it appears at first sight" (128). These pericopae illustrate the literary technique of retrojections of contemporary problems into the past. As an historical reconstruction of the actual events in 701 BCE, they have little value. On the contrary, the Hezekiah narrative provides evidence of the theological discussion among the survivors of the great catastrophe in 586 BCE.

In "The Portrayal of King Manasseh: A Literary Analysis of II Kings xxi and II Chronicles xxiii," Smelik provides a highly detailed analysis of them as literary units, seeking to understand the literary techniques used by the authors in their efforts to achieve their ideological and theological aims and the problems encountered in portraying Manasseh. 2 Kings present Manasseh as the nadir of Israel's history and is ultimately responsible for its downfall. Smelik maintains that the author of Kings shaped his account in order to emphasize that punishment for his transgressions falls upon the people instead of him personally. On the other hand, the text from Chronicles presents this punishment as befalling the particular sinners themselves and eliminates all people from the account. The Chronicler changed the Manasseh portrayal in Kings into a paradigm for all the people in the Babylonian exile. The different appreciation of Israel's history by the authors is reflected in their different portrayals of King Manasseh, either as the troubler of Israel or as a model of repentance. From this analysis, Smelik concludes that neither account is interested in the historical Manasseh, as such. On the contrary, these chapters are "very important for research into the literary technique and the theological purpose of the Book of Kings as well as that of Chronicles" (189).

*Converting the Past* is a challenging read. It is a highly detailed historical and literary analysis written by and for competent biblical scholars. Because of this, *Converting the Past* makes demands on the reader. It requires the reader to have more than a basic working knowledge of biblical Hebrew in order to understand the nuances of the biblical texts as well as the abundant charts. It also requires the reader to have a grasp of the important issues involved in the continuing, and sometimes confusing, debate on the purpose and function of history, historiography, and historicity. These comments, however, are not to be understood as reflecting negatively on the book. On the contrary, they are intended to point out the value of Smelik's critical reading of biblical texts in light of other ancient Near Eastern texts, his understanding of the role of literary genres in historical reconstructions, and his dialogical, analytical method. *Converting the Past* opens up new avenues for further enquiry and analysis needed in the continuing study of the

Hebrew Bible. The book is amply detailed by its critical apparatus, an extensive bibliography and an index of biblical references.

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*Remembering for the Future: Working Papers and Addenda* (3 volumes). Editorial Advisory Board: Yehuda Bauer, Alice Eckardt, Franklin H. Littell, Elisabeth Maxwell, Robert Maxwell, David Patterson. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989. ISBN 0-08-036754-2. Pp. I: xxv+1160; II: xiv+1149; III: x+893.

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This three-volume set takes its name from an international conference held in Oxford from July 10–13 1988, with a public meeting convened in London July 15. The steering committee accepted the papers of sixty-two academics. Held in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, *Remembering for the Future* did far more than commemorate. It acknowledged that much work examining the ramifications of the *Shoa* is yet undone; that the community of survivors shrinks year by year; that generations have been born for whom the term “Holocaust” is virtually meaningless; and that there is a need for the complacency and the indifference on the modern “collective consciousness” to be challenged. A remarkable gathering, in which the contributors were drawn from many disciplines and countries, has resulted in an equally remarkable collection of documents.

The sheer breadth and depth of the materials gathered in these texts renders a full review impracticable, if not impossible. I will therefore proceed to an outline of the contents of each volume, before beginning a more sustained review of the first. Volume I bears the title “Jews and Christians during and after the Holocaust.” Comprising over one hundred addresses, it contains scholarly reflections upon: Christian attitudes and responses to the Jewish plight in central, eastern, southern and western (including the Vatican) Europe and English-speaking countries; the ethical, psychological and religious factors at work in the rescuers; and the challenge to the Jewish and Christian traditions. In Volume II, dedicated to “The Impact of the Holocaust on the Contemporary World,” we find over one hundred papers addressing the challenge of the *Shoa* to: educational institutions; the practice of law, medicine and psychology; politics; the arts and literature; philosophy; the social sciences; and genocide studies. Volume III, “The Impact of the Holocaust and Genocide on Jews and Christians,” contains a number of supplementary papers as well as the record of the public gathering at the Central Hall, Westminster, London. In all, there are over two hundred and fifty papers.

The vast majority of papers in Volume I are first-rate contributions to the area. One thinks in particular of essays by H. Jansen (Karl Barth’s “amicable” antisemitism); J.P. Kelley and E.H. Robertson (Bonhoeffer); I. Irwin-Zarecka (post-*Shoa* Poland); E. Fleischner (rescuers in France); M. Shelah (Catholicism in Croatia); J. Conway (Canada’s response); A.T. Davies (the Zündel and Keegstra trials); M. Nefsky (the reaction of Canadian Protestantism during the Nazi era);