

In chapter 13 he uses a comparison between Genesis 6:1–4, which recounts the sexual union between mortal women and the “sons of god,” and a similar more elaborate version in 1 Enoch 6–11 in support of a late date for this biblical unit and its attribution to P. However, he completely ignores my earlier treatment of this episode in Genesis and its very close comparison with the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (Van Seters, *Prologue to History* [Louisville, 1992]: 149–58), which would support a much earlier date for the Genesis story and would seriously undermine the entire argument of this chapter. Historical criticism requires the serious appraisal of *all* the relevant historical evidence. Notwithstanding these few critical remarks, Davies has done much to help us rethink biblical scholarship and for this we are grateful.

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*‘Durch Dein Wort ward jegliches Ding!’ / ‘Through Thy Word All Things Were Made!’: 2. Mandäistische und samaritanistische Tagung.* Edited by RAINER VOIGT. Mandäistische Forschungen, vol. 4. Wiesbaden: HARRASSOWITZ VERLAG, 2013. Pp. x + 393, illus. €98.

When still a graduate student, this reviewer gave a presentation on some intricacies of Samaritan Aramaic phonology at a University of Heidelberg research seminar. The late Professor Klaus Beyer, Nestor of Aramaic Studies in Germany, was present and—amicable as always—shared some of his thoughts on the late Prof. Rudolf Macuch, whose name had naturally come up a number of times throughout the talk: “I always wondered,” said Beyer, “why Macuch chose to concentrate his scientific efforts on two areas so wide apart as Mandaic and Samaritan languages. But then again, they share a number of common denominators: Both are located at the extreme eastern and western ends, respectively, of the Aramaic-speaking world of Late Antiquity. Both were spoken by religious minority groups that survive, in very small numbers, unto this day. And both lack laryngeals and pharyngeals.” It is impossible to know whether Beyer’s rationalization of Macuch’s choice of research topics is correct, but is it this very peculiar choice that dictated the contents of the twenty-three articles on different aspects of Mandaisms (about two-thirds of the book) and Samaritanism in the volume under review, which originated in the Second International Conference of Mandaic and Samaritan Studies in Memory of Prof. Rudolf Macuch. For reasons of space, we cannot review all articles in detail. Rather, we shall concentrate on particularly noteworthy items.

Ionuț Daniel Băncilă opens the volume with “Die Stellung der mandäischen Version des 114. Psalms im Qolasta: Eine semantische Kontextualisierung” (pp. 3–44). While this surprising parallel between the psalm and a Mandaic prayer has been treated before, e.g., by

Jacob N. Epstein and Jonas C. Greenfield, it is worthwhile to return to this and similar parallels every now and then, if only to expose researchers from other fields to them. After all, such small and very specialized disciplines like Mandaic and Samaritan studies have many hidden pearls to offer to mainstream fields like theology or history.

Gaby Abu Samra, “A New Mandaic Magic Bowl” (pp. 55–69), publishes the transliteration and translation of a Mandaic incantation bowl housed at the library of the Holy Spirit University in Kaslik, Lebanon. As Abu Samra remarks (p. 59), the formula “upon the wreath of the light of air I am standing . . .” is a staple in Mandaic epigraphy. Ohad Abudraham, “Three Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the Yosef Matisyahu Collection,” *Leshonenu* 77 (2015): 59–98 (82–83) (Hebrew), has now provided a comprehensive list of attestations.

Matthew Morgenstern and Tom Alfia, “Arabic Magic Texts in Mandaic Script: A Forgotten Chapter in Near-Eastern Magic” (pp. 163–79): Non-Muslim Arabic, sometimes written in foreign scripts, is a priceless source for historical Arabic dialectology, since the language of such texts is usually less influenced by the standard language than Muslim Arabic. No wonder, then, that Morgenstern and Alfia point to various vernacular features (pp. 169, 171–72).

Werner Arnold asks “Gibt es einen samaritanischen Dialekt des Arabischen?” (pp. 249–55) and answers in the affirmative. Even though the Samaritan Arabic dialect resembles the local dialect of Nablus, it still preserves some typically Damascene Arabic features, apparently relics of the language of the many Samaritans who fled from Damascus to Nablus in the aftermath of the massacre of 1625.

Magnar Kartveit, “The Origin of the Jews and Samaritans according to the Samaritan Chronicles” (pp. 283–97), rigorously tests the reliability of the Samaritan Chronicles as historical sources for the biblical and Hellenistic periods, with negative results. However, the historiographical material can offer genuine information on the Byzantine period (see the reviewer, *JAOS* 135 [2015]: 189–207) and the Middle Ages.

Frank Weigelt provides an excellent overview of “Die exegetische Literatur der Samaritaner” (pp. 343–90), which replaces the respective entries in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan D. Crown (Tübingen, 1989), and *A Companion to Samaritan Studies*, ed. Alan D. Crown et al. (Tübingen, 1993). He adds a sample edition of Šadaqa b. Munağğā’s commentary on Genesis (here vv. 3:1–8), but this is a drop in the ocean: Most of the Samaritan Arabic exegetical literature remains unpublished.

Mandaic and Samaritan Studies are small disciplines that have a lot to offer to historians, Bible scholars, and Semitists. Hopefully, this felicitous volume will succeed in making the exciting Mandaic and Samaritan sources known to a wider audience.

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