

The first and last chapters of the book are perhaps the most compelling. *Fragmented Women* is framed by two studies of two women: Jephthah's daughter and Michal (chapter 1: "Murder they Wrote"), and Bathsheba and *Bath-sheber*, the woman who is raped repeatedly and then brutally dismembered in Judges 19 (chapter 6: "Raped by the Pen"). Exum brings the two women together in each chapter-experiment in order to investigate their similarity: in chapter one, murder *in* the story and murder *by means* of the story, and in chapter 6, rape *by means* of the narrative and rape *in* the narrative. Exum explains that she wanted to "experiment with reading a text that relies on a particular strategy for controlling women on the level of the plot against a text that uses the same type of strategy at the narratorial level" (12).

The results are interesting. In the murder stories, it is the speech of the women (speech represents autonomy) which brings a deleterious end for the victims (on two counts: virginity/childlessness and actual physical death). In the rape stories, Exum exposes how the text makes the woman responsible through her actions (Bathsheba bathing and *Bath-sheber* exerting her own sexual independence) for male sexual activity and, in these cases, sexual aggression. In all four cases (chapters 1 and 6), the women are punished for their autonomous behaviour.

In another chapter, Exum discusses the theme of the "Endangered Ancestress" (Gen 12, 20, 26; "Who's Afraid of the Endangered Ancestress?"). This is the clearest example of her use of psychoanalytical criticism in the book. She employs this approach to reveal the text's patriarchal interest in female sexuality. This interest is represented both by a fear of female sexuality and a need to have it approved and experienced (with reference to the patriarchs' own wives) by other men. The conflict is resolved by the bible's three-time repetition of the story. At the third telling, the super-ego develops to the point that it no longer needs approval of the wife by her peers. This is seen in the story as the wife's rejection by the patriarch's rival, "Abimelech."

Exum also treats the subject of Michal in greater detail and the role of the matriarchs in Israel's stories of its origins. The author's experiments in *Fragmented Women* are successful and enlightening. She argues cogently and effectively for her reconstructions of the stories of biblical women. She provides readings which expose both the biblical text's patriarchal agenda and its problems in maintaining the patriarchal point of view, giving new insights into the presence and personality of some of the bible's women.

Fiona Black

McGill University

---

*Politics and Theopolitics in the Bible and Postbiblical Literature*. Ed. Henning G. Reventlow, Yair Hoffman, and Benjamin Uffenheimer. JSOT Supplement Series 171; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994. ISBN 1-85075-461-6. Pp. 216.

---

From textual polemics to just war theories, this collection of essays, generated by meetings between Jewish and Christian academics from Tel Aviv and Bochum

Universities, covers political topics relating to biblical and post-biblical literature. But in spite of the wide scope of material and individual scholarly interests, the essays fall into two broad categories: political readings and textual politics.

The first type of paper in this collection deals with the way biblical passages have been read to suit various political agendas. Among these we find: a paper by Yehoshua Amir which describes Josephus' conception (and initiation) of the term *theokratia* based on his understanding of the Mosaic "constitution" (13–27); Henning Graf Reventlow's essay which explores the viability of just war, according to Augustine and others (160–175); a paper by Nahum Rakover which deals with the legal obligation of the Noahides with respect to the Torah (148–159); and an essay by Christofer Frey which compares Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670) with the distinctions between political ethics and political theology among German academics over the last twenty five years (55–64). The variety represented by these papers suggests an almost inherent relation of politics to reading.

On the other hand, several of the papers in this book look at how politics play an important role in the production and subsequent redaction of texts. Yairah Amit deals with political story-telling, and the hidden polemic of texts (28–40); Yair Hoffman addresses the way prophetic texts were given retrospective theopolitical slants through redaction (85–99); Gottfried Niebe examines the connections between power and theological terminology (100–118); and B. Uffenheimer looks at the way two different biblical authors (Isaiah and Micah) deal with the same social reality in politically and theologically divergent ways (176–188).

As fascinating as these essays are, they raise some questions about the possibility for modern scholars accurately to determine authorial or redactional intent, political or otherwise. A paper like Yair Hoffman's essay on the political redaction of various prophetic "agendas" can only be highly speculative: even determining what is redactional and what is original is a matter of speculation. For example, in Yairah Amit's essay, on finding *intended* hidden polemics in texts, he develops a whole set of criteria by which one can find such a polemic based on the assumption that authorial intent, although hidden, is meant to be discovered. Not surprisingly he discovers an anti-Saul polemic operating in Judges 19–21, well-supported by his criteria. It is almost as if he posits the polemic first, and then develops a way of evaluating the validity of its existence, given its "hiddenness." Perhaps the ability for texts "to exhibit" political agendas is part of the reason that they can be read so easily in the service of political agendas. But despite any specific queries about the methodology of these authors, this book provides an excellent range of issues to look at, both for students and teachers.

As with any collection of papers, this book represents a range of academic styles, of comprehensibility, and of argumentative strength. In terms of editorship, there are a few things that seem quite odd. The volume lacks an introduction (there is only a short editor's preface) that situates the dialogue and which pulls the many strands together. The book also lacks bibliographies, either for each paper or compiled at the end. As well, whether a politically motivated decision or not, the book ends with an essay that criticizes Rome and chastises the

church for giving allegiance to a Roman heritage and for neglecting its Israelite heritage. Although such a finale may sound rather unecumenical, it is not completely out of place given the dual-faith nature of the volume. Regardless of these editorial decisions, this book is both interesting and valuable: it is successful both in raising important issues for textual studies and hermeneutics, and in alerting readers to the inevitable links between texts, religions and politics in ancient and modern contexts.

Erin Runions

McGill University

---

*Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography.* By John Dominic Crossan. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1994. ISBN 0-061669-5. Pp. xiv+209.

*Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & The Heart of Contemporary Faith.* By Marcus J. Borg. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1994. ISBN 0-06-060916-8. Pp. ix+150.

---

One of the central debates of New Testament biblical studies and Christology over the last two centuries has centered on two questions of faith. First, to what extent can we “know” the historical Jesus of Nazareth? Second, paraphrasing Martin Kähler, what is the relationship between the “historical Jesus” and the “Christ of faith”? Attempts to answer these questions have given birth to multiple “waves” of scholarly studies commonly known as “Quest[s] for the Historical Jesus” and counter-movements rejecting the legitimacy of these attempts.

The first wave of the Quest, characterized by the work of Reimarus and D.F. Strauss, assumed that one could discover the historical Jesus within biblical literature and, in answer to the second question, argued that one could prove or disprove faith based upon this historical research. This position was rejected by thinkers such as Kähler, Bultmann, Barth and Tillich on both historical and theological grounds. In answer to the first question of faith, these thinkers argued that one could not penetrate behind the *kerygma* of the early Church to discover the “real” historical Jesus. Instead, answering the second question, one discovers the Christ of faith within the *kerygma*. A second wave of the Quest then arose in the 1950s, lead, ironically, by a number of Bultmann’s students (e.g. Bornkamm, Käsemann and Fuchs) arguing that one could discern the historical Jesus based on the fact that the historical record indicates a continuity between the *kerygmatic* Christ and the Jesus of history. The attempt, as argued by Ernst Käsemann, was to answer the second question by emphasizing the importance of both the historical and the *kerygmatic*.

It has been suggested that we now live within the third (or fourth) wave of the Quest. Two of its most prominent proponents are John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. It seems appropriate to consider their most recent books as illustrative of the most current approaches to the two questions of historical faith.

Crossan’s *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, is a “popular version” of his longer, more scholarly 1991 book, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish*