BOOK REVIEWS / BOEK RESENSIES

Sneed, Mark R. (ed.), *Was There a Wisdom Tradition: New Perspectives in Israelite Wisdom Studies*. 325 + xi pages. Paperback. ISBN 978-1-6283-7099-7; R623.00. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015.

Analogous to the Hebrew Bible itself, this edited volume represents a dialogue among its contributors. Unlike the Hebrew Bible, however, the central concern is the ontological status of what has been variously identified in recent research as the reference of the second-order concept of a "wisdom tradition" in ancient Israel and/or the Hebrew Bible, which is not the same thing). The editor is Mark Sneed, a leading and internationally acclaimed researcher on the "wisdom literature" in general and in regards the book of Qohelet (Ecclesiastes) in particular. The publication itself is the eventual outcome of fruitful discussions at the annual SBL in the session "Wisdom in Israelite and cognate traditions".

In the introduction, Sneed recounts his own experiences as a student in a manner that many readers will be able to relate to:

During my days in graduate school, I was taught and read what has been the paradigm position in Hebrew Bible studies concerning the nature of the wisdom corpus. It was described as an alien body in the Hebrew Bible. It never alluded to the pivotal events and persons in Israelite history like the patriarchs or the exodus or the covenants, such as at Sinai… The sages were practically empiricists who only considered what could be rationally and empirically verified as legitimate knowledge.

This sets the stage nicely for what follows, the objective being an attempted reconsidering of the currently usefulness of a number of issues that emerged within the older form-critical "paradigm" that began with Herman Gunkel and further popularised by James Crenshaw. Ambitious to the bone, nothing less is in view than the very nature of the wisdom tradition itself, although the idea is soon thereafter defamiliarized and complicated beyond all collegial decency, as is only appropriate:

….nature of the wisdom "tradition." Is the wisdom literature rightly a tradition? If so, what kind? Or is it a mode of literature or discourse? Who were the tradents? Can we know with certainty? Does the wisdom literature represent this group's worldview or not? What relationship does the wisdom literature have with the rest of the corpora of the Hebrew Bible? What are the limits or boundaries of the wisdom corpus? How tightly or loosely should they be drawn? These and other questions are the concern of this volume.

Three sections are distinguished by the table of contents itself, namely "genre theory and the wisdom tradition" (seven authors/contributions), "case studies" (four authors/contributions and "ancient Near Eastern comparison" (one author/contribution).

In the first perspective presented, Will Kynes reminds us that the concept of a "wisdom tradition" is a scholarly construct which according to him has outlived its usefulness as a separate category of research in relation to the rest of the biblical literature. Sneed is right behind him next, intricately weaving the thread of a thousand and one qualifications required concerning the category of genre (and therefore "wisdom"). Michael Fox then enters the fray arguing that one can still speak meaningfully of "wisdom literature" as a type, meeting specific necessary and sufficient criteria regarding form and content. Douglas Miller similarly thinks there is a thing to be said for common characteristics within wisdom literature. Annette Schellenberg goes one further, suggesting even the idea of a wisdom "worldview" (previously disputed) can be retained. Katharine Dell makes use of the Wittgensteinian concept of "family resemblance", viewing some books (Proverbs) as more (proto-)typical than others (Job), the latter itself further connected to atypical members (e.g. wisdom Psalms). Stuart Weeks follows suit when criticizing the hermeneutical assumptions of form criticism.

Markus Saur takes us to the next section and concludes from his interpretation of some of the so-called "wisdom Psalms" that the category was a form of discourse rather than a class of people. Tova Forti argues for a little more specificity regarding form and content when attempting to classify texts as wisdom in type and shows what she means in the context of Psalms 39 and 104. Raick Heckl summarises parts of his earlier research showing that the frame-narratives of the books of Job and Proverbs presuppose parts of the Pentateuch and prophetic texts as already semi-canonical during the Persian period. Mark Hamilton looks at wisdom bits scattered in the book of Ezekiel as evidence for the existence of distinct genres that did not exclude their mixing with non-wisdom types.

Nili Shupak represents the home stretch in the relay and the only view in the ancient Near Eastern specialist section (although all the other contributions touch on comparative aspects). The case is re-opened for viewing Egyptian wisdom as originating in a secular context before being codified by a scribal class. Israelite wisdom is said to show signs of similar development, partly as a result of direct dependence on said cognate context.

The edited volume is a welcome addition to the ongoing related research. In a way, it stands in another modern tradition concerned with what happens when readerly categories are projected onto the contents of ancient texts thereby distorting their meaning(s) accordingly. The title of the volume is somewhat (but understandably) ambiguous since the various essays are not merely answers to

the question being posed but in fact concerned with different questions in different contexts. Wisdom and the tradition it is connected to can refer to anything from a word, a genre, as a body of literature, as a social phenomenon (a school), as a historical entity (scribal sages), a theology (non-revelatory, non-Yahwistic), a practice (non-cultic), a worldview (sapiential), etc. To ask whether there was a wisdom tradition and what answer comes to mind will mean different things in the context of different senses and references of the concept, and of course in the registers of different auxiliary subjects (linguistics, literary criticism, history, sociology, theology, philosophy, etc.)

To the extent that the concern lies with an essentially contested concept, the volume as a whole seems to imply adherence to a probabilistic view of conceptual structure as assumed by the prototype theory of concepts. To the extent that this is the case, the arguments related thereto and dependent thereon share the weaknesses of that theory. Mutually exclusive forms of terminology are also present, as when Wittgenstein's notion of "family resemblances" that inspired the theory of prototypes is mixed with references to the classical theory's notion of necessary and sufficient conditions At times it is hard to avoid the suspicion that the essentialism associated with intentional definition is nevertheless presupposed in the repeated criticism levelled at form-criticism for having failed to identify any essential properties of the phenomenon under consideration.

What is particularly pleasant in terms of the reading experience, however, is that the volume itself is as provocative and interesting as the debates regarding the "historical traditions" of "ancient Israel" during the nineties of the previous century. The analogy seems strong with regard to the questioning of a fundamental second-order concept and the game-changing implications involved in doing so and discarding it from the meta-language (cf. also the repeated reference to the previous "paradigm".). Also, the revision called for within the specialist research focus area on biblical wisdom equally stops just south of its own raison d'être. And what better way to tickle the fancy of specialists on other types of OT literature and initiate a lively scholarly debate on the topic (not to mention the additional research spawned and the citations that can be expected, even in disagreement). If this was the objective (or not), the editor and his team, as they say, absolutely nailed it. This volume is the proverbial city gate where the sages of tomorrow can meet, even if the latter are no longer discoverable elsewhere than amongst ourselves.

The analogy with the minimalist controversy is also weak, however, given the diversity of views allowed to present themselves concurrently. In addition, in this case, wisdom "minimalists" and "maximalist" both appear to be motivated by "theological" agendas in general and canonical criticism in particular (with a few exceptions among the contributions, of course). The desire to connect or even oppose "wisdom" in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) to the rest of the

inner-biblical contexts imply as much, and in many cases the agenda does not diminish the quality of the insights provided. Here everyone, whether rejecting, affirming or modifying one or more concept, concern or category of the "previous paradigm", seems to be on the same page (pun intended).

In conclusion, the publication is highly recommended for both institutional libraries and personal ones. It caters for everyone from intermediate students to research experts. It's one of those works without which something is missing and with which a lot of others are allowed to be. The range of relevant issues it touches on is sufficient as a five-course meal introduction to contemporary research on wisdom in the Hebrew Bible. Every contribution is of sufficiently high quality irrespective of the shortcomings indicated here and by others. However, the reader concurs or disagrees with any particular perspective therein, and however one interprets and approaches the question(s) constituting the research problem, it is arguably the most useful introduction to current related research available in English.

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Mirjam Zimmermann, Ruben Zimmermann (Hrsg.), *Handbuch der Bibeldidaktik*. UTB (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013). Xviii + 748 S., kartoniert. ISBN 978-3-8252-3996-1. 40 Euro

This extensive handbook provides a fine survey of the current insights and debates in Bible-related-didactics in different German contexts. Some of the essays are particular to this context, others will also apply elsewhere, including an undergraduate university setting. The question behind the volume is this: "Wie kann dieser Text, der in ferner Vergangenheit entstanden ist, für Menschen im 21. Jahrhundert, besonders für Schülerinnen und Schüler, noch heute zugänglich werden, Sinn stiften und vielleicht sogar mehr Bedeutung bekommen als gute Literatur?" (vii). Regarding the purpose of the volume, the editors (Mirjam Zimmermann is a specialist in teaching the Bible at the University of Siegen, Ruben a New Testament scholar at the University of Mainz, Germany) note:

> Das vorliegende Handbuch möchte für die Chancen einer Bibeldidaktik werben und empfängt Rückenwind durch neue Impulse der Fachdisziplinen, wie etwa der "Kinderexegese" oder der "narratologischen Figurenanalyse", um nur zwei Beispiele zu nennen. Es stellt insofern exegetisch-hermeneutische sowie didaktisch-

> methodische Neuansätze vor, möchte aber zugleich traditionelle Wissensbestände der Bibelwissenschaft und Bibeldidaktik und klassische Zugänge und Methoden aufnehmen, die zu kennen immer noch hilfreich und nützlich ist. Die Artikel können auf diese Weise umfassend informieren und zugleich motivieren, mit der Bibel pädagogisch zu arbeiten (Preface, vii).

The editors introduce the subject and the volume with its different parts ("Bibeldidaktik – eine Hinführung und Leseanleitung", 1–21). *Bibeldidaktik* is defined as processes of teaching and learning with the Bible.

> Wer die Bibel zur Hand nimmt und liest, wird ein Lernender werden. Er oder sie wird mit Fremdheit, Widersprüchen und Unverständnis konfrontiert, entdeckt längst Bekanntes und Vertrautes wieder, folgt zögerlich oder neugierig den Spuren einer eigenen Sprach- und Denkwelt des Gottesglaubens, wird in seiner individuellen Existenz- und Weltsicht angesprochen und herausgefordert, kurzum: Er oder sie wird in einen Prozess des Verstehens und Missverstehens, der Ermutigung und Veränderung oder eben mit anderen Worten: in einen Prozess des Lernens hineingezogen.
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> Die Bibel war und ist immer schon ein "didaktisches Buch": Sei es, dass in ganz materialer Hinsicht die Bibel als Lehrbuch und Lesefibel verwendet wurde, sei es, dass die Bibel mit ihren Geschichten und Gestalten zur kollektiven Lehrmeisterin wurde und prägende Spuren in der abendländischen Kulturgeschichte hinterlassen hat, sei es, dass Menschen in ihrer individuellen Suche nach Sinn und Orientierung bis heute in der Bibel Antworten finden, die Bibel somit zum Lernbegleiter wird, mit dem "zu leben" gelernt werden kann (1).

The introductory essay also reflects on teaching and learning the Bible (the Bible as an object of education), on teaching and learning with the Bible (the Bible as a medium of teaching), on teaching and learning through the Bible (the Bible as a catalyst for comprehensive learning) and on the aspects of teaching the Bible. Each article starts with an introduction that describes the relevance of the subject for teaching the Bible. This is followed by presentations of aspects from the history of research and the current scholarly debates. These sections lead to didactical-methodological issues and concrete suggestions for application. Each article also contains suggestions for further reading.

The volume consists of seven parts. *Part one* focuses on the history of the origin and reception of the Bible. It contains the following essays: Georg Plasger, "Bibel: Entstehung, Überlieferung, Kanonisierung" (25–30); Michaela Bauks, "Die Welt des Orients" (30–37); Susanne Luther, "Politische Geschichte und religiöser Kontext in griechisch-römischer Zeit" (38–46); Wolfgang Zwickel, "Biblische Archäologie" (47–51); Susanne Luther, "Neutestamentliche Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Umwelt Jesu und der frühchristlichen Gemeinden" (51–58); Michael Tilly, "Opfer, Kult und Fest im Judentum" (58–64); Katja

Soennecken, Dieter Vieweger, "Jerusalem" (64–70); Michael Landgraf, "Die Bibel als Lehrbuch" (71–76), Peter Kristen, "Moderne deutsche Bibelübersetzungen" (76–82) and Michael Landgraf, "Bibelausgaben damals und heute" (82–87).

Part two offers quite a mixed survey of the content of the Bible that is considered important and presented in schools in German-speaking Europe. The following texts and themes are described (we focus on contribution on the Old Testament or themes appearing in both Testaments: Sabine Pemsel-Maier, "Der Kanon im Kanon" (91–99, what are the most important passages/books of the Bible, what are the criteria used to determine them? This is where the focus should be on teaching the Bible); Georg Plasger, "Gott" (99–106); Martin Rothgangel, "Schöpfung" (106–113); Christina Kalloch, "Der Turmbau zu Babel" (113–116); Georg Plasger, "Erwählung und Bund" (117–120); Bernd Schröder, "Der Dekalog" (120–126); Ann-Cathrin Fiß, Gudrun Neebe, "Prophetie" (127–133); Christoph Gramzow, "Ijob/Hiob und die Frage nach dem Leid" (133–137); Ingo Baldermann, "Psalmen" (138–144); Ruben Zimmermann, "Liebe und Sexualität" (145–148); … Marco Hofheinz, "Sünde" (218–222); Johannes Woyke, "Gerechtigkeit Gottes/Rechtfertigung des Menschen" (222–227); Mirjam Zimmermann, Ruben Zimmermann, "Ethik" (228–234); … Marco Hofheinz, "Kirche/Volk Gottes" (243–247); Peter Müller, "Kinder in der Bibel" (247–250); … and Manfred L. Pirner, "Eschatologie/Reich Gottes" (259–263).

Part three presents a number of biblical figures. From the Old Testament the following are chosen after a brief introduction by Hans Mendl ("Lernen an biblischen Personen, 267–271): Christfried Böttrich, "Adam und Eva" (271–275); Martina Steinkühler, "Kain und Abel" (275–279); Martina Steinkühler, "Noach" (280–283); Dorothea Erbele-Küster, "Abraham und Sara" (283–289); Thomas Naumann, "Isaak und Rebekka" (289–292); Thomas Naumann, "Ismael und Hagar" (293–296); Gabriele Theuer, "Jakob und Rahel" (296–300); Isa Breitmaier, "Mose und Mirjam" (300–304); Friedhelm Kraft, "Josef" (305–311); Heinrich Krauss, "David" (312–317); Ruth Sauerwein, "Elija und Elischa" (318–322); Isa Breitmaier, "Amos" (322–327) and Frauke Büchner, "Rut" (327–330).

Part four presents various concepts and approaches to teaching the Bible. These are Rainer Lachmann, "Die Entwicklung der Bibeldidaktik von 1900 bis zum problemorientierten Religionsunterricht" (375–381); Michael Meyer-Blanck, "Hermeneutik und Bibeldidaktik" (382–387); Gabriele Klappenecker, "Problemorientierung und Bibeldidaktik" (387–392); Ingo Baldermann, "Existenzielle Bibeldidaktik" (392–398); Jürgen Heumann, "Bibeldidaktik als Symboldidaktik" (398–403); Hans Mendl, "Korrelation und Bibeldidaktik" (404–409); Friedrich Schweitzer, "Elementarisierung und Bibeldidaktik" (409–415); Bernhard Dressler, "Semiotik und Bibeldidaktik" (415–421); Alois Stimpfle, "Bibeldidaktik und konstruktivistisches Lernen" (421–428); Mirjam

Zimmermann, "Kindertheologie und Kinderexegese" (428–433); Bärbel Husmann, "Bibel und performative Didaktik" (434–439); Mirjam Schambeck, "Bibeltheologische Didaktik" (439–446); and Hartmut Lenhard, Gabriele Obst, "Bibeldidaktik im kompetenzorientierten Religionsunterricht" (447–454).

Part five explains and evaluates various methods and approaches to teaching the Bible in different contexts: Hans-Ulrich Weidemann, "Historisch-kritische Bibelauslegung" (457–)462; Mirjam Zimmermann, Ruben Zimmermann, "Aneignende Methoden der Exegese" (463–468); Christian Dem, "Angeleitete Lektüre von biblischen Ganzschriften" (468–474); Mirjam Zimmermann, "Erzählen" (475–482); Bettina Eltrop, "*Lectio divina*/Bibelteilen" (483–490); Rainer Oberthür, "Bibelwort-Karten" (490–496); Gottfried Adam, "Lernen mit Kinderbibeln" (497–503); Mirjam Zimmermann, "Kreatives Schreiben" (503–509); Gerhard Marcel Martin, "Bibliodrama" (509–515); Uta Pohl-Patalong, "Bibliolog" (516–522); Werner Kleine, "Sprechzeichnen zu biblischen Geschichten" (522–529); Anneliese Hecht, "Biblische Figuren stellen" (530–535); Barbara Schaupp, "Bibel und Bodenbilder" (536–540); Martin Steinhäuser, "Godly Play" (541–547); Georg Langenhorst, "Bibel und moderne Literatur" (547–553); Gerhard Büttner, "Bibel und Kunst" (554–559); Heike Lindner, "Bibel und Musik" (560–565); Reinhold Zwick, "Bibel im Film" (565–571); Gerd Buschmann, "Bibel und Popkultur" (572–577); Marion Keuchen, "Bibel und digitale Welten" (577–582); Hartmut Rupp, "Bibel und Kirchenraum" (582–589); Michael Landgraf, Mirjam Zimmermann, "Außerschulische Lernorte zur Bibel" (589–595) and Manfred Zoll, "Kinderbibeltage/Kinderbibelwochen" (596–602).

Part six focuses on the variety of the recipients, that is those learning and reading the Bible: Georg Langenhorst, "Bibeldidaktik und Entwicklungspsychologie" (605–609); Carsten Gennerich, "Bibel als Medium der Identitätsbildung" (609–613); Ulrich Riegel, "Bibelverständnis und soziales Milieu" (614–617); Susanne Betz, Hans Hilt, "Zugänge zur Bibel für kleine Kinder (Elementarpädagogik)" (618–623); Ulrike Itze, Edelgard Moers, "Zugänge zur Bibel für Schülerinnen und Schüler der Grundschule" (623–629); Iris Bosold, "Zugänge zur Bibel für Schülerinnen und Schüler der Sekundarstufe I" (629–633, children between 10 and 16 years of age); Birgit Maisch-Zimmermann, "Zugänge zur Bibel für Schülerinnen und Schüler der Sekundarstufe II" (633–638), Andreas Obermann, "Zugänge zur Bibel in der Berufsschule" (638–642); Anita Müller-Friese, "Inklusives Lernen zur Bibel" (642–647); Carsten Haeske, "Zugänge zur Bibel für Konfirmandinnen und Konfirmanden" (647–651); Anneliese Hecht, "Zugänge zur Bibel in der Gemeindearbeit" (651–656; surprisingly, one essays is to cover all ages between about 14 years and 65 years of age!) and Christian Mulia, "Zugänge zur Bibel für Seniorinnen und Senioren" (656–660).

The *final part* addresses several problems in approaching and understanding the Bible. It consists of ten essays: Mirjam Zimmermann, Ruben Zimmermann, "Ist die Bibel wahr?" (663–667); Norbert Mette, "Zeitgemäßheit der Bibel" (667–670); Michael Fricke, "Was sind (zu) schwierige Bibeltexte?" (671–674); Bernd Beuscher, "Tipps für einen langweiligen Bibelunterricht" (675–678); Frederike Weißphal, "Die Bibel als patriarchalisches Buch" (679–682); Helga Kohler-Spiegel, "Lesen Jungen und Mädchen die Bibel unterschiedlich?" (683–687); Michael Bachmann, "Bibel und Antisemitismus" (687–692); Anton A. Bucher, "Gewalt in der Bibel" (693–696); Matthias Hahn, "Biblische Texte und Themen im Ethikunterricht" (697–701) and Michael Weinrich, "Die Bibel und der Exklusivitätsanspruch" (701–705).

Indices of biblical references and of subjects close the volume. The volume is a gold mine for all who teach the Bible in schools, different ecclesiastical settings and elsewhere and who are looking for inspiration or want to reflect their task. The volume also offers helpful material and insights for those teaching biblical subjects at institutions of higher learning. It is difficult to think of something that the volume with its comprehensive approach missed (at least regarding its treatment of the Old Testament). A number of essays appear which one might not have expected in a volume on Bible didactics. Due to the comprehensive coverage, the individual articles are relatively short.

While a number of articles would be similar in a South African handbook of this scope, it is worthwhile to reflect on what might be and would have to be different in order to assist and inspire those teaching the Bible in that context.

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Johanna Stiebert. *First-Degree Incest and the Hebrew Bible. Sex in the Family.* London: Bloomsbury, 2016. 228 pages, hard cover, price £59.90. ISBN 978-0-5676-0033-2.

In this book the author attempts to explore how sexual relations between first-degree relatives are portrayed in the Hebrew Bible. Apart from the usual introduction and conclusion, three chapters form the heart of the book. Chapter 2 (pp. 19-44) engages with the "reasons and rationale for incest taboos" and draws from a wide range of literature produced on the topic in the social sciences. Chapters 3 (pp. 45-87) and 4 (pp. 89-193) examine how first-degree incest is portrayed in non-narrative (Chapter 3) and narrative (Chapter 4) texts of the Hebrew Bible.

Chapter 2 is a truly interdisciplinary chapter which draws from a wide range of literature on incest. The chapter first provides an overview of past explanations offered for incest taboos, including scholars such as Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud. One of the most important observations of this chapter is the discussion of the contribution of Edvard Westermarck, a contemporary of Durkheim's. The "Westermarck effect" is described as follows: "children reared together, living in close domestic proximity in their early years, tend to form non-erotic sentimental attachments." (p. 21) The Westermarck effect is often referred to in the rest of the book and in this chapter provides a brief overview of the contributions of other scholars, who have all mostly produced clinical work which supported Westermarck's basic argument. Stiebert concludes that, based on current assessments, most scholars agree that:

1. the Westermarck effect is demonstrable;
2. inbreeding has detrimental consequences;
3. the Westermarck effect is a mechanism that procures the selection of not-closely-related person for the purpose of mating (p. 27).

Arthur Wolf's work is also discussed as it builds on the work of Westermarck and describes the "infant-parent bond" in similar "contra-sexual" terms as the Westermarck effect, which was originally applied to siblings only. Wolf follows John Bowlby who argues that this "caregiving drive" has an evolutionary basis "promoting the survival of offspring" (p. 30).

The second half of Chapter 2 (pp. 33-44) provides a brief overview of father-daughter incest in antiquity and modernity. This kind of incest is the most common in contemporary Western contexts and this observation seems to be at variance with the "infant-parent bond", since one would expect the latter phenomenon to curb father-daughter incest. Although denial was initially the typical response, second-wave feminism played a big role in "turning the tide on denial" (p. 36) and Stiebert sums up the consensus as follows:

1. Father-daughter incest is real and occurs across social classes;
2. Father-daughter incest, while more widely reported now than prior to the second-wave feminism, is still under-reported,
3. Father-daughter incest has long-term damaging consequences for daughters (p. 40).

The theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 sets the scene for Chapter 3, where the focus is on first-degree incest in the non-narrative texts of the Hebrew Bible. The two most important texts discussed in this chapter are the usual suspects, namely Leviticus 18 and 20, although other texts are also engaged with, including texts from Ezekiel. The chapter first discusses the family in Ancient Israel, drawing especially from the work of Carol Meyers (pp. 46-49). As to why the prohibitions are found in Leviticus 18 and 20, Stiebert agrees with Meyers that the existence of these chapters "presupposes the *likelihood* of incestuous

tensions and temptations" (p. 49). This argument is offered to counter the views of scholars who think that the taboos are listed because they are widely accepted as "a given".

In the second part of the chapter Stiebert focuses especially on the major exegetical issues in Leviticus 18 and 20, as well as other relevant texts (pp. 50-65). In this chapter the recent work of Eve L. Feinstein is often integrated into the discussion. The usual issues, such as the meaning of the Hebrew terms often translated with "flesh of his flesh" or the use of other Hebrew terms expressing perversion and disgust, are also discussed in detail (pp. 52-61). The critical issue of whether these prohibitions are actually "laws" is also addressed and here Stiebert sides with Jan Joosten (against Calum Carmichael), who argues that Leviticus 18 and 20 are examples of "persuasive rhetoric" and not legal codification (p. 63). In her engagement with Joosten, Stiebert then addresses one of the most debated issues in Leviticus 18 and 20, namely the omission of a prohibition to sleep with one's daughter. Joosten's argument is through the application of literary skills, the topic of the daughter is "skirted" yet at the same time it is very much present in the thoughts of the hearers of the text. The objective of this literary strategy is to show that sexual relations with one's "daughter is *the most offensive* form of incest." Stiebert concludes this discussion with the argument that these texts radiate a "profound anxiety" (p. 64) about "social disruption". This insight brings Stiebert to the third part of Chapter 3, where she discusses the "psycho-social implications" of the incest prohibitions (pp. 66-87).

The most valuable insight which runs like a golden thread through this last part of Chapter 3 is the issue of anxiety and especially the anxiety of males who are in a position of power. Citing the famous interpretation by David Clines of who the addressee of the Ten Commandments might be, Stiebert similarly argues that male Israelite landowners are addressed in Leviticus 18 and 20 and that the foremost threat to their interests comes from other, especially younger, males. This is why uncovering your "father's nakedness" features at least three times in Leviticus 18. For Stiebert, this anxiety also explains why the daughter is not explicitly mentioned, since the major threat is from other males. According to Stiebert, a daughter is included in Leviticus 18:6 and 17, but is not "singled out more emphatically, because her violation is within the father's control" (p. 78). Towards the end of the chapter Stiebert explores the classic views put forward by Mary Douglas about the "blurring of categories," which she thinks has some potential, but unfortunately does not explain all aspects of the lists in Leviticus 18 and 20. For Stiebert the purpose of these lists is clear: "The lists then are aimed at instilling social stability, particularly between males, because in a socially stable context power is easier to maintain" (p. 86).

In Chapter 4 (pp. 89-193, making it the longest) the author moves to the narrative texts of the Hebrew Bible. Hebrew narratives are discussed in terms of

the kinds of incest possibly presented in them. "Male-Male incest" is presented first (pp. 89-114) – a lot of space devoted to something that probably does not occur in the Hebrew Bible. It is also a bit confusing that the author keeps on referring to Leviticus 18 and 20, texts which were already discussed in the previous chapter. One text narrative which does get a fair amount of attention (pp. 104-109) is Genesis 9, where "Ham uncovers the nakedness of his father." Stiebert provides a thorough literature review of what might have happened in this narrative, but never provides the reader with her understanding of the nature of the incident. In line with her sensitivity to power struggles, she understands this narrative as a story about intergenerational power struggles. Next female-female incest is discussed (pp. 114-132) and once again Stiebert starts with Leviticus 18 and 20 and the fact that lesbian sex is not in itself regarded as taboo in these chapters. After arguing that lesbian sex probably did take place in ancient Israel, a few narratives are discussed, with the relationship between Ruth and Naomi getting most of the attention. Yet Stiebert acknowledges that although there is "acknowledgement of sexual potency" in some of these stories, no "sexual contact" is actually indicated. "Mother-Son" or "Son-Mother" relations are discussed next (pp. 133-144); this is the shortest section of the chapter and engages mostly with stories where sons sleep with their father's concubines, with Rueben and Absalom the prime examples.

"Father-Daughter" incest is then discussed (pp. 144-165) and about the first half of the section deals with texts where YHWH is portrayed as the father of Israel. Stiebert's discussion of Ezekiel 16 is especially fascinating. The relationship between YHWH and the daughter he brought up is clearly abusive. As can be expected, the second half of this section discusses the narrative of Lot and his daughters. The last section of this chapter discusses "brother-sister" incest (pp. 166-193. Infamous narratives such as those about Ammon and Tamar, or Abraham and his "sister", are now examined. Stiebert comes to the following interesting conclusion: "In terms of all the various first-degree permutations, brother-sister unions are presented in the Hebrew Bible as the most fantasized of and most probable" (p. 193). This brings us to the conclusion of the book.

There can be no doubt that this is a fascinating and thorough exploration. The presentation of the debate in the social sciences in Chapter 2 and the way in which that discussion is linked with the detailed engagements with a wide variety of texts are impressive. One point of critique could be the lack of any attempt to date any texts. This is probably more difficult with some of the narratives, but why not at least attempt to make out an historical argument for Leviticus 18 and 20? This lack of historical engagement leaves the impression that Israel remained the same over a number of centuries. We know that this is not true, but could it be true of the practice of incest in different time periods, that incestuous practices somehow remained the same over different historical periods?

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