The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature. By Lorenzo DiTommaso. SVTP 20. Leiden: Brill, 2005. Hardback. Pp. xx + 548. € 145.00/US\$ 215.00. ISBN 978900414412 5.

This compendious monograph about the ancient and medieval apocryphal Daniel literature is the most complete treatment of the post-biblical *Literatur- und Interpretationsgeschichte* of this mesmerizing biblical figure to date. Apart from Daniel's reception in art, literature, and the commentary tradition, which is acknowledged but not treated here, the book is truly comprehensive in its scope, covering a vast number of primary texts composed or preserved in languages such as Arabic, Aramaic, Armenian, Coptic, Old and Middle English, Medieval German, Greek, Hebrew, Old Icelandic, Old Irish, Latin, Persian, Old Slavonic, Syriac, and Turkish. It brings together diverse materials, both previously published and as of yet unpublished. As DiTommaso explains at the outset, "the present study represents the first attempt to identify and evaluate the complete body of texts and to clarify the state of their manuscript evidence" (15). Whether the massive nature of the material makes Daniel "arguably . . . the greatest post-biblical afterlife of any biblical figure," as DiTommaso asserts (308), can be debated—after all, figures such as Adam, Abraham, Moses, or David were not exactly forgotten either once the biblical canon was closed. But still, the sheer vastness of the Daniel material here collected is truly impressive.

Of course, we have come to expect nothing less from Lorenzo DiTommaso. Only four years prior the author published a project of similar ambition, *A Bibliography of Pseudepigrapha Research 1850–1999* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), a bibliography of over one thousand pages that lists scholarship worth a century and a half on more than one hundred primary texts. The present volume, which overlaps with and at the same time builds on the *Bibliography*, is similarly comprehensive. Daniel scholars as well as students of the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha are deeply in DiTommaso's debt.

The first chapter serves as an introduction to both the biblical book and to the present study. DiTommaso then organizes the apocryphal Daniel literature according to genre into three groups: the legends, the apocalypses, and the prognostica. Chapter two is devoted to the "Daniel legenda," that is, to postbiblical interpretations of the court narratives of Dan 1–6; the chapter is organized according to stages in Daniel's life: the young Daniel, the chronology of the kings, and the last days. Chapter three deals with twenty-four extant Daniel apocalypses; it first catalogues the texts and provides bibliographical information, and then offers some general observations. Chapter four discusses a handful of prognostica, "texts concerned with communicating knowledge of the future" (234). Of course, such genre recognition can seem overly rigid and somewhat arbitrary (the distinction between apocalypses and apocalyptic oracles in chapter three, for example, is less convincing). Similarly, premodern interpreters did not

all limit themselves in their exegeses *either* to the first *or* to the second half of the biblical book. Diverse authors such as the author of Qumran's *Aramaic Apocalypse* (4Q246), Josephus, and the author of *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* all refer to and interpret both Daniel's narrative frame and his apocalyptic visions. But DiTommaso's intentions are sufficiently clear. In chapter five DiTommaso offers a few concluding remarks. And chapter six, titled "The Apocryphal Daniel Literature: Inventory and Bibliography," resembles much DiTommaso's *Bibliography*, in that he lists *all* known apocryphal Daniel material, complete with a list of the manuscript evidence and modern publications.

We have known already from his *Bibliography* that DiTommaso is not exactly a man of few words. As is true for the *Bibliography*, there is considerable redundancy and unnecessary repetition here which should have been avoided. For example, detailed bibliographical information is provided for all twenty-four apocalypses in chapter three, and then again in chapter six. Texts such as 4Q243/244 are listed twice in the index, which defeats the purpose of an index. Clearly the print medium reaches its limits here. Material of this kind is best published in electronic form: it is more accessible, easier for the reader to maneuver, and it is convenient to keep updated.

The book raises other organizational questions: why do chapters two, three, and four, which contain the heart of argument, take different forms? What determines which form is chosen? Similarly, chapter six, the "Inventory and Bibliography," lists all texts by languages rather than genre (a less intrusive and hence thoughtful decision, no doubt), but there seems to be no rhyme and reason to the order in which the languages are arranged (Aramaic, Greek, Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Coptic, Hebrew, . . .), which, again, makes maneuvering rather difficult.

The book also raises a number of more important, and rather intriguing, conceptual questions. Chief among them: what exactly is the connection between the postbiblical Daniel material and the book of Daniel itself? In addressing this question, DiTommaso does well to differentiate between each of his three groups (legends, apocalypses, and prognostica), but his answers will not go unchallenged. With respect to the first group, for example, he claims repeatedly that "the exegetical motivations behind the legenda were . . . identical to those which stood behind the formation of MT Daniel and the creation of the Greek witnesses to the Book of Daniel" (310; already 82 and 84). Really? How do we know this? DiTommaso also claims that the Daniel legenda "are all court tales" (83), which is obviously not true. He makes the most elaborate case for the continuity from the biblical into the post-biblical material with respect to the apocalypses. Here, too, he wants to find a very close connection between the biblical and the post-biblical material, and insists, uncompromisingly, that Collins' *Semeia* definition of an "apocalypse" applies to all of these texts, too. What motivates DiTommaso's zeal to fit such diverse texts under one definition? The one element missing from Collins' famed definition, as is now widely recognized, is the *function* of the

apocalypse. DiTommaso's impressive list of twenty-four diverse texts exemplifies better than anything the variety of functions and the evolution of a genre.

The single most frustrating aspect of DiTommaso's compilation, perhaps unavoidable in a tome of this size, is the fact that there is a lot of talk here *about* texts, yet no text is ever allowed to speak for itself. There are plenty of assertions, but no quotations from or even paraphrases of any text, so that the reader is at the mercy of the interpreter without being given any evidence. The problem is exacerbated in chapter three, where DiTommaso discusses in great detail the secondary literature. All too often he dismantles a text-based argument advanced by a scholar but then fails to produce an alternative reading that is superior.

DiTommaso's compendious monograph will prove indispensable for future generations working on the reception history of the book of Daniel; the aficionado of Daniel manuscripts in particular will not be able to put the book down. Those of us interested in careful and creative textual work will find this a perfect point of departure.

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