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Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *I Enoch 91–109* (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature; Walter de Gruyter: Berlin – New York, 2007). Pp. xv + 855. € 144,95. ISBN 978-3-11-019119-6

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Stuckenbruck's (henceforth S.) commentary on the final chapters of *I Enoch* is a fine piece of exegetical work on a very difficult and complex tradition preserved in Aramaic, Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Ethiopic manuscripts. In order to discuss in detail single sections of that part of the Enochic tradition, S. proposes an exegetical approach that is both traditional and innovative at the same time. After the introductory chapter (pp. 1-48) which contains general information about chapters 91–109, the following five chapters are dedicated to single literary sections and are composed of two parts: the Introduction contains notes about the textual tradition and its manuscripts, literary analysis and structure, date and social setting, author and community; the Commentary discusses the literary units found within each part of the text. The exegetical analysis of each unit is preceded by extensive textual notes concerning the preserved text, which makes the commentary a very valuable tool for textual criticism purposes. In most cases, only textual variants are given, but the Ethiopic variants decisively dominate, with many new readings collated mostly from the manuscripts preserved in the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library in Collegeville, Minnesota. The Ethiopic variants cited are, in many cases, so extensive that one wonders whether they are really necessary, because their number simply overwhelms the reader and only some of them are actually used by S. in his exegetical notes. One has the impression that such extensive textual notes on Ethiopic manuscripts should rather find its place in a critical edition of the Ethiopic text. Chapter Four is the most extensive one in the whole commentary because it deals with the central part of the whole section *I Enoch* 91–109, that is, with the *Epistle of Enoch* (92:1-5; 93:11-14; 94:1–105:2). The introductory contents and the comments are very detailed and the literary analysis of single sections, together with extensive textual notes, proves excellent exegetical skills. There are, however, some problems that should be noted.

S. does not accept Nickelsburg's description of *I Enoch* 1–36, 81:1–82:4 and 91–105 as a “testamentary collection”, and claims that the “testamentary” element developed as the compilers attempted to find a literary or narrative rationale for the additions they were making (p. 16). On p. 191 S. claims that the introduction (92:1-5; 93:11-14; 94:1-5) and conclusion (104:9–105:2) of the *Epistle* retain the mood of the testamentary address in the *Exhortation* in 91:1-10, 18-19 (cf. p. 72-73). He stresses the presence of Enoch's ethical exhortations to his immediate progeny and his predictions concerning the sinners who will tempt Enoch's sons away from wisdom. Additionally, the introduction and conclusion of the *Epistle* contain the language of choosing or walking on righteous or wicked paths. In the end, those with an understanding of Enochic wisdom will bring their wisdom to the children of the earth for whom they shall act as guides. When commenting on 93:2d (p. 80), S. indicates the formula of the transmission of Enochic revelation to his descendants as being part of the testamentary genre. Thus S., on the one hand, recognizes that the term “testamentary” does not fit the overall characterization of the literary forms found in the *Epistle* and in the rest of chapters 91-108; on the other hand, the adjective “testamentary” properly describes some short literary forms that S. usually relegates to the redactional stage of the last chapters of *I Enoch* (p. 16). The question, however, should be raised as to whether the term “testamentary” should be used at all in the context of *I Enoch* literature. What the scholars usually refer to as “testamentary” in that composition is easily explained against the didactic context of knowledge transmission present both in the *Aramaic Astronomical Book* and the *Book of Watchers*. The adjective “testamentary” is an anachronism in relation to Enochic literature, transferred by modern scholars from a much later pseudepigraphic composition called *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* to earlier Jewish texts from the Second Temple period (cf. H. Drawnel, “The Initial Narrative of the *Visions of Amram* and Its Literary Characteristics”, *RevQ* 24 [2010] 517-554).

The question of the social setting of the *Epistle* is a thorny one and has elicited several proposals duly cited and critically evaluated by S. It is, however, surprising not to find his own opinion about where and by whom the text might have been composed. Paragraph C “Date and Social Setting” (p. 211-215) contains pertinent information about the date of the *Epistle*, but the opinion of S. about its social setting is simply not there. The *Epistle* contains some pronouncements against the idolatry of the sinners, and VanderKam and others connected it to the times preceding the Maccabean revolt (see p. 212 and n. 382). However, the social context of the *Aramaic Astronomical Book* and of the myth of the fallen Watchers (*I En.* 6–11) indicates clear links

with Late Babylonian society and its polytheistic culture (cf. H. Drawnel, “Between Akkadian *ṭupšarrūtu* and Aramaic ספר”, *RevQ* 24 [2010] 373–403; “The Punishment of Asael (*I En.* 10:4–8) and Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Literature”, *RevQ* [2012] 369–394; “Professional Skills of Asael (*I En.* 8:1) and Their Mesopotamian Background”, *RB* 119 [2012] 518–542). Perhaps it is time to ask whether the social setting of the *Epistle* should be sought for in the Babylonian polytheistic society of the Hellenistic period, and not in the pre-Maccabean times in Israel, without any clear association with any group in Jewish society of the second century B.C. The association of the “sinners” with the polytheistic Babylonian society would rely not only on the charge of idolatrous behavior found in the *Epistle* (99:6–9), but also on the presentation of idolatry and the worship of demons as an epistemological error. In 99:7 the author compares idolatry with “every (kind) of error” made “not according to knowledge” (οὐ κατ’ ἐπισ[τήμην]). S. concludes from this statement about the lack of knowledge that the opponents of the author “are not able to know that they are (from the author’s perspective) idolaters, nor are they therefore aware of the divine judgment that their actions will incur (cf. 98:3)” (p. 404). Probably due to that opinion S. does not accept the Greek reading, which is clearly superior, to the Ethiopic “without knowledge” (*wa-’i-ba-temhert*) that he cites in his translation. The statement about the lack of knowledge of idolaters has to be read in light of the discussion about knowledge transmission in the *Book of Watchers* (chs. 6–11), where the knowledge transmitted by the angels causes much disruption in the divinely established world order. The *Book of Watchers* supplants the disruptive knowledge of the fallen Watchers with that of Enoch who receives his revelation about the structure of the world from the angels faithful to God (chs. 17–36; cf. 72–82). The analysis of the social context of the knowledge of the fallen Watchers indicates its connection with the idolatrous Babylonian enchanters (*āšipu*) and the Babylonian temple personnel (smiths and goldsmiths; see H. Drawnel, “Between Akkadian *ṭupšarrūtu* and Aramaic ספר”; idem “Professional Skills of Asael (*I En.* 8:1) and Their Mesopotamian Background”). Thus, for the author of the *Book of Watchers* there exist two types of revealed knowledge: one that is strictly connected with the idolatrous priests and artisans associated with the temple in Babylonia, and the other one that comes from the revelation to Enoch, that is an Aramaic version of some parts of Babylonian science taken over by the Jewish scribes. As S. often points out, the author of the *Epistle* knows the *Book of Watchers* and is often inspired by its world view. By specifying that idolatry is done not according to knowledge, the author bases his statement on the *Book of Watchers* that clearly distinguishes between the two types of revealed knowledge. The idolaters in 99:7 do not act

according to the knowledge revealed to Enoch about the heavenly and earthly realm, and *because of that* fall into the trap of idolatry, associated with the knowledge revealed to the fallen Watchers (cf. H. Drawnel, “Knowledge Transmission in the Context of the Watchers’ Sexual Sin with the Women in *1 Enoch* 6–11”, *BibAn* 2 [2012] 123–151). Note that the lack of knowledge in the conduct of the sinners in *1 En.* 98:3 causes their destruction by their being thrown into a fiery furnace, a punishment that recalls the destruction by fire imparted on the fallen Watchers in *1 En.* 10:6, 13 (cf. *1 En.* 103:8).

It is surprising that S. discards the paleographic identification and dating of the Greek fragments of *1 Enoch* from Qumran Cave 7. He claims that the preserved Greek text is “too meager either to serve the analysis of the *Epistle* itself or to provide sufficient grounds for identification from which to advance an argument about the date” (p. 214). However meager the evidence might be, it is sufficient to propose a paleographic dating, which can hardly be questioned. In fact, S. does not cite any arguments against the paleographic datation of the Greek fragments proposed by Puech (“Sept fragments grecs de la *Lettre d’Hénoch* [*1 Hén* 100, 103 et 105] dans la grotte 7 de Qumrân [= *7QHéng*”] *RevQ* 18 [1997] 313–323) and Muro (“The Greek Fragments of Enoch from Qumran Cave 7 [*7Q4*, *7Q8*, & *7Q12* = *7QEn gr* = *Enoch* 103:3–4, 7–8]” *RevQ* 18 [1997] 307–312). In note 388 he also expresses his agreement with Nickelsburg’s opinion that the identification of the Greek fragments from Cave 7 as the remnants of the *Epistle of Enoch* is unproven. Such an opinion calls into question the excellent identification and reconstruction of the Greek text and its paleographic dating without giving any reasonable argument against the work of experienced paleographers.

When citing Syncellus’s text of *1 En.* 8:3, S. claims that the Greek sentence “that there should be anger against the mind” is an expansion that reflects a textual corruption (p. 278, n. 505). He, however, does not cite any argument to support his claim. One should note that Syncellus’s text is closer to the Aramaic original than other attested versions, especially in the case of 8:3. So, even if one can claim that the sentence is an expansion, there is a high probability that it goes back to the Aramaic original. Additionally, there are good reasons not to translate the plural ὀργάς with singular “anger”, which does not seem to correspond, from the semantic point of view, to the Aramaic term רַגִּז that is often translated by the LXX as ὀργή, cf. H. Drawnel, “Between Akkadian *ṭupšarrūtu* and Aramaic כַּפַּר”, *RevQ* 24 [2010] 388.