

lana finns ingen avgränsning i paritet med de 150 kanoniska psalmerna. Den icke-kanoniska Ps 151, som i Septuaginta ges en "outsider" ställning, inkluderas på samma premisser som de andra psalmerna. Dessutom är ordningen på psalmerna i Qumran annorlunda. I de syriska handskrifterna är situationen mer komplex: Ps 151–155 placeras oftast, men inte alltid, i en annan kategori. Gemensamt för såväl grekiska som syriska manuskript är dock att skillnaden mellan kanonisk och icke-kanonisk inte är en skillnad i graden av helighet eller autenticitet.

Det allra sista bidraget, av James Davila, är förvånansvärt nog ett försvar för den traditionella textkritiken. I essän redogör Davila för sitt val att basera översättningen *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, på sin egen kritiskt rekonstruerade eklektiska text där varianter förpassats till apparaten. Trots hans sympati för ny filologi och trots att handskriftsbeståndet uppvisade stora varianter (vilket borde tala för en nyfilologisk approach) drar han slutsatsen att traditionell textkritik är ett fortsatt viktigt verktyg i vår vetenskapliga verktygslåda.

Den ibland hätska tonen mot traditionell filologi, där sökande efter en urtext kallas såväl problematisk som kontraproduktiv, mildras något i den avslutande essän. Essäerna tillsammans visar på att utifrån perspektivet Ny filologi kan mycket användbara resultat nås såväl när det gäller texthistoria som information om skrivare, lärare, läsare och deras miljöer.

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ARI MERMELSTEIN AND SHALOM E. HOLTZ (EDS.)

*The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective*

BIS 132, Leiden: Brill, 2015, Hardcover, 310 pages,

\$152.00, ISBN: 978-9-004-28163-9

The fascinating and overall very well researched compilation of articles explores the ways in which God's justice is conceptualized. Its focus rests on Jewish or Christian views but other traditions are also included. The volume opens with brief introduction where the editors summarize the overarching goals of the volume, as well as reflecting on how each of the twelve contributions touch upon the notion, put forward in Meira Ken-

sky's monograph *Trying Man, Trying God*, that the image of a divine courtroom puts not only humans but also God on trial. Furthermore, all the essays explore the extent to which the notion of a divine trial is limited to the worlds of text or whether it is connected to broader aspects of culture and ideology.

Turning to the individual contributions, Tzvi Abusch shows that the Mesopotamian ceremony against witchcraft found on the text *Maqlû* envisages a judicial hearing before a heavenly court. The plaintiff describes the witch's behaviour and thus establishes the right to an investigation. In this process, the witch's guilt is taken for granted—the plaintiff offers no evidence in support of his/her claim—and it is further assumed that the court shares this knowledge and will act in accordance by condemning the witch (often by burning a figurine that represents her).

Joseph L. Angel examines the similarities and the differences between the divine courtroom scenes in Dan 7 and those in the Qumran *Book of Giants*. His initial textual and contextual comparisons seek to establish the relative chronology of the texts: Dan 7 is the earlier text yet it drew from even earlier, non-biblical material. Angel further highlights how Dan 7 utilizes the courtroom imagery to depict an end-time scenario, while the *Book of Giants* uses the same imagery in its retelling of the ante-diluvian *Urzeit*, yet also hints at the *Endzeit*.

Chaya Halberstam's excellent essay on *Sifre Deuteronomy* uses John Rawls's differentiation between 'perfect', 'imperfect', and 'pure' procedural justice to shed light upon rabbinic understandings of divine and human justice. Halberstam investigates two midrashot and highlights that divine justice is depicted as 'pure justice', i.e. as a system where the outcome is based on the fact that it stems from a just *system*, in this case God's ultimate justice. As a result, the outcome is always just, whether we understand it or not. In parallel, such depictions minimize God's role as judge as there is little space for a divine adjudicator.

Warren Zev Harvey's succinct contribution explores Rabbi Nissim ben Reuben of Girona (Ran)'s dual beliefs in the existence of objective truth and its corresponding lack of legal validity. Harvey highlights that

in Ran's understanding of the heavenly court, God represents objective truth and justice, yet it is up to humans to rule. This ruling is fallible, yet has the ultimate word. To illustrate this matter, Harvey discusses Ran's commentary on b. B. Meṣ 86b (Rabbah bar Naḥmani) which emphasizes how God's absolute knowledge is overruled by the rabbinic majority voice, and Gen 18 (Abraham) which in Ran's understanding shows God's ability, in extreme circumstances, to intervene.

Job Y. Jindo survey article argues that in order to understand the use of the divine courtroom image in the Hebrew Bible, we need to take into account the latter's overarching depiction of the cosmos as a polity, where God is the divine king and where the heavenly council is his royal council. Jindo further suggests that many seemingly unrelated biblical notions can be rendered coherent when understood as part of the judicial functions of the heavenly council. As the author acknowledges, these are but preliminary observations that need deeper discussions.

By examining Tertullian of Carthage's *Apologeticum*, Meira Z. Ken-sky continues her aforementioned work on the depictions of the divine courtroom in Jewish and Christian literature from antiquity. She highlights how Tertullian uses the notion of a 'courtroom within a courtroom' in order to reprimand (within the text) the Roman rulers and to ask them to consider God's judgement upon them. In parallel, Tertullian seeks to comfort, support, and ultimately also admonish his Christian readers: they should not fear human judges who do not grant them justice, but they should fear God lest they jeopardize their salvation owing to fear of martyrdom.

Victor Bers and Adriaan Lanni's informative article highlights the somewhat surprising fact that classical Greek literature does not portray the Greek gods as judges. The gods do have a sense of justice, but no text conveys the sense of divinity sitting in judgement of mortals. A similar impression is given by classical Greek legal practice, where justice is understood as established and executed by humans. Bers and Lanni suggest that the gods were disqualified as judges due to their immortality: the seriousness and urgency that the task of judging demands can only be found among mortals.

Turning to the New Testament, Andrew T. Lincoln argues that the use in John's Gospel of forensic language, with focus on the adaptation of the divine courtroom imagery of Isaiah 40–55, legitimizes the intended readers' own beliefs in Jesus as the ultimate divine judge. In parallel, it also communicates the message that those people who are now judging them (and who may have excommunicated and ostracised them) will in turn be judged by Jesus.

F. Rachel Magdalene's substantial contribution opens with a survey of the Mesopotamian and biblical depictions of a divine court which tries and condemns humans, yet also hears petitions and, in view of proof of innocence or confession, acquits. Magdalene then turns to the notion of abuse of power by authorities (kings) and the mechanisms of the divine courtroom to regulate it. To illustrate her point, she discusses the case of abuse of royal authority in 1 Kings 21 and compares Naboth's situation with that of Job. She concludes that in both cases, the divine courtroom is at work on behalf of the wronged man and ultimately brings about a just outcome.

Carol A. Newsom excellent study emphasizes Job's novel imagery of a lawsuit between God and man. Newsom highlights how Job's judicial terminology, in contrast to the similar language found in the complaint psalms, functions as a generative metaphor in that it envisages a scenario where Job could meet God in a fair trial and as it places God's justice in the centre of the human-divine relationship.

Mathieu Tillier valuable study highlights the social uses of eschatology in Muslim courts of law. Judges were understood to stand between heaven and hell, and fear of the latter was employed to encourage / threaten earthly judges not to abuse their power. To illustrate the point, Tillier discusses key cases where especially poets threatened a judge with divine punishment in an attempt to ensure a just ruling.

Finally, Dov Weiss insightful essay cites three post-tannaitic midrashot to show how the courtroom imagery often turns God into the defendant. While officially being the judge in the cited scenarios, the imagery is actually more of a court of appeal where God is made to recognize his prior mistakes and thus moved to revise his previous rul-

ings. In this way, God is forced to uphold true justice. This collection of articles is a very useful and learned complication and I can warmly recommend it.

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STUART S. MILLER

*At the Intersection of Texts and Material Finds: Stepped Pools,  
Stone Vessels, and Ritual Purity Among Jews of Roman Galilee*

JAJ 16, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015, Hardcover, 423 pages,  
€150.00, ISBN: 978-3-525-55069-4

Stuart Miller is professor of Hebrew, History, and Judaic Studies in the Department of Literatures, Cultures and Languages at the University of Connecticut at Storrs. In this book, Miller brings together four previously published articles that he has revised and adds a substantial amount of new material. The result is an in-depth examination of purity practices with a particular focus on the use of ritual baths, *miquva'ot*. Miller's broad knowledge in Jewish history, including rabbinic traditions and archaeology, is evident in his nuanced and compelling analyses of both texts and archaeological data in his quest for understanding the dynamics and development of ritual purity practices. The title is a bit misleading, since the scope of his examination in many aspects includes both Galilee and Judea, although he pays special attention to Sepphoris (Chapter 6, "The Stepped Pools of the Western Acropolis at Sepphoris"; Chapter 8, "Domestic Judaism and the 'Well-Ordered Bayit': Who Bathed/immersed in the Stepped Pools at Sepphoris and Why?"; Chapter 9 "Priests, Purities, and the Jews of Roman and Late Antique Galilee – Rethinking the Priests of Sepphoris and the Mishmarot"). Miller is mainly interested in the Roman period up to the second century CE, investigating how and why purity practices changed over time. The book consists of a lengthy introduction, eleven chapters, and a postscript about pools in 19th century Chesterfield in Connecticut. It includes indexes not only of primary sources, but also of places, foreign terms, and subjects, which are very helpful. The book is illustrated with