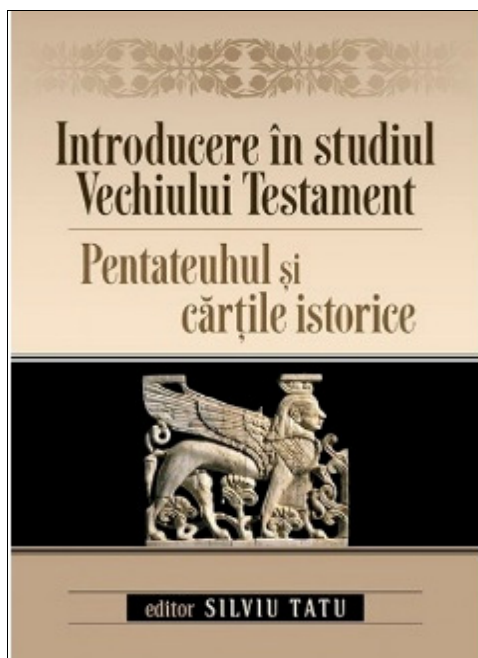


RECENZII ȘI PREZENTĂRI DE CARTE

***Introducere în studiul Vechiului Testament. Pentateuhul și cărțile istorice*, Silviu Tatu (ed.), Cluj-Napoca & Oradea: Risoprint Publishing House & Casa Cărții Publishing House, 2016, 535 p.**

In Vetere Novum, Velatum: The New Testament is veiled in the Old Testament. The first one of the two volumes that make up the project coordinated by the Romanian exegete and Hebraist Prof. Silviu Tatu, suggestively entitled *Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament*, appeared as a legitimate, desirable and essential complement to the Vetrotestamentary *breviarium* (breviary) containing works signed by Romanian authors such as: Emilian Lemeny (*Critical Introduction to the Old Testament Books*), Athanase Negoită (*Old Testament Theology*), Eduard Sechel (*Introduction to the Old Testament*), I.V. Botiza (*Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures*), Petre Semen (*Introduction to the Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*), Teodor Baba (*Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament*), Mihai Handaric (*Introduction to the Old Testament*) etc.

The current volume runs ahead of the other ones (quantitative and qualitative), because it subsumes synthetically in a total text with over 500 pages, containing comments, exegeses and interpretations of the five books of Moses and the twelve historical books, proposed by the Bible researchers and belonging to writers from Antiquity to contemporary times. With an elegant graphic conception – the image of *Ornamental Phoenician Sphinx* on hardcover –,



this volume enjoys the competence of the specialised editor (who is polyglot, Old Testament professor and theologian), and of the literary editors, respectively the specialised revisers of Casa Cărții Publishing House from Oradea.

The coordinator of the volume is a renowned author due to his works: *The Biblical Hebrew* (Timothy Crow, Silviu Tatu: Cartea Creștină, 2001), *God Spoke in the Old Days through Prophets: studies of the Old Testa-*

ment (Metanoia, 2007), *Israel's Prophetism in Biblical documents: falsity versus authenticity* (Casa Cărții de Știință, 2008), *The qatal / yiqtol (yiqtol / qatal) verbal sequence in Semitic complets: a case study in systemic functional grammar with applications on the Hebrew Psalter and Ugaritic poetry* (Gorgias Press, 2008), *The Lion of Zion: expositions of the prophecies of Amos, Zephaniah and Haggai* (Casa Cărții, 2008), *Exegesis of the Biblical Narrations: literary analysis of The Book of Judges* (SBR, 2011) etc. Besides him, other well-known or lesser-known STD¹ authors signed articles, the majority being Romanian professors of the Old Testament at home and abroad.

Through the *Foreword*, the coordinator wants to create a five-fold framework that will be respected by each of the authors:

(1) "History of interpretation" (the study of the hermeneutic versions in their historical context, the clarification of paternity, dating and place of writing),

(2) "Historical background" (contextualisation of the discursive thread in the biblical chronology and the Christian era),

(3) "Literary analysis" (textual critical approach, evocation of the genre and literary structures, the book's schedule etc.),

(4) "The relationship with the extra-biblical literature" (realization of connections between the biblical text and the Judeo-Christian or other literary texts) and

(5) "The theological message" (establishment of theological themes specific to each book and their connection to the whole Scripture).

There follow the *Abbreviations*, which are surprising through the magnitude of the 362 titles used. Then, four of the authors address a brief "introduction" to this volume, in which they tackle subjects such as: manuscripts and versions (Gelu Păcurar, *Baptist Bible Institute*, Timișoara), the Canon (Grațian Vandici, STD at *University of Oxford*, UK), the relationship between Testaments (Radu Gheorghită, *Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, Kansas, USA) and the ethics of the New Testament (Creighton Marlowe, *Evangelische Theologische Fakultät*, Leuven, Belgium). Thus, the evocation of the manuscripts from the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, abbreviated as 1Q, 2Q, 4Q, 6Q, 11Q (numbered according to the Qumran Caves) and of the Aleppo Codex dating from 925 AD, is added to the tripartite partition proposed by Origen for the Biblical Canon (uncontested books / contested books / rejected books), then to the attentive classification of the two Testaments' typologies, such as: institutional (The Tabernacle and The Temple of Jerusalem / The Temple and The New Jerusalem Tabernacle), characterological (The First Adam / The Last Adam), event-related (The Crossing of The Red Sea / The Christian Baptism) and *exempla* (literary genre in which the Vetero-testamentary characters become parables for us: Abraham / the faith, Job / the patience etc.).

These biblical books were analysed as follows: *Genesis, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Chronicles* – Silviu Tatu (*Pentecostal Theological Institute*, Bucharest), *Exodus* – Cristian G. Rata (*Torch Trinity*, Seoul, South Korea), *Leviticus* and *Ruth* – Alexandru Mihăilă ("Justinian the Patriarch" *Faculty of Orthodox Theology*, București), *Numbers* – Daniel

¹ STD (abbrev.): *Sanctae Theologiae Doctor* ["Doctor of Sacred Theology"] [Ș.Ș.].

Gherman (*Baptist Theological Institute*, Bucharest), *Deuteronomy* – Benjamin Kilchör (*Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule*, Basel, Switzerland), *1-2 Kings* – Tchavdar S. Hadjiev (*Belfast Bible College, Institute of Theology*, Belfast, Ireland), *Ezra, Nebemiah*, Tiberius Rata (*Grace College and Seminary*, Winona Lake, USA) and *Esther* – Romulus V. Ganea (*Pentecostal Theological Institute*, Bucharest). In the process, elements of literature, history, geography, archaeology, biblical criticism, patrology, exegesis and biblical hermeneutics intertwine with references to authors such as: Philo of Alexandria, Josephus Flavius, Origen of Alexandria, Ephrem of Nisibis, Gregory of Nyssa, Didymus the Blind, John Chrysostom, Saint Jerome, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Augustine of Hippo, Cyril of Alexandria, Procopius of Gaza, Isidore of Seville, *Bēda Venerabilis* (Bede the Venerable), Claudius of Turin, Rabanus Maurus Magnentius, Rabbi Sa'adiah ben Yosef Gaon, Rashbam *alias* Samuel ben Meir, Petrus Comestor, Thomas Aquinas, *Nicolaus Lyranus* (Nicholas of Lyra), Thomas Cajetan, Martin Luther, John Calvin, *Drusius* (Johannes van den Driesche), Hugo Grotius, James Ussher, Franz Delitzsch, August Dillmann, Hermann Gunkel, Gerhard von Rad, H.W. Wolff, R.E. Longacre, Donald B. Redford, Jan P. Fokkelman, Steven H. Propp etc.

For instance, we offer a convincing fragment, extracted from “The History of the Interpretation of Genesis” by Silviu Tatu (p. 107):

“When it refers to divinity, the Book of Genesis uses with priority some names that are no longer used as current forms in the following books. One of them is ‘The God of My Father’, an epithet attested by the OAA² documents from the 19th century BC [...]. Additionally, as compared to the rest of the Hebrew Bible, a lot of divine names containing *El* appear in Genesis: El-Elyon (14:18, 19, 22 acc. Ps. 78:35), El-Shadday (17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25 acc. Ex. 6:3), El-Roi (16:13; 24:62), El-Olam (21:33), El-Betel (31:13; 35:7), El-Elohe-Israel (33:20), Elohe-HaShamayim (24:3, 7). The use of El-Elyon in correspondence with Elohim in the ancient Hebrew poetry suggests the fact that the first was replaced by the latter. [...]

The Onomasticon of Genesis is original due to the fact that among 38 names, 28 are not reused by the other characters of the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, the theophoric names, when they exist, prefer the EL form of the divine name and not the one preferred afterwards – IAHU (eg: MahalaleEL, ELiezer, IshmaEL, IsraEL, YachleEL, MalkiEL, JahzeEL etc.)”.

It is important to mention that out of a total of 535 pages, approximately 70 contain bibliography, written in small characters, which represents 13% of the volume. This is the proof of the Romanian and foreign biblists’ conscientiousness. The schedules, maps, tables, graphics and diagrams complete the panoply put at the disposal of the reader by these researchers.

Through its magnitude and the professionalism proved by the coordinator and the authors, this volume is not far from the value of the classical masterpiece of R.R.

² OAA (abbrev.): „Orientul Apropiat al Antichității” [*The Near East of Antiquity*] [Ș.Ș.].

Brown, J.A. Fitzmyer and R.E. Murphy, *Introduction and Commentary on the Holy Scripture*, translated in Romanian at Galaxia Gutenberg Publishing House (Târgu-Lăpuș, 2005). If, following the compilation of the second volume that will contain the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament, the authors decide to translate the biblical text, offering the readers a rich critical apparatus also, their work will gain the notoriety of other editorial projects, such as the editing of *The Septuagint* (NEC &

Polirom, 2004).

We are looking forward with great interest to the second volume, noting the truthfulness of Augustin's saying: "*Vetus Testamentum in Novo revelatum, in Vetere Novum velatum...*" ["The Old Testament is revealed in the New and the New Testament is veiled in the Old"].

ȘTEFAN ȘUTEU