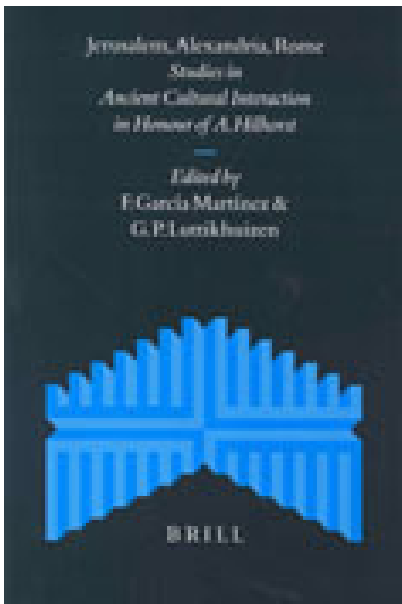


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García Martínez, F., and G. P. Luttikhuisen, eds.

Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst

Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 82

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This Festschrift reflects in its variety the multiple interests that moved the research of Dr. Antonius Hilhorst, professor of New Testament Studies and Early Christian Literature at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Groningen. He is mostly a philologist specializing in “interaction” who “explored the continuum of literatures in order to unveil the fecundating process of transmission, assimilation and reaction among the texts” (ix) The question underlying his research, as the editors present it, is how to keep “this cultural heritage alive and make it more accessible” (x). Hilhorst’s rich bibliography is placed at the end of the present volume.

The variety and number of contributions collected in this volume is impressive (twenty-three!), and, as just noted, related to the wide spectrum of Hilhorst’s interests. In presenting the different contributions, I follow the division proposed by the editors.

1. “Five of these contributions deal specifically with the interaction of the Old Testament with later Jewish or Christian writings” (x). Michael Knibb’s “The Use of Scripture in *1Enoch 17-19*” discusses the role of the Bible in the interpretation of the otherwise unclear passages in the description of the first journey of Enoch and gives an interesting overview of the possible background of the author of this passage. The contribution is particularly interesting in the light of the old debate on the connections of *1Enoch* and the

Bible, Genesis in particular. G. Luttikhuisen's "The Critical Rewriting of Genesis 1 in the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John*" supports the thesis according to which the person who wrote the *Apocryphon of John* found in Jesus a revelation of his transcendent God but in the Old Testament saw just a witness of the Demiurge, the inferior god of this material and inferior world. Thus the author of the *Apocryphon of John* raised the polemic against the other Christians who defended the validity of the Old Testament. János Bolyki's " 'Never Repay Evil with Evil': Ethical Interactions between the Joseph Story, the Novel *Joseph and Aseneth*, the New Testament and the Apocryphal Acts" is a study of the roots of this particular ethical admonition in the New Testament and *Joseph and Aseneth*. J. van Ruiten's "The Four Rivers of Eden in the *Apocalypse of Paul (Visio Pauli)*: The Intertextual Relationship of Genesis 2:10–14 and the *Apocalypse of Paul* 23:4" studies the two texts in order to analyze whether the evident connection is direct or mediated by other middle Jewish writings. It demonstrates that "the connection of the four rivers of Paradise to the City of Christ in the *Apocalypse of Paul* was prepared long beforehand" (283). Arie van der Kooij's "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language: A Characteristic of LXX-Isaiah" is a brief study on the figurative language in the Greek translation of Isaiah, seen as very close to the language of the Targum of this book.

2. "Two contributions are devoted to the interaction of Greek motives in Jewish and Christian literature" (x). The first article is by Anders Klostergaard Petersen, "Between Old and New—The Problem of Acculturation Illustrated by the Early Christian Usage of the Phoenix Motif." Here the author uses the example of the Phoenix motif to show how Christians, in a conservative world where everything new was considered with suspicion, were able to present their being a new religion as the accomplishment of ancient promises. The second article in this section, István Czachez's "The Eagle on the Tree: A Homeric Motif in Jewish and Christian Literature," is very effective in showing the continuity of a pagan motif in Jewish and Christian literature.

3. The third group refers to the *Martirium* literature: two articles by Jan Bremmer and Boudewijn Dehandshutter are related to this topic. The first author works on the *Passio Perpetuae and Felicitatis*, concentrating on the vision of Saturus, Perpetua's spiritual guide, that confirms the importance of martyrs and their happy destiny, defending the inestimable role of martyrs and *confessores* inside the church as well. Boudewijn Dehandshutter concentrates his short essay on some observations on the textual transmission of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*.

4. "Other contributions explore the influences of Greek writings within a Jewish context at the level of philology" (xi). In this group we find a number of essays. Natalio Fernández Marcos's "Teodoreto's Philological Remarks on the Language of the Septuagint" brings the reader into the world of ancient Christian interpretation of the

Bible, in which we clearly see the influence, for instance, of the Homeric pagan exegesis. Florentino Garcia Martinez's "Greek Loanwords on the Copper Scroll" faces, in a remarkable article, the complicated and much-debated question of the language of the mysterious *Copper Scroll*. He underlines how the Greek loanwords in the book, that he reduces to only four, cannot be an indication of the nonsectarian origin of the manuscript but evidence a further development in the Hebrew language used at Qumran. J. J. Collins, in "Life after Death in Pseudo Phocylides," gives a creative answer to the question, What kind of life after death is pictured in Pseudo Phocylides? According to Collins, the author "combined different ideas of afterlife, but strung them together in a way that achieved a measure of coherence" (85). Mostly, Pseudo Phocylides worked on popular ideas and images of life after death. G. Stemberger's "Moses Received Torah—(*m. Avot* 1,1): Rabbinic Conceptions of Revelation" argues that the famous text relating the transmission of the Torah from Moses to the "Men of the Great Assembly" is strangely isolated and reflects only a later development of the tradition in which the figure of Moses is exalted. It cannot be used in reference to the Pharisees and the New Testament. Monika Pesthi's "The Three Nets of Belial from Qumran to the *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaeum*" studies the interesting development of the Middle Jewish idea of three basic sins (fornication, affront against divinity, violence against other human beings) in the concept of temptation in the Christian tradition. Johannes Tromp, in "Origen on the *Assumption of Moses*," reaches the interesting conclusion that the description of the apocryphal book given by Origen is correct and that he did not "mix . . . up the *Assumption* and the *Apocalypse of Moses*" (338), as is sometimes believed. Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, in "The White Dress of the Essenes and the Pythagoreans," compares the basic assumptions of the two groups about wearing white clothes as a protest against inequalities in society and also draws the conclusion that, while we know the Essenes dressed in white, there is no proof that the people in Qumran did the same, even if there are indications and warnings against wearing colored clothes. Finally, Ed Noort writes on the traditions about the places where John the Baptist baptized, evidencing how the shift from East to West corresponds to a shift given to the person of the Baptist himself, as Elijah *redivivus*, to the fact of the baptism of Jesus.

5. "Six contributions move beyond the chronological frame of the Supplements to the *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, but all of them faithfully represent the same principles of interaction in the continuum of literary texts that characterize Ton's research" (xi). Jan de Boeft's "Aeterne Rerum Conditor: Ambrose's Poem about 'Time'" is a presentation of the work of Ambrose in its historical context, above all with reference to Augustine and Plotinus. Antoon Bastiaensen, in "Augustine of Hippo Preaching on John the Baptist," presents the sermons of Augustine in their historical context, trying to specify what can be considered typical of Augustine's style and theology. The comparison with

Jesus and the use of the verb *currere*, as an image of the running of the mothers to the baptism of the infants, was used in polemic against the Pelagians. Marc van Uytfange, in “Le sauveur biblique du Latin mérovingien: L’exemple de la *Vie de Sainte Rusticule*, Abbessse à Arles (VII^e siècle),” writes of a linguistic study on the influence of the Bible on the hagiographical Latin of the seventh century. Gerard Bartelink’s “*Illiteratus* in Early Christian and Medieval Texts: Church and Illiteracy” describes the figure of the *illiteratus* in the ancient and Middle Age church and evidences the importance of being able to read and write for priests and monks in the church through the Middle Ages. Martin McNamara presents an interesting journey among some Irish New Testament apocryphal books evidencing the development of the antichrist legend, a good example of how the study of the Apocrypha was open to new tracks in the Middle Ages. Finally, the article by Miekske van Poll-van de Lisdonk examines the way Erasmus developed his biblical criticism in connection with the scholars of his time.

About the present book, the only problem I would like to underline is that the reader can get lost among the wide variety of subjects dealt with, a problem typical of Festschriften but here strongly accentuated. Beside this note, I would also stress that, even if most of the essays are interesting because they actually reflect Hilhorst’s interest in interaction, showing how we can see a continuum in the literary pagan, Jewish, and Christian traditions, I see as particularly meaningful three essays among the others. Florentino Garcia Martinez’s research on Greek loanwords in the *Copper Scroll* offers an important contribution on the understanding of this mysterious Qumran work and brings research some steps further in defining the environment in which the scroll was written. Stemberger’s article is of the most importance because it proves further the difficulty of using the rabbinical writings as a source for Middle Judaism; in this long-lasting debate, I think he brings further proof that rabbinical writings can be used to understand their own time and not the preceding centuries. Finally, I found very interesting Ed Noort’s article, because it points to the fact that the picture of John the Baptist as Elijah *redivivus* was probably not a Christian reading of Jesus’ mentor but an original picture.

Not having the wideness of knowledge of Hilhorst, I must admit I cannot fully evaluate the importance of all the essays, which seemed to me very interesting reading and worthy of the reader’s attention.