

**Michael W. Duggan, Renate Egger-Wenzel, Stefan C. Reif (eds.), *Cosmos and Creation: Second Temple Perspectives (Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook 2019)*, Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020. ISBN 978-3-11-067696-9; e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-067704-1; e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-067711-9. Pp. 439.**

The Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook 2019 documents the revised conference papers of the ISDCL meeting held at St John's College in the University of Cambridge in 2017. The 18 contributions by as many authors focus on various perspectives on the topic of "cosmos and creation" in the literature of the Second Temple period and beyond. The editors provide a very helpful introduction (pp. 1–4) which not only illustrates the overall arrangement of the collection but also offers short summaries of each contribution. Before the papers themselves, the editors have included appreciations of two major figures in the history and development of the ISDCL: Otto Kaiser (1924–2017; pp. 5–8, by Markus Witte) and Alexander A. Di Lella (1929–2019, pp. 9–12, by Jeremy Corley and Michael Duggan).

The first two papers open the perspective to the *environment*. Stefan Beyerle (Heaven: Use, Function and Content of a Cosmic Concept, 13–33) points to cosmological ideas in the Ancient Near East and in ancient Judaism. Barbara Schmitz (Does κτίστης Mean "Creator"? The Lexeme κτι- and Its Implications in the Greek-Hellenistic Context, 35–53) demonstrates that the κτίστης primarily refers to the specific Hellenistic concept of kingship in which the κτίστης has the specific role of founding cities (see Judith, 2 and 4 Maccabees, the Letter of Aristeas and Gen 14).

Three papers focus on the work of the *Greek translators*. Markus Witte shows that the Greek form of Job 38 contributes to the Hellenistic philosophical discourse on the cosmos (Cosmos and Creation in Job 38 [Septuagint], 55–76). Kristin De Troyer explains how the translator points to a good outcome for the Jewish people by "Cosmic Events in the First and Last Additions to the Greek Text of the Book of Esther" (77–89). According to Pancratius C. Beentjes ("Bless the Lord, Winter Cold and Summer Heat:" Cosmos and Creation in Greek Daniel 3:52–90, 91–109), Dan 3:57–90 is not so close to Psalm 148 as is usually assumed and refers less frequently to biblical passages on creation or cosmology as one would expect. Dan 3:52–53 recapitulate the approach of the Prayer of Azariah (3:26–45), whereas Dan 3:54–56 shift the focus to creation, which the psalm (3:57–90) subsequently elucidates.

Two contributions deal with 2 *Maccabees*. Michael W. Duggan analyzes the "Epiphanies: Cosmic Transcendence in 2 Maccabees" (111–128) and demonstrates that God intervenes on behalf of observant Jews in the land of Israel. The description of the epiphanies blends Israelite depictions of YHWH as the commander of heavenly armies with Hellenistic imperial imagery (horses and riders). Renate Egger-Wenzel also deals with heavenly interventions and focuses on the imagery of gold ("Gold from Heaven" in 2 Maccabees, 129–148).

*Ben Sira* attracts the attention of four scholars. Severino Bussino (Creation and Humanity in the Book of Ben Sira, 149–178) analyzes the sections in Ben Sira that deal with nature and anthropology; he describes the function of these teachings for the overall concept of the book. Núria Calduch-Benages deals with the Hebrew text of Sir 33:7–15: She provides an annotated translation and describes the concept of complementary pairs in creation (Polarities in Creation [Sir 33:7–15], 179–200). Ben Sira's praise of the Creator and his creation culminates in a hymn in Sir 42, and Otto Mulder describes the theological plan of this text (A Theology of the Creator and His Creation in Sir 42:15–25, 201–222). Jeremy Corley (Creation and Cosmos in Greek Sirach 18:1–10, 223–243) demonstrates that Ben Sira's creation theology draws heavily on the Priestly account of the sole Creator (Gen 1:1–2:3); however,

Ben Sira's cosmology is also open to Stoic thinking (see, e.g., Cleantes' *Hymn to Zeus*) and the idea of creation's perfection (see Cicero on the nature of gods).

Three papers discuss the idea of creation as it is expressed in the *Book of Wisdom* (*Wisdom of Solomon*). William Horbury (*Cosmos and Empire in the Wisdom of Solomon*, 245–269) explains how cosmos and earthly empire are interconnected (as elsewhere in Greek, Roman, and Jewish literature, see especially the analogies between *Wisdom of Solomon* and Virgil). Angelo Passaro offers a part of a broader study on *Wisdom 19* that tries to unveil the composition history of the book's sections; here, he concentrates on the third part of the book, the *sunkrisis* (Creation and History in the Structure of the Book of Wisdom: ἡ κρίσις ... ὑπηρετοῦσα [Wis 16:24], 271–295). Martina Kepper looks for the Philosophical Ideas about Cosmos and Creation in the Book of Wisdom (297–317). She can prove that the author takes up various philosophical challenges of the Hellenistic era and masters Greek-Hellenistic literary form and vocabulary. The traditional figure of Lady Wisdom becomes a kind of intermediary pervading the cosmos in order to find people to be saved. *Wisdom of Solomon* is a true witness to the struggle of Hellenistic Judaism to bridge the gap between thinking and believing.

Chaos and restoration are important aspects in the *Book of Tobit*. As Francis M. Macatangay demonstrates, the creation motif helps to master this polarity: God's creative power in the days of old provides salvation for Tobit's tormented present as well as for the exilic chaos (God's Conflict with the Chaos Monster in the Book of Tobit, 319–329). Helen Cashell-Moran picks up an example from the *Qumran* literature and discusses Cosmological Origins and Creation in *4QInstruction* (331–344). *4QInstructions* is full of allusions to the creation accounts in Genesis in order to promote the universality of creation and to re-enforce the importance of pursuing revealed wisdom.

The last two articles introduce the *rabbinic perspective*. Stefan C. Reif analyzes "The Work of Creation in Early Rabbinic Prayers and Benedictions" (345–361). The compilers of these early rabbinic prayers eschewed mystical and colorful notions (including angels) in favor of more literal descriptions of the Creator. Dalia Marx offers reasons for the notion that the later part of Ben Sira (42:15-50:24) provided a literary inspiration or *Urtext* for the *Seder Ha-'Avodah* poems of rabbinic liturgy (Ben Sira 42–50: An Antecedent of the Seder 'Avodah Poems?, 363–384). This example demonstrates how Second Temple texts stipulated the nascent concepts and literary patterns of rabbinic compositions.

Each article comes with an English abstract and keywords at the beginning. The volume concludes with biographies of the authors and three indices (references, authors, subjects). As is the case in many books with collections of essays, a kind of synthesis that summarizes and bundles the findings is missing. This synthesis is left to the readership. In this respect, the anthology is not a general Bible-theological introduction to the topic "cosmos and creation," but rather a collection of highly interesting special studies. Experts in the widely ramified fields of literature from the Second Temple period and Early Judaism provide detailed insights into the literary and theological shaping of certain aspects of this theme in various writings. Anyone looking for corresponding details will certainly find what they are looking for.