

reasons to do this, but the archeological data discussed only stretches to the end of the Iron Age, whereas the second main part also includes fairly late texts (such as Job). This makes for a certain discrepancy between the two parts. Also, in the first part it is specifically the *Judahite* tomb and mortuary practices that are focused, whereas the perspective is much wider in the second part. Lastly, there is some inconsistency in the use of the terms “Hebrew Bible” and “Old Testament,” where the latter is used a number of times, seemingly without any motivation.

However, these are only marginal objections. Overall, Suriano’s study has all the qualities necessary to make it a standard work for anyone who wants to study the ideas of death and afterlife in Ancient Israel.

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PAAVO N. TUCKER

*The Holiness Composition in the Book of Exodus*

FAT II 98, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017, Paperback, 230 pages,  
€79, ISBN: 978-3-16-155190-1

The wide consensus among scholars about the origin and development of the Pentateuch based on the classic exposition by Julius Wellhausen—which summarized the discussion during the latter half of the nineteenth century ending in the hypothesis of the four parallel sources J, E, D, and P composed in that chronological order and put together by several successive redactors—started to crumble definitely in the mid-seventies with the publications by John Van Seters, Hans Heinrich Schmid, and, above all, Rolf Rendtorff. Common to these scholars was the abandonment of the hypothesis of parallel sources and a general lowering of the dating of the composition. The basic outline of the Pentateuch, which implies the whole image of Israel’s origins, was seen as the result of the activities of the Deuteronomistic school, thus lowering the date of the composition of the Torah texts in the shape we know them to the sixth century BCE at the earliest.

These scholars, and several of their successors (for example Erhard Blum), saw the so-called Priestly Code, P, the latest of the sources according to the classical hypothesis, as a later supplement to the D-

redacted Pentateuch and not as an independent literary work. This was a definite break with the view of most scholars, going back to Wellhausen and his colleagues and also to Theodor Nöldeke who had defined the Priestly Code in its main outlines as an independent literary work.

One specific part of P has played a role in the argumentation, viz. the so-called Holiness Code (HC), Leviticus 17–26. Most scholars since Karl Heinrich Graf have seen HC as a pre-priestly law-code later on incorporated into P. Some modern scholars (Erhard Blum, Rainer Albertz, Andreas Ruwe), however, have denied the independence of HC, instead seeing it as a part of P from the beginning. This view is partly based on the observation that there are traces of HC terminology in P outside HC. This, in turn, has led some scholars like Israel Knohl and Jacob Milgrom to assume that HC is more or less the kernel of the Priestly code. Knohl assumes the existence of a “Holiness school,” responsible for most of the traditional P narrative, datable to the time of Ezekiah, hereby following for example Menahem Haran.

The study by Paavo Tucker follows in the footsteps of Milgrom and Knohl. Tucker’s main thesis is that the structure-building passages in the P-narrative, the *Grundschrift*, P<sup>G</sup>, viz. Gen 1:1–2:4a; Exod 6:2–8; 29:43–46; 31:12–17, show close relationship with Leviticus 17–26 in terminology and content. This leads to the conclusion that the entire P narrative in fact is a creation by the people behind the Holiness Code. This is what Tucker tries to show through a detailed analysis of Exod 1–14; 16; 20:8–11; 24:15b–18a; 25:1–2a, 8; 29:43–46; 31:12–17; 35:1–3; 39:32, 43; 40:17, 33–35. The P<sup>G</sup> should be seen as a Holiness composition, HC. Its main focus is not the priestly cult per se but the relationship between creation, covenant, divine presence and religious practice, especially the sabbath, as a sign of the relationship between YHWH and Israel. The Holiness Code in Lev 17–26 summarizes the whole concept successively presented in the preceding narrative of which this law-collection is the culmination and finish. Tucker thus makes a division between the HC which constitutes the fundament of the traditional priestly code, and the priestly material proper used by the HC and incorporated in it. This material, according to Tucker, is found

mainly in Exod 25–31, 35–40, and Lev 1–16, and is thus earlier than the HC.

Tucker shows himself as a follower of Rendtorff and Blum in seeing the text as a supplementary layer to a “pre-priestly,” i.e. pre-HC composition closely connected to the Deuteronomistic school which, according to this view, is the main creator of the outline of the Pentateuch as a whole. We are thus in the exilic period at the earliest and the HC would consequently be later.

Studies of the Pentateuch are notoriously intricate, often making tough reading. This book is well structured and readable and the author shows considerable pedagogical skill. He presents his main conclusions in introductory summaries to each chapter, then follows the detailed analysis of the texts which is a good solution to the problem of how to present the often complicated issues. The introductory chapter presents the problem and PT’s solution and gives a survey of the contents of the five following ones. Chapter two is a short but lucid account of the *Forschungsgeschichte* of the relationship between the Priestly Code and the Holiness Code. Chapter 3 is a more detailed discussion of the arguments for and against the unity of P and HC. Chapter 4 contains an analysis of the P and HC elements in Exod 1–14. Chapter 5 is a similar thorough analysis of the same elements in Exod 16–40. A short final chapter summarizes the results of the investigation.

Tucker’s command of the secondary literature on the subject is impressive and we get a full survey of the scholarly debate on the Pentateuch after the mid-seventies. It appears that the traditional “P,” which always has tended to receive a limited interest from traditional biblical scholarship (to a not so small extent due to a Christian, or Protestant bias against “Spätjudentum”), is more and more moved into the focus, and its importance for the whole structure and history of the Pentateuch is becoming clearer. Tucker is a good guide to the intensive debate on these questions during the last three or four decades.

Even if Tucker stands close to the Milgrom-Knohl school he does not follow it slavishly. As was pointed out above, he agrees with Blum in seeing P and HC as a supplementary layer to a D-redacted text, thereby

deviating from those seeing it as an originally independent literary work. This is a point where some scholars would disagree, but a final consensus seems impossible to reach at the moment. Unlike Knohl, for example, Tucker tunes down the differences between the purely priestly material and the Holiness composition. He also refrains from suggesting a definite dating of his HC. It would have been interesting to have a more detailed argumentation on this question since several scholars (Haran, Knohl) have argued for a much earlier date (end of the eighth century BCE) than the traditional exilic-postexilic one.

All in all, Tucker has given a solid, lucid, and fascinating contribution to the debate on the Pentateuch which has to be seriously taken into account in the future discussion.

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JERMO VAN NES

*Pauline Language and the Pastoral Epistles:*

*A Study of Linguistic Variation in the Corpus Paulinum*

Linguistic Biblical Studies 16, Leiden: Brill, 2018, Hardcover, 532 pages,

\$158, ISBN 978-9-00435-841-6

This revised version of Jermo van Nes's 2017 doctoral dissertation aims at contributing something new to one of the classic problems of New Testament studies, that is, the authorship of the Letters to Timothy and Titus. Noticing that the authenticity debate involves arguments pertaining to the Pastoral Letters' historical circumstances, theological contents and linguistic characteristics, van Nes has made the decision (a wise one, for a dissertation) to deal exclusively with the issue of the language of these writings.

The first part of the study, "The Linguistic Problem of the Pastoral Epistles," begins with a detailed history of early research into the problem of the Pastoral Letters' authenticity (ch. 1). Here, van Nes reviews several famous contributions, but also breaks new—or should we say very old?—ground by tracing the questioning of the authenticity of Titus back to Edward Evanson in 1792, over a decade before German scholars began to doubt Paul's authorship of these writings. He then cat-