

"floating place," is insightful and intriguing; Mason and Klassen both put Josephus to the test by using archaeological data). Donaldson and Wilson both explore artifactual data in such a way as to raise the question of where we draw the boundary between "text" and "non-text"—are ossuary inscriptions (Donaldson) and epigraphic evidence (Wilson) textual or non-textual, or somehow both and neither?

These essays vary in their strengths and weaknesses, but overall offer solid discussions on the various topics raised. As a tribute to Richardson, they reflect and develop his work, and, furthermore, each offers a strong collegial tone of respect and admiration for Richardson both as a person and as scholar. Whether this collection of essays will be effective in encouraging a stronger "text and non-text" approach within early Christian studies is questionable, but not entirely impossible. Still, even as contributors seemed to struggle with moving beyond textual analysis so also may this collection challenge readers to do likewise. That this very challenge is raised by Richardson's colleagues and former students is perhaps the greatest tribute they could have offered him.

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The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 44. Edited by John D. Turner and Anne McGuire. Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 1997. ISBN 90-04-10824-6. Pp. xviii + 531.

In 1945 one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century occurred within the fields of Christian origins and Patristics. The discovery of the Nag Hammadi Codices in Egypt has sparked an incredible amount of research into not only the history and thought of Gnosticism, but has also called into question many of the assumptions, and canonical biases, of early Christian studies. This collection of original essays emerges from the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Philadelphia (18-22 November 1995) as well as a special meeting at Haverford College on 17 November 1995.

The essays are organized into five major parts, each representing key texts or matters within Nag Hammadi studies. The first part ("Past, Present, and Future Research on the Nag Hammadi Codices") includes: James M. Robinson, "Nag Hammadi: The First Fifty Years" (3-33); Stephen Emmel, "Religious Tradition, Textual Transmission, and the Nag Hammadi Codices" (34-43); Birger A. Pearson, "The Coptic Gnostic Library Edition of Nag Hammadi Codex VII" (44-61); Hans-Martin Schenke, "The Work of the *Berliner Arbeitskreis* Past, Present, and Future" (62-71); Edwin M. Yamauchi, "The Issue of Pre-Christian Gnosticism Reviewed in the Light of the Nag Hammadi Texts" (72-88); Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, "The Thought Pattern of Gnostic Mythologizers and Their Use of Biblical Traditions" (89-101).

Part two ("The *Apocryphon of John*") includes: Karen L. King, "Approaching the Variants in the *Apocryphon of John*" (105-137); Frederik Wisse, "After the *Synopsis*: Prospects and Problems in Establishing a Critical Text of the *Apocryphon of John* and Defining its Historical Location" (138-153); Michael Waldstein, "The Primal Triad in the *Apocryphon of John*" (154-187); Sergio La Poria, "Sophia-Mêtêr: Reconstructing a Gnostic Myth" (188-207); and Michael A. Williams, "Response to the Papers of Karen King, Frederik Wisse, Michael Waldstein, and Sergio La Porta" (208-220).

Part three explores the *Gospel of Philip*, while part four addresses the *Gospel of Thomas*. The discussion of the *Gospel of Philip* includes: Martha L. Turner, "On the Coherence of the *Gospel according to Philip*" (223-250); Einar Thomassen, "How Valentinian is the *Gospel of Philip*?" (251-279); and Elaine H. Pagels, "Ritual in the *Gospel of Philip*" (280-291). Studies on the *Gospel of Thomas* include: Paul-Hubert Poirier, "The Writings ascribed to Thomas and the Thomas Tradition" (295-307); Steven R. Johnson, "The *Gospel of Thomas* 76:3 and Canonical Parallels: Three Segments in the Tradition History of the Saying" (308-326); Philip H. Sellow, "The *Gospel of Thomas*: Prospects for Future Research" (327-346); Jean-Marie Servin, "L'interprétation de l'*Évangile selon Thomas*, entre tradition et rédaction" (347-361); Ismo Dunderberg, "John and Thomas in Conflict?" (361-380); and April D. De Conick, "'Blessed are those who have not seen' (Jn 20:29): Johannine Dramatization of an Early Christian Discourse" (381-398).

Part Five ("Issues of Social Location, Composition, and Rewriting") offers four essays that address socio-religious issues, especially in relation to textual (re-) interpretation. These essays include: Christoph Marksches, "Valentinian Gnosticism: Toward the Anatomy of a School" (401-438); Louis Painchaud and Timothy Janz, "The 'Kingless Generation' and the Polemical Rewriting of Certain Nag Hammadi Texts" (439-460); Andrea Lorenzo Molinari, "*The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*: A Reconsideration of the Source Questions" (461-483); and Anne Pasquier, "Interpretation of the Prologue to John's Gospel in some Gnostic and Patristic Writings: A Common Tradition" (484-495). An extensive bibliography on works cited is supplied.

As a collection of scholarly essays, this is an outstanding contribution to Gnostic studies, bringing together some of the most influential voices in the field and addressing several key issues in Nag Hammadi studies. Of the Nag Hammadi texts selected for focused attention, the *Apocryphon of John*, *Gospel of Philip*, and the *Gospel of Thomas* have been focal points for critical analysis. The essays in these three sections do not simply summarize academic discourse on these texts, but indicate directions for the field to move in. King, in particular, offers a challenge for us to move beyond the search for an "original" text and instead to appreciate each textual variant as a "performance" of the text, thereby rendering each variant as authentic as any "original" version. Her challenge, grounded in the oral and written aspects of ancient literary production, allows each performed enactment of the *Apocryphon of John* to relate to particular community contexts. Sellow's discussion of *Gospel of Thomas* scholarship also raises a challenge, indeed a prolegomenon for future studies of this

gospel. Although the most studied of all the Nag Hammadi texts, the *Gospel of Thomas* continues to be studied as a simple collection of redactional variants of gospel sayings with no serious attention given to it as a unified text with its own internal logic. The situation in *Thomas* studies is not all that different than it was in Markan studies prior to Wrede's seminal work. If Sellow's challenge is taken seriously, then future studies of *Thomas* will address not only its value in Synoptic studies, but also its internal logic and compositional development.

Other essays in this collection break new ground, such as Marksches, whose explication on differing types of ancient philosophical schools may offer new ground for deciphering the socio-cultural make-up of Valentinian groups. The emerging appreciation for rhetorical and redactional analysis of these texts continues with Painchaud and Janz; a preliminary work on Valentinian ritual is offered by Pagels, using the *Gospel of Philip* as a bouncing board; and both Waldstein and Pasquier challenge us to continue exploring points of contact between Gnosticism and the philosophical traditions of Late Antiquity. A key strength of this collection is the inclusion of some younger voices alongside the older figures that have shaped the field. Molinari and Marksches in particular should be singled out in this regard, especially as each is breaking new ground in the field. Molinari, for example, has now written the only book length analysis of the *Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, of which this essay is an earlier contribution to an understudied text.

Despite the value of these essays, there are several shortcomings worth noting, primarily in regards to the collection rather than individual contributions. Although there are some essays reflecting on the history of scholarship over the last fifty years (Robinson and Schenke), there is little in this collection that specifically relates to the theme of the book. A commemoration, such as this one, would ideally offer both reflections on the development of scholarship as well as a desideratum for future studies. Instead, we are simply offered a somewhat random collection of essays, which could have been published under almost any pretence. As for the surveys of the field (the actual "reflection" pieces), Schenke's presentation of the *Berliner Arbeitskreis* is very informative, and tactfully presented. Robinson's discussion, however, carries a strong subtext of pro-American rhetoric, celebrating what he sees as a shift from European dominated scholarship to American domination of the field. As many of us, from both Canada and Europe, in the audience during the oral presentation of this paper reacted, so also may others outside the United States feel marginalized by such a parochial historiography. A third essay, furthermore, should have been included to comment on the ongoing work of the Laval project in Quebec. (Historically, the three central locations for the study of Gnosticism have been Berlin, Claremont, and the Laval group; with the Society of Biblical Literature offering a more encompassing setting for bringing Nag Hammadi scholars together.) A further shortcoming of this collection is the limitation of texts addressed. Molinari's reassessment of the source question in the *Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles* is the only study to address one of the many understudied texts from the Nag Hammadi corpus. Perhaps it would been bene-

ficial if the editors had decided to use this commemoration as an opportunity to challenge future research to focus upon such lesser studied texts as the *Interpretation of Knowledge*, *Prayer of the Apostle Paul*, *Apocalypse of Peter*, and *Asclepius* (among others) rather than simply reinforce the emphasis upon such widely studied texts as the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Gospel of Thomas* (and to a lesser degree, the *Gospel of Philip*).

These caveats aside, what emerges is a solid collection of essays for the study of Gnosticism. Over the past fifty years, the study of Gnosticism has flourished and matured. This collection, both as indicated by the quality of the essays as well as the diverse voices involved, is an excellent indication that this field of study is still full of vitality and creativity—indeed, it is possible that the study of Gnosticism has never been as healthy as it is today.

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Early Christian Historiography: Narratives of Retributive Justice. By G. W. Trompf. New York: Continuum, 2000. ISBN 0-8264-5294-9. Pp. xx+362.

G. W. Trompf has produced a painstaking analysis of early Christian historiographical methods. As a backdrop, Trompf overviews the principles of historiography in Hebraic and Graeco-Roman societies. He identifies patterns of “retributive logic” driving the ancient narratives—patterns which, according to Trompf, are deeply embedded even in modern historiography. Since antiquity, historians have generally held “there are *reasons* why a certain group runs into trouble, or an individual falls ill and dies, or *per contra* some great ‘blessing’ is felt” (4). In short, retributive logic holds that the righteous will receive reward for their goodness and the wicked will receive judgment for their evil.

Of course, a problem with the logic of retribution is the longstanding recognition that sometimes the good suffer and the evil prosper. Thus, Trompf’s book explores both how early Christian historians applied retributive logic to their historiography and how they dealt with what often appears to be a breakdown of the basic principles of retributive logic. In other words, Trompf argues that the early Christian historians, rather than abandoning the principle of retributive logic in the face of evidence to the contrary, upheld and modified the principle in creative ways.

Trompf’s investigation begins with an examination of the biblical author, Luke, and the two books credited to him: *The Gospel of Luke* and *Acts*. Trompf believes Luke-Acts is so significant a start to Christian historiography that at no point in the following Patristic periods is the “emotive vibrancy” and “unmistakable authority” ever really matched (90). For Luke, retributive logic is operative both in the present and the future, but there are no clear-cut guarantees whether this logic will come to fruition either in the immediate or eschatological sense. Though several incidents in Luke’s accounts seem to illustrate an