

topics of "Sin" and "Systematic Theology," to name but a few of the more significant subjects that have been omitted even though they have received considerable discussion in recent debates.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the BEMCT surpasses all others in its field and will be useful to anyone interested in the contemporary discussion of Christian theology.

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Minor, Mark. *Literary-Critical Approaches to the Bible: An Annotated Bibliography*. West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill Press, 1992. xxxi + 520 pp. \$50.00.

Minor's *Literary-Critical Approaches to the Bible: An Annotated Bibliography* is a compilation of books and articles published in English that are related to the topic of literary criticism. Commentaries and dissertations, as well as articles in dictionaries, are excluded from this compilation. With a few exceptions, book reviews also have been omitted.

Minor introduces his book with a definition and brief history of the literary criticism of the Bible. With skill and concision he describes the different schools of interpretation that have influenced the development of literary criticism. Indeed, the author shows himself to be not only a thorough compiler, but an able analyst and synthesist of the material.

Minor's definition of the literary-critical approach is captioned by three principles: First, the biblical language should be regarded as a "mirror" (rather than a "window," which would be seen as capable of describing what is behind or beyond the text). Second, form and content are inseparable; when trying to find the meaning of a text, one should rely on both form and content. Third, the final form of the present text should constitute the foundation of any study or analysis (xx). The selection of bibliographical material is organized along the lines of the definition given above. The work also includes items that rely on "Composition Criticism" (which implies that the author's theology dictates the content of his work), since this approach uses some assumptions found in the literary-critical approach. Material based on traditional historical-critical methods has been excluded from this book. However, sources that use "New Criticism" (which gives importance to structure, diction, genre, style, etc.) have been retained. Likewise, the book retains material from other disciplines that literary critics use, such as structuralism and post-structuralism, feminism, folklore and myth criticism, etc. Obviously, the choice of materials has not been easy, since there is often a fine line between what relates to traditional historical criticism and what does not. But, as the author himself asserts, a delimitation should be established somewhere, subjective as it may be (xxiv).

The book is subdivided into three logical sections: (1) the Bible (3-44), covering the OT and NT; (2) the Hebrew Bible (45-151), with three subsections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings; and (3) the NT (331-500).

Each bibliographical reference is numbered (thus allowing cross-referencing) and is followed by a brief annotation. These annotations, which usually summarize the content of the book or article, represent a real asset to biblical research. When two or more articles are interrelated or respond to each other, the fact has been noted whenever possible (see, for instance, #1422, p. 317; #1241, p. 280; #2234, p. 496). The author index at the end adds to the practicality and usefulness of the book.

Minor does not claim that this compilation is a comprehensive one. And there is indeed omitted material that corresponds to the author's criteria. To mention just a few items, one can cite S. G. Brown, "The Structure of Ecclesiastes," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 14 (1990): 195-208; L. J. de Regt, *A Parametric Model for Syntactic Studies of a Textual Corpus, Demonstrated on the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 1-30* (Assen/Maastricht, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1988); and T. E. Boomershine, "The Structure of Narrative Rhetoric in Gen 2-3" *Semeia* 18 (1980), 113-129. However, these omissions do not alter the quality of this book, since its intent is to provide not a complete bibliographical reference (if such a thing is possible) but a reference tool on books of the Bible and topics related to literary criticism.

Scholars from all persuasions who have an interest in biblical hermeneutic, literary criticism and related studies, and biblical exegesis, will benefit from this compilation, which sheds light on the relationship between biblical and literary studies. Unique in its field, Minor's work is indeed a valuable tool that biblical scholars should include in their libraries.

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Neusner, Jacob. *Israel's Love Affair with God: Song of Songs*. The Bible of Judaism Library. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1992. 152 pp. Paper, \$14.95.

The title of Neusner's latest interpretive work is misleading, but the scholarly effort represented here is successful and valuable. The book is not a commentary or theological exposition of Canticles itself, nor is it a full commentary on the Song of Songs Rabbah. It is instead a short treatise which introduces this midrashic Rabbah and teaches the modern (especially non-Jewish) reader how to comprehend and appreciate this literature of Talmudic Judaism. Neusner is right to select only a few passages from the Rabbah for comment, as these are sufficient to illustrate how Judaism of the sixth-century (C.E.) dual Torah was reading its treasure of Scripture.

Because so much of this midrashic literature is a closed book to the modern scholar of religion, the author helpfully makes his first expositional chapter (chap. 2) the longest; it is an extensive, careful commentary on the