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Orlov, Andrei A., *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 114), Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007, xii + 483 pages.

In this work, Dr. Orlov presents two different types of material. The first is an extensive, analysed bibliography of the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha and related literature. This is a field of study that lay fallow for the greatest part of the twentieth century during Soviet rule, and now is undergoing a renaissance. His bibliography will become a valued tool for experts in the field and its appearance is certainly a notable event. In addition to lists of collections and of general works, Orlov has organized the material by the names of the works, ranged in alphabetical order. Had he been able, and it may have been impossible, to add a few lines on the character or content of each work, the bibliography's significance for the majority of non-Slavonic reading scholars would have been further enhanced. Since a work like this inevitably invites updating and extension, we express the pious hope that such brief statements be introduced in future editions of this bibliography. The combination of knowledge of Pseudepigrapha and other Jewish sources and Slavonic is not one often encountered but valuable for those of us engaged in the study of the Pseudepigrapha and their reception.

The main body of the book, however, is not bibliography but a collection of learned articles that cohere rather well and that deal with certain specific Slavonic texts relating to various themes in the Hebrew Bible and the pseudepigraphic writings. Like the Bibliography, all the essays refer to what may be called "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha" (and not the surely even larger literature related to the New Testament) and the main focus is the Slavonic Enoch book, 2 Enoch or Book of the Secrets of Enoch. It is the Enoch tradition and its conversation with the traditions about Adam, Moses and Noah that form the heart of this very interesting book. Single essays also deal with the mysterious Jacob vision and also with the Melchizedek tradition, this latter in the form in which it occurs in 2 Enoch.

All the papers in the book but two have been published previously and, in the Introduction, Dr. Orlov notes that he has corrected some typographical and factual errors that crept into the original papers and also consolidated certain of the footnotes to avoid repetition. One paper is new (the last one) and one was in press at the time of publication. First, we shall make our remarks on the technical presentation of the book and then on its extremely interesting content. Clearly, between 2000 and the present, Orlov has produced a series of studies that form a substantial corpus of scholarship, most of which is devoted to 2 Enoch. It makes good sense to combine these into one volume for they form an extensive scholarly investigation of the book. Users of Orlov's book, thankful as they may be for the ease of use which assembly between two covers affords, will regret three things. Unlike many such collections of published papers, this book has been re-set in type and no indication is given of the pagination of the original publications. Together with the fact that the changes, even corrections, of the text of the original publication are not marked, e.g., by putting them into square brackets, the thorough researcher will find her/himself forced to consult both the present work and the original publication. We strongly urge Andrei Orlov to remedy these deficiencies in any future edition of the work. In addition, the reviewer appeals to him, or to one of his associates, to prepare a

subject index to the work. (It might even now, be published in a Journal.) The book has an Index of Sources and one of modern authors, as well as a cumulative bibliography, but an index of subjects would enormously enhance the accessibility of the interesting scholarly work in the book. This remark, incidentally, is true of many recent scholarly works and, frankly, though a cumulative bibliography is a valuable tool, an index of subjects and themes would be an invaluable one.

Having dealt with the technical aspects of this book, we should address its main theses and the insights to be gained from these theses. Orlov opens his introduction by reference to the late Gershom Scholem's view that (as he puts it) "Second Temple pseudepigrapha" can be viewed in the context of "the history of early Jewish mysticism" (p. 103).

Scholem, we may add, viewed 4QSerek Shirot Olam and two works preserved in Old Church Slavonic as major way-stations in the speculative tradition that continued (largely underground) from Second Temple times until the emergence of the Merkabah and Hekalot mystical writings at a debated time in the first millennium. Philip Alexander's recent work on 4Q Serek Shirot (Philip Alexander, *The Mystical Texts. Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and Related Manuscripts* [Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 7, Library of Second Temple Studies 61] London: T&TClark, 2006) makes a similar point for that writing, and not by chance the next footnote after the citations of Scholem on p. 103, refers to Alexander's studies. Likewise, some recent writing showing the relative antiquity of identifiable speculative traditions in Judaism in late antiquity, add verisimilitude to this view from a different perspective.

Through a number of case studies or probes, Orlov seeks to put flesh on the bones of this thesis. Thus, in the first chapter he focuses on the "two tablets" tradition. The idea of two ante-diluvian stelae made of two different materials (one of stone or bronze and the other of clay) occurs in Josephus, Ant. 4.33, connected with Seth. It is witnessed widely. In general, the two materials are designed to survive two future inundations, one of water and the other of fire, and so to enable the transmission of primordial knowledge to later generations. Orlov notes that, though Josephus connects the two pillars with Seth, both the pillars and they type of knowledge they transmit, are at home in connection with Enoch (112-113). This "Enochic" configuration of the figure of Seth is striking, in particular as related to the Enoch of 2 Enoch 22. Moreover, such material, Orlov remarks, is connected in the Merkabah tradition with Enoch-Metatron. He then proceeds to trace this tradition in Malalas, in the Armenian Abel text, and into the Greek Palaea Historica. The same basic insight is followed in a range of other themes. Their roots in more ancient literature are sought and their appearance in 2 Enoch and later writings, both Jewish and Christian, are traced. Here there is no place to present Orlov's further examples, which relate to the Divine Face, traditions about celestial glory and others. Basically, this reviewer regards Orlov's learned presentation as more than plausible.

In addition to this argument traced in an often sensitive and perceptive, and occasionally far-fetched, history of traditions, Orlov's other main preoccupation is with what has come to be called "Enochic" traditions. He repeatedly tries to show that certain clusters of characteristics are typical of the way the figure of Enoch developed and was understood and that they originated there. Moreover, in the latter part of the book in particular, he addresses the attribution of such "Enochic" features to other figures, especially to Adam, to Noah and to Moses. He repeatedly explains this as the outcome of polemics, in formulations like that on p. 307, where he says, "This [the presence of "Enochic"

characteristics in an Adamic tradition MES] suggests that the author of 3 Baruch seems to represent the locus of intense debates involving substantial rewriting of the "original" Enochic/Noachic motifs and themes." Mutatis mutandis this approach governs his view of the relationship of Enochic, Adamic, Noachic and Mosaic traditions, with excursions on Jacob and Melchizedek.

The book is a learned one and Dr. Orlov draws on a broad range of sources, both early and later, Jewish and Christian. He is to be congratulated for placing 2 Enoch very firmly into the ongoing speculative tradition in Judaism and thus imperiously demanding a re-assessment of its significance. This should (and we hope will) have a lasting impact on the study of Judaism in Late Antiquity.

This said, there are a couple of points that should be made, or at least thoughts that have occurred to this reviewer. First, it is striking that this "missing link" in the speculative chain survives in three works known only in Old Church Slavonic: 2 Enoch, Apocalypse of Abraham and Ladder of Jacob. These three works, as Orlov notes, have a good deal in common. Now, traditions are not transmitted except by social / literary tradents living in specific contexts and at given times. If, as is generally agreed, 2 Enoch was composed in Greek (and this may well be true of Apocalypse of Abraham, too) one could have considered where such works were composed, in which circles / contexts they were transmitted and how they came to be translated in the early second millennium CE into Old Church Slavonic and by whom. How, in practical terms, do these Greek-language works relate to the speculative traditions of 4QShirah; how were they transmitted into Merkabah circles?

A second issue that will need to be addressed is the view, evident at various places in the work, of a very distinct, Enochic tradition. Whether this view is influenced, as I imagine, by the work of the "Enoch Seminar" headed by Gabriele Boccaccini or not, it generates presuppositions, particularly in the discussion of the so-called "polemics" between different traditions. Do such polemics between the presentation of biblical figures discerned in various texts reflect actual polemics between social groupings, be they "schools" (what might they be?), "groups," or "traditions" (borne, presumably by tradents)? (Moreover, why it is regarded as axiomatic that the attribution of the same characteristic to two different figures is "polemical"?) What is implied about the social contexts that produced such polemics? If the strategy employed is to work back from "polemical" relations between biblical figures such as Enoch or Noah evident in texts to some sort of social realities in which such relations were actualised, the methodological presuppositions should be made evident. Yet, here Orlov remains basically in the realm of history of traditions and of concepts, and does not delve into their further implications. The two preceding paragraphs should be taken as a reviewer's musings on Orlov's important work. The basic issues he raises are highly significant for the early history of the speculative dimension of Judaism and he is to be congratulated on producing such a stimulating corpus of scholarship. We hope that the influence of this book will benefit those of us who tend to focus on the early period, while those whose concentration is on the early mystical tradition will be led to reconsider issues of continuity and dating that have been dismissed in recent decades.

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