BibAn 2 (2012) 343-346

Kathel Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-en-Provence, 30 June-2 July 2008* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 94; Leiden: Brill, 2010). Pp. xii, 624. €180, $255. ISBN 978-900-418-7863

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The book is a collection of essays all of them dedicated to Aramaic manuscripts from Qumran. The editors are at the same time main organizers of the international conference dedicated to that topic that took place in Aix-en-Provence in 2008. The internal division of the publication is composed of six sections, grouped together under some broad thematic labels. The first one entitled "General Approaches" presents an article of Devorah Dimant dedicated to themes and genres in the Aramaic texts from Qumran. The second article contains the presentation of the 37th volume of the *DJD* series by Émile Puech. The second section discusses linguistic problems ("Lignuistica et Onomastica") with the contributions by Steven Fassberg ("Salient Features of the Verbal System in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls"), Jan Joosten ("L'araméen de Qumran entre l'araméen d'empire et les Targumim"), Ursula Schattner-Rieser ("L'apport de la philologie araméenne et l'interpretation des archaïsmes linguistiques pour la datation des texts araméens de Qumrân"), André Lemaire ("Nabonide et Gilgamesh: l'araméen en Mésopotamie et à Qoumrân), Michel Langlois ("Shemihazah et companie(s). Onomastique des anges déchus dans les manuscripts araméens du Livre d'Hénoch"). The contribution of André Lemaire does not have a linguistic profile but it tries to prove that the Aramaic manuscripts from Qumran are influenced by Babylonian cuneiform culture and constitute a proof of the existence and vitality of Jewish Babylonian diaspora in Late Babylonian period. He concentrates on the presence of Babylonian names in the Nabonidus' prayer and the *Book of Giants*. One should add to these two texts cited by Lemaire the Jewish version of Babylonian lexical lists in the *Visions of Levi* (vv. 31-36; 37-47) together with the lunar calculation of 4Q208-4Q209 modeled on the ideal scheme of lunar visibility during the equinoctial month present in Tablet 14 of the *Enūma Anu Enlil* astrological series. It seems that Lemaire is not aware of these two examples of real cultural influence of the Babylonian scholarly

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tradition on Aramaic Jewish writings. The article by Michel Langlois is an enlarged discussion of the angelic names from his doctoral dissertation (*Le premier manuscript du Livre d'Hénoch*, Paris 2008) where he discusses the terms found in 4Q201.

Devora Dimant dedicated her lecture to themes and genres in the Aramaic texts from Qumran, in which she discusses the literary genre of the Aramaic compositions. Some corrections to Dimant's article seem necessary. When discussing Enoch's cosmic journey with the angels (pp. 21-22) she claims that *1 En*. 72–82 together with *1 En*. 17–36 belongs to the "literary" category that describe Enoch's journeys in the company and under the guidance of various angels. The *Ethiopic Astronomical Book* that Dimant refers to is however markedly different from Enoch's travels (chapters 17-36), especially for the lack of any reference to Enoch's travels. As such, the *EAB* must not be discussed together with chapters 17–36 because the literary forms used in the *EAB* are markedly different from those present in the *Book of Watchers*. It is enough to recall the literary form of the solar calculation in chapter 72 that does not find any point of contact with *1 En*. 17–36. Additionally, Dimant started her article claiming to discuss themes and genres in *Aramaic* texts, it comes therefore as a surprise to notice that she discusses the *Ethiopic* version of the Astronomical Book, without *any* analysis of the content of the *Aramaic Astronomical Book* (4Q208-4Q211), which is quite deceiving. It is evident that the Aramaic manuscripts, although fragmentary, present a markedly different presentation not of the "orbit of the moon," as incorrectly stated by Dimant (p. 22, n. 16) but of the periods of lunar visibility together with the illumination of the lunar disc. Nothing like this has been found in chapters 17-36, and precisely the reader expects Dimant to closely analyze the Aramaic evidence, as the title of her article allows to hope for. Dimant's reticence to deal with the Aramaic fragments of the *Astronomical Book* is sometimes shared by some scholars of the Second Temple period who instead of analyzing Qumran manuscript evidence start from the Ethiopic "complete" translation with negative consequences for the explanation of the Aramaic material. A good example of this approach is Dimant's claim that "the second person addresses to Enoch's son (79:1; 82:1-2) make the entire authobiographical account a testamentary farewell address" (p. 22). While such a statement is (partially) justified for the Ethiopic text, there is nothing in the Aramaic fragments that would allow to extend her statement to the Aramaic composition. The latter certainly does not appear as a testament, and in the Enochic research it is common knowledge that the last chapters of the *EAB* (chs. 80-81) are a later addition, so the primitive literary form was quite different from what we find in the Ethiopic text. To support her claim

that the *Astronomical Book* is an Enochic autobiographical narrative, Dimant cites 4Q209 frg. 26 6 as an additional argument for such a possibility (p. 22, n. 15). While it is interesting to note that actually this is the only Dimant's reference to the text of the *Aramaic Astronomical Book* from Qumran, her argument cannot be upheld because in the cited Aramaic line one does not know who the speaker is, and whom he addresses as his son. The Aramaic line has a clear didactic thrust and stresses the transmission of knowledge from father to son, that is from a master to his pupil. It cannot be taken as an argument supporting the understanding of 4Q208-4Q2011 as "Enoch's cosmic journey with the angels" under which Dimant subsumed the *Ethiopic Astronomical Book*.

Dimant's treatment of the *Visions of Levi* (so-called *Aramaic Levi Document*), *Visions of Amram* and *Admonitions of Qahat* is also surprising. She claims that the literary genre of these three documents is "testamentary' because they are formulated as farewell discourses delivered to the speakers' offspring before their death (p. 28). Sometimes her argumentation is reduced to a logical *non sequitur*, as when for example she speaks about the *Admonitions of Qahat*: "It (4Q542, HD) contains mainly an exhortation to the patriarch's children, similar to the *Aramaic Levi Document*. The fragment should therefore be viewed as the remains of Qahat's address to his sons before his death." There is no logical connection between the first and second sentence, because in the *Visions of Levi* Levi's speech is not certainly a farewell speech, he is not lying on his death-bead and he is not instructing his sons before his death. Additionally, the *Visions of Levi* can hardly be classified as a testament according to the literary criteria elaborated by von Nordheim (*Die Lehre der Alten*, 1980, 1985) on the basis of the Greek *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. The *Visions* contain the following literary units that have been for the first time described in 2004 in my book (*An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran*, pp. 205-207; 224-225; 228-229, 230-232, 233-235, 249-250; 254-259; 302-303; 318-325; 342): petitionary prayer without a lament, vision, rewritten Bible, wisdom instruction, birth account, autobiography, wisdom poem, prophetic speech with apocalyptic overtones. Dimant mentions none of these literary units of the *Visions of Levi*, her analysis therefore cannot be considered as based on the text of the document. It is equally questionable to speak about the *Visions of Amram* as of a testament because the sheer mentioning of the patriarch's death in 4Q543 is not a sufficient and, it seems in Dimant's analysis, exclusive criterion for the classification of the literary genre of this Aramaic composition. My own analysis of the introductory narrative of the *Visions of Amram* ("The Initial Narrative of the *Visions of Amram* and Its Literary Characteristics", *RevQ* 24

[2010] 517-554) and the comparison with the Greek *Testaments* has proved that the *Visions of Amram* has served as a model for the Greek testaments, a model that was purposefully modified to fit the structure of the testamentary literary pattern. Hence calling the *Visions of Amram* a testament is a good example of modern anachronism that transposes the terminology from the second century A.D. Christian text on a set of patriarchal didactic compositions the oldest of which (the *Visions of Levi*) is around five hundred years older than the Greek testaments.

The third thematic section of the book bears the title "Exegesis and Genre" (pp. 183-378) where most of the articles deal with various exegetical aspects of the Aramaic texts from Qumran. There are two article in this section that discuss the literary genres; one is by Moshe Bernstein who discusses the *Genesis Apocryphon* (pp. 317-339*)* and the other by Jörg Frey who deals with the origins of the genre of the "Literary Testament". Prof. Frey allowed me to consult his article in a pre-print version and I was able to answer to his analysis of the testamentary genre, strongly rooted in von Nordheim's understanding of the form, in my article about the initial narrative of the *Visions of Amram* (see above).

Part IV (pp. 379-432) of the book contains two articles dedicated to science (Jonathan Ben-Dov) and esoteric knowledge (Samuel Thomas) at Qumran. The fifth part contains four contributions which discuss "Apocalyptica et Eschatologica" in Qumran writings (pp. 435-544). The last concluding section presents the paper by John Collins (pp. 547-562) who proposes the general conclusions that result from the papers presented during the conference. It is worth stressing that most of the papers are followed by a response or/and discussions also published in the book. This precious detail allows the reader not only to feel the atmosphere of the lively discussion but to follow the reactions of other scholars to theories and explanations proposed in the papers. The whole book is an important contribution to the ongoing discussion on the Aramaic scrolls from Qumran, their literary forms, origin, and ways of their modern explanations.