

sive by their sheer volume; however, some minor errors remain, as do some gaps that are not “covered” by the selection. It is to be hoped that further work on the same sources will be able to better explore this precious resource of modern Jewish Studies and Western comparativism.

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*Hebrew Bible/Old Testament—The History of Its Interpretation I/1*. Edited by Magne Sæbø. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996. ISBN 3-5255-3636-4. Pp. 847.

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This huge tome, apparently somewhat better known in Europe than in North America, surveys, in twenty-two chapters, the history of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament interpretation from its beginnings through late antiquity. The book begins and ends with learned prolegomenon and epilogue by the editor and offers twenty chapters of analyses by an impressive list of contributors, many of whom have taken the opportunity to summarize and refine their own previously published books on the subjects they treat here. Section 1, some 230 pages, is devoted to the “Beginnings of Scriptural Interpretation,” essentially the texts produced before Christianity. Section 2 deals with various Jewish and Christian texts, issues, and interpreters.

In Section One, Michael Fishbane looks at inner-biblical exegesis; Emanuel Tov and John Barton write about the implications of having a standardized text and its canonization. John Wevers discusses the Septuagint; Johann Maier, Bible interpretation in the Qumran texts. A lengthy piece by Folker Siegert surveys the Hellenistic interpretative literature, including Aristaeas, Philo, and the Jewish non-allegorists from Alexandria. The section concludes with a chapter by Robert Kraft and Steve Mason on canon and scripture in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Josephus.

In Section Two, Jarl Fossum discusses briefly the relationships between the Bible and various Christian and Jewish sects, including the Samaritans. The combined efforts of Jay Harris, David Kremer, Richard Kalmin, Jacob Neusner, and Etan Levine contribute two chapters on the early rabbinic texts: Mishnah, Talmud, Targum, and Midrash (75 pages).

The remaining 400 pages are devoted almost exclusively to Christian interpretation of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. They contain a study by Hans Huebner on interpretation of the Old Testament in the New; two by Oskar Skarsaune, on second- and third-century writers except Clement and Origen, and on the Old Testament canon and text in the early Greek church. J. F. Procope writes on philosophy and Alexandrian hermeneutics; J. N. B. Carleton Paget on Alexandrian interpretation (mostly Clement and Origen). Sten Hidal discusses the Antiochene School; and Günter Stemmerger on exegetical contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire. Michael Weitzman describes the interpretative character of the Peshitta, and Lucas Van

Rompay complements it with an analysis of the Syrian tradition of interpretation. Eva Schulz-Flügel treats the issues of text and translation in the Latin tradition (Jerome); Rene Kieffer, Jerome's exegesis and hermeneutics. Christoph Jacob examines the reception of Origenist interpretation in later Latin exegesis, and David Wright concludes with a discussion of Augustine's exegesis and hermeneutics.

The quality of the chapters is high, the range of topics is well chosen, organization in them and among them is clear, and the results are informative and readable. This is a major advance over, for example, the *Cambridge History of the Bible*, which covers the period in a far less satisfactory way. The volume shows a good overall plan, individual bibliographies are provided for each chapter, and, in general, it is a fine piece of work.

The global orientation of the effort is perhaps best evaluated in comparison with the analogous one by Martin Mulder, *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (1990), which appeared in *Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum*. Including front matter, Mulder is almost 100 pages longer, and it is divided into twenty chapters written by another impressive international team (only Michael Fishbane has contributed to both, but on different subjects). Unlike Sæbø's volume, most of Mulder's is about Jewish interpretation; only about 150 pages are devoted to Christian writers.

At first glance, when examined separately, each collection of studies seems to reflect a reasonable presentation of a literature far too massive to explore in one volume; but, in fact, the volumes create two complementary images of the materials under discussion. Sæbø gives much attention to pre-Christian Jewish texts but less to rabbinic ones. This suggests that a continuous exegetical tradition runs from Hellenistic Judaism through patristic Christianity, and that the rabbinic material is somewhat distant from it. Mulder is mostly about Jewish interpretation, which, through an introductory chapter on ancient scribal activity and book production, anchors itself in the ancient Semitic world and then discusses various documents of interpretation from Hellenistic, Samaritan, gnostic, Qumranian, rabbinic, and Christian sources. The last are well represented, but obviously far from the main event.

Despite the common range of primary sources, the actual amount of duplication between these two *magna opera* is far less than might be imagined. Writing, inner biblical interpretation, the Masorah, reading the Bible in the ancient synagogue, and Samaritan and gnostic interpretation, for example, are treated more fully in Mulder. Talmud and Midrash as individual works, many individual Christian writers, and some methodological issues are handled more extensively in Sæbø. What should one read? Where they overlap, one can choose—and not go too far wrong, because each is excellent—but globally, the only answer is to read them both. I recently learned that the next volume of Sæbø's effort is on the way; I look forward to receiving it.