

J. N. Bremmer and F. García Martínez, eds., *Sacred History and Sacred Texts in Early Judaism. A Symposium in Honour of A. S. van der Woude* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 5; Kok Pharos: Kampen, 1992). Pp. 183. Dfl. ?????????? .

Professor A. S. van der Woude, one of the major Old Testament scholars in the Netherlands, retired in November 1992 from his teaching post at the University of Groningen. At that occasion he was honoured both by a Festschrift (F. García Martínez, A. Hilhorst, C. Labuschagne, eds., *The Scriptures and the Scrolls. Studies in Honour of A. S. van der Woude on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* [Leiden, 1992]), and by the volume under review. The honouree's copious bibliography is included in the Festschrift.

The volume under review contains four valuable papers read at a symposium held in van der Woude's honour, together with the latter's stimulating farewell lecture, which was also published separately in Dutch: *Pluriformiteit & Uniformiteit—Overwegingen betreffende de tekstoverlevering van het Oude Testament* (Kampen 1992).

The link between the papers in this volume is their connection with the Second Temple period. All of the first four papers deal with literary relations between texts.

The occurrence of a single phrase in 1 Thess. 2:16c "but the wrath has come upon them finally," almost identical with the Testament of Levi (TLevi) 6:11, occasioned a long article by T. Baarda entitled "The Schechem Episode in the Testament of Levi—A Comparison with Other Traditions." The exact relation between these two verses is of interest to Baarda as it has been to many other scholars in the past. Before analysing the literary relation, Baarda reviews at length the contents and motifs in the Shechem episode in TLevi. He then formulates the various possibilities of the literary relationship between the two relevant verses. Of these possibilities, the assumption that this verse contains an interpolation in either 1 Thess. or TLevi is discarded. The most important part of the analysis is Baarda's conclusion (p. 63) that the verse was an integral part of the design of TLevi, especially shown by the connection between 6:11 and 7:1. It is because of the wrath of the Lord that the Sichemites have been attacked. The dependence of Paul on the Greek text of TLevi thus remains a possibility, while the reverse assumption, that of dependence of TLevi on Paul, is rejected. Paul could have quoted TLevi because of the themes developed in 1 Thess. 2:15. The assumption of this literary dependence has chronological implications for the compositions under discussion.

J. N. Bremmer discusses the origin of the Christian idea of atonement in "The Atonement in the Interaction of Greeks, Jews, and Christians" (pp. 75-93). The occasion for this study is a series of articles in scholarly journals and in the Dutch daily press regarding the possible pagan background of the Christian idea that the death of Christ provided atonement for the sins of others. Bremmer does not accept the evidence brought forward in support of the claim that this idea came from certain Jewish sources (Test. Moses; 2 Macc. 6, 7); Dan. 3:38-40 LXX). Nor is he convinced by the relevance of parallel ideas in the

surrounding pagan world, especially from the Roman empire. At the same time influence from 4 Macc. 6:28ff, 17:20-22, or Euripides on the interpretation of Jesus' death cannot be excluded.

The interpretation of Ezek. 20:25 (“...I gave them laws that were not good...”) in ancient Judaism and early Christianity is the topic of a detailed and valuable analysis by P. W. van der Horst (pp. 94-118). This phrase is explained in different ways in both environments, and since the Christian interpretations preceded those of the Jews, van der Horst considers the latter a reaction to the former. For Christians, Ezek. 20:25 refers to the laws of the Torah itself, which had been superseded by God's will. On the other hand, for the Jews the reference was not to the laws of the Torah, but to rabbinical rules. According to the author of this article, the Jewish interpretation was a reaction to that of the Christians, since for the latter the verse had become the basis of anti-Jewish interpretations.

M. A. Wes of the University of Groningen provides a comparative study of Josephus' account of Jesus the son of Ananias and of a few pericopes in the book of Baruch (“Mourning Becomes Jerusalem,” pp. 119-150). According to Josephus' account, during the Feast of Tabernacles in 62 CE, Jesus, son of Ananias (a false prophet according to Wes), suddenly began to cry out at the temple: “...a voice against the bridegroom and the bride...” This passage occurs several times in Jeremiah, but also in Bar 2:23. What the exact connection is between Josephus' report and Baruch according to Wes is not clear from his article. Possibly upon hearing Bar 2:23 on the ninth of Av, Josephus may have been reminded of Jesus son of Ananias, and the passage in Baruch may have influenced Josephus' description.

The last contribution in this volume, “Pluriformity and Uniformity—Reflections on the Transmission of the Text of the Old Testament,” by the honouree himself, presents new ideas on the vexed problem of the relation between variety and uniformity in the transmission of the biblical text. Traditionally, these two concepts have played an important role in the description of that transmission history. De Lagarde's views can probably be summarized as “from uniformity to pluriformity,” and those of Kahle as “from pluriformity to uniformity.” The latter two terms (“From Pluriformity to Uniformity ...”) feature in the title of a recent article by M. Saebø (*ASTI* 11 [1977-1978] 127-137), who focuses on the emergence of the Masoretic Text (MT). This issue is also treated in the present paper which uses a terminology similar to that of Saebø, though reaching different conclusions. Not “from pluriformity to uniformity,” as in the traditional formulation and also the title of Saebø's paper, but “there was always a relative uniformity of textual traditions in the religious circles around the Temple of Jerusalem” (p. 163). Van der Woude believes, as does the present reviewer, that in different circles in Second Temple Judaism, there must have been different approaches towards the transmission of the text. Most circles did not insist upon a single textual tradition, as is visible in the collection of the Qumran texts. At the same time, a single textual tradition, the Masoretic Text (or as the reviewer would rather say: “the group of Masoretic texts”) was held in esteem by the temple circles, and later, the Pharisees. Where I would differ from van der Woude is that while van der Woude claims that there *always* was a relative uniformity of textual tradition in the religious circles around the Jerusalem temple, I prefer to express myself more cautiously. In the period for which we possess textual

evidence, that is, from the middle of the third century BCE onwards, the two textual approaches indeed co-existed. But before that time we do not know what the situation was. It is not impossible that the texts fostered by the temple circles were always characterized by a wish for uniformity but they could also have been different from each other. If indeed the textual tradition underlying the LXX of several books preceded that of the MT, and if indeed that tradition was once the central text used by the temple circles, they probably always had a single textual tradition. The sole clue for such a presumed relation would be that a Hebrew scroll, at least of the Pentateuch, was sent from the temple circles of Jerusalem to be translated in Egypt. At the time, that scroll must have been considered the central text, since otherwise it would not have been sent to be translated. In due course that text was replaced in several biblical books with another one, the forerunner of the MT, and at that stage, that one was in turn considered the central text. In this way van der Woude's abstract model may thus be extended to the period beyond the evidence provided by the Qumran finds, but this description is rather hypothetical.

Van der Woude, as many other scholars before him, speaks about a process of standardization from the second pre-Christian century onwards. This suggestion is supported by an article by Greenberg (1956) who provided mere circumstantial evidence, viz., revisional activity in the Greek versions of the Bible towards MT, and possible text-critical activity in the Hebrew Bible reported in Talmudic sources (*tiqqunê soferim* and the tradition about the three scrolls of the Law found in the Temple Court). However, it is not clear to which extent a conscious process of standardization or stabilization ever took place. Our evidence is limited to the end product, viz., a standard text, but it is not clear how that text came into being.

Towards the end of his article van der Woude says: "Pluriformity of scriptural tradition is a normal phenomenon, uniformity is an exception" (p. 167). This is an important insight, followed by another very relevant remark: "But a pluriform textual tradition is not a problem for the believer as long as there is an authoritative body within his circle which, besides Scripture, decides on doctrine and life ..." (pp. 167-168).

The author reaches, on mainly theoretical grounds, the conclusion that the temple circles adhered to a uniform textual tradition (for caveats see p. 163), a view which the present reviewer has also embraced in an as yet unpublished paper, whose conclusions are based upon the statistics of the biblical text found in Qumran: "Groups of Biblical Texts Found at Qumran," *Proceedings of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University*. At the same time, I am not sure I would accept van der Woude's lead in his concluding remarks. Since the textual tradition of MT may be older than the preserved evidence, van der Woude recommends MT since it is "a basically faithful representation of the tradition by the spiritual leaders of early Judaism ..." (p. 169). The value judgment of MT should be detached from an analysis of its possibly ancient roots. In my view the LXX often represents an earlier and preferable text or literary composition for which a similar statement may be made.

As always, we learn much from the honouree, in this case from his assessment of the history of the textual history of the Hebrew Bible, and from his ability to reconstruct processes in antiquity.

Emanuel Tov

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem