(28:10–22), Jacob and the speckled flock (31:10–13), the dream of Laban the Aramean (31:24) and the Covenant of the Pieces (15:1–21). Thereafter, Lipton lays out for the reader the six points that make up the 'sign posts' of her analytical programme: (1) each dream is received during a period of anxiety or danger for the dreamer (or the person for whom the dream is intended, or both); (2) each dream concerns the immediate (or eventual) descendants of the dream's recipient/s at a time when the continuation of the line is in jeopardy; (3) each dream signals a change in status for the dream's recipient/s; (4) each dream recasts recent events to reveal divine involvement in what had previously appeared to be solely human affairs; (5) each dream deals with the interaction of Israelites and non-Israelites; and (6) each dream is concerned about absence from the land.

The method used is punctilious yet straightforward close reading that incorporates and benefits from the conclusions of historical-critical, form-critical, literary-critical, narratological and psychological schools of scholarship. The quotations provided are significant without being overly substantial and allow the reader to follow the case being made. Throughout the book the reader is presented with traditional readings and with subtle counter-readings and is guided deftly through the wealth of data and interpretations by the author whose clarity of prose keeps the main thrust of the argument always in focus.

Lipton's conclusions are that these dreams fulfil a common narrative function — at least at the level of final redaction. She finds their purpose to be partly *political* in that the dreams further the purposes of the Patriarchs within the narrative and partly *editorial* in that they present a more acceptable view of the narrated dealings between Israelites and non-Israelites — a view that could well reflect the aspirations of the redactor. It is this 'use' of the dream narratives, to recast events and show readers/hearers how divine help was always in the background working 'under cover' for the good of the patriarchal line, that Lipton regards as their key function.

The particular character of dreams and of dream reports has made them ideal for these subtle forms of persuasion and their ambiguous and quasi-supernatural format allows them to convey the impression of 'dual causality' — human actions masking divine interventions — a feature that the narrator seeks to promote. They also create or affirm connections between the narrative past and the narrative future in a convincing way since they carry the connotation of divine authentication. Finally, Lipton concludes by suggesting the time of the Babylonian exile as the most likely scenario for this 'creative revision' of biblical texts.

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RAYMOND DE HOOP, *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context* (Oudtestamentische Studiën 29). Brill, Leiden 1999. Pp. xvi + 695. Price: NLG 340.00/ $200.00 hardback. ISBN: 90-04-10913-7.

This study of Genesis 49 by Raymond de Hoop originated as the author's doctoral dissertation under the direction of Johannes C. de Moor at the Theological University Kampen. It is a massive work devoted to elucidating the many problems present in the single poem of Gen. 49:1–27 (henceforth I will refer to the poem as simply 'Genesis 49,' though the last six verses of the chapter return the reader to the prose narrative). In addition, de Hoop spends considerable time discussing both the overall structure of the poem and the setting of the poem within the larger narrative surroundings of the Joseph story.

The enormous amount of material in this book is conveniently summarized in a concluding chapter of only ten pages, which I here further digest for the reader of this review. The most salient points are the following.

1) Whereas most scholars have understood the tribal sayings as independent compositions, de Hoop demonstrates that Genesis 49 has a 'well integrated unity' with the sayings 'connected with each other by means of verbal repetition' (p. 624). Most impressive is the manner in which six of the tribes are linked with the following words: -והוא ל (Zebulun, v. 13) > -ויהי ל (Issachar, v. 15); ויהי (Issachar, v. 15) > יהי (Dan, v. 17); עקבי (Dan, v. 17) > עקבם (Gad, v. 19)[1]; והוא (Gad, v. 19) > והוא (Asher, v. 20); והוא יתן (Asher, v. 20) > הנתן (Naphtali, v. 21). This is an important discovery, but de Hoop did not go far enough with it, in my opinion. One should note that there is a division within the Jacob and Joseph narratives between the six primary sons (four primary sons of Leah and the two sons of Rachel), that is, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Joseph, and Benjamin, all of whom appear as characters in the narrative, and who, not coincidentally, also represent core historical Israel; and the six secondary sons (two sons born later to Leah, along with the sons born to Bilhah and Zilpah), about whom the narrative includes only a birth announcement but no character development, and who, following the above, represent peripheral Israel, tribes which only at a later time may have attached themselves to core historical Israel.[2] In light of this, I would propose that the author of Genesis 49 considered it all the more necessary to link the six latter tribes in the manner which de Hoop has discovered. Note that this chain occurs in vv. 13–21, the material concerning these very six tribes (Zebulun through Naphtali).

2) The verbal system in Genesis 49, as analyzed by de Hoop, points to most of the sayings having future signification (though see further below), in conformity with the introductory passage in v. 1.

3) De Hoop considers the material in Genesis 49 to be 'testamentary sayings' (rather than 'blessings' per se). Near Eastern parallels suggest that such documents 'functioned mostly in a court context as a legitimizing or as an apologetic document in which the current king was justified' (p. 625). Furthermore, 'the apology was applied mostly in those cases where the king assumed his office in an irregular fashion' (pp. 625–6), suggesting that Genesis 49 functioned to legitimize the position of Judah over his brothers.

4) The poem needs to be understood against the backdrop of the prose story in which it appears. A synchronic reading of the literary whole demonstrates that the intention here is to raise Judah to a position above that of Joseph. The deathbed episode in Gen. 47:29–48:22 works well here too, for by 'elevating' Ephraim and Manasseh in this manner (note that they are equals to Reuben and Simeon!), Jacob ensures that Joseph's name will not be continued. In short, the overall structure is as follows: 'Judah's blessings are for the future and his future office; Joseph's blessing is for his former office' (p. 626).

5) De Hoop believes that classic source criticism needs to be reevaluated in light of his study. He much prefers his synchronic reading to any diachronic approach. If the latter needs to be countenanced, then, for the reasons adumbrated above, one must look to the United Monarchy as 'the most likely period in which this document could have originated' (p. 630).

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[1] Following most authorities (see the LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate), de Hoop detaches the *mem* from the beginning of v. 20 (MT מאשר) and reads it as the final letter of v. 19. One might have expected a reference to Abraham ibn Ezra here; while he did not propose attaching the *mem* of מאשר to the preceding word, he understood it to be a 'מ״ם נוסף'.

[2] See G.A. Rendsburg, 'The Internal Consistency and Historical Reliability of the Biblical Genealogies', *VT* 40 (1990), 185–206, especially pp. 201–3.

I leave for the reader to judge whether or not de Hoop's results are acceptable and convincing. I, for one, am sympathetic to this approach,[3] and I applaud his marshalling an immense amount of material to support his conclusions.

At the same time, however, I must critique certain aspects of his work. De Hoop engages too freely in textual emendation. True, most of his proposed changes affect the vowels of the Masoretic Text, and he appears to have a greater regard for the consonantal text. But the Masoretic Text is a whole (consonants, vowels, and accent marks),[4] and only in the very last resort, when the evidence is overwhelming to the contrary, should one consider textual emendation.[5] Of the many examples, space permits extended discussion of just one (though see below for some further cases). De Hoop emends the expression יצועי עלה '(on) my couch he went up' to יצועי עלה 'the concubine's couch,' understanding עלה from Arabic *'lh* 'concubine.'[6] But I much prefer to retain the MT here, especially because of the greater literary effect produced. Jacob directs his words to Reuben throughout vv. 3–4, but then with the last two words he steps out of character and faces the 'camera' (Groucho Marx style, as it were), addressing the audience with the words '(on) my couch he went up' (or alternatively, he addresses the other sons here[7]), thus returning the reader to Gen. 35:22, where all we read was וישמע ישראל 'and Israel heard,' followed by an unusual *petuḥa* break in the middle of a verse. Chapters later, in Gen. 49:4, we hear Jacob say the words יצועי עלה, informing us that he was fully aware of Reuben's actions with Bilhah, even if Gen. 35:22 was less than forthcoming in informing the reader of Jacob's reaction at that time.

I include here a few specific comments:

P. 109: De Hoop accepts M. Dahood's derivation of מכרתיהם (v. 5) from the root כרת 'cut'[8] and renders the word as 'knives.' But the form looks like a plural ending in -*ôt*, and therefore it is highly doubtful that the *taw* in the word is a root letter. Personally, I accept this word as an early loanword from Greek μάχαιρα 'knife' (an idea noted but rejected by de Hoop), though I am ready to see here a second nuance as well, as befits poetry with a high rate of polysemy, from the root מכר 'counsel' (also noted but rejected by de Hoop).

P. 175: Concerning v. 21, de Hoop writes that 'MT itself interprets אילה as אַיָּלָה "hind"'. MT cannot interpret. All the Masoretes did was create a notation system to record in writing an oral reading tradition that had been passed down for centuries. This relates to my comment above that MT should be treated as a single construct with its three component parts.

P. 180, nn. 644–8: No less than eight words in vv. 22–4 are emended (in all cases 'only' the vowels!). Among them is the change of the two *waw* consecutive forms in v. 23, וימררהו and וישטמהו, to simple prefix conjugation forms, with the statement (in line with the above comment) that 'the present *wayyiqtol* is due to the Masoretic

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[3] See G.A. Rendsburg, 'Biblical Literature as Politics: The Case of Genesis', in A. Berlin (ed.) *Religion and Politics in the Ancient Near East* (Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 1996), 47–70.

[4] See my recent article, 'Psalm cx 3b', *VT* 49 (1999), 548–53.

[5] Such an example from this poem is discussed above, note 1.

[6] De Hoop bases himself here mainly on J. Reider, 'Etymological Studies in Biblical Hebrew', *VT* 4 (1954), p. 276.

[7] This is the interpretation of the thirteenth century commentator Hezekiah ben Manoah ('Ḥizquni'): שהיה אומר זה לשבטים, כלומר אל תתמהו אם אני מדבר אליו קשות, שהרי הוא העוה העוה מאז, כי עלה על יצועי 'he said this to the tribes, as if to say, "don't be astonished if I speak to him harshly, for he sinned greatly in that he went up on my couch".'

[8] M. Dahood, '*mkrtyhm* in Genesis 49,5', *CBQ* 23 (1961), 54–6.

interpretation' (p. 218). This alteration allows de Hoop to translate the clauses containing these verbs with future tense, 'and he will make him strong so they will become numerous' (deriving the verb from מרר 'be strong') and 'and if archers should harass him'. Therefore, de Hoop is able to view the Joseph saying with future reference (see above). One should be cautious of an approach which first plays with the evidence and then produces the theory from the doctored data.

Finally, though this book already is large, it desperately needs a complete bibliography at the end listing all the sources cited. De Hoop's style, following standard practice, is to present the full bibliographic data only the first time that a particular work is cited. One might go hundreds of pages before the work is cited again. In theory, one is able to access the first citation via the extensive Index of Authors, so the information can be found. But I experienced at least one instance where such is not the case. I first noticed an interesting looking title on pp. 208–12, where de Hoop repeatedly (nn. 819, 825, 834, 842, 849, 852) cites Sanders, *Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*. In an attempt to find the first citation of this work, I used the Index of Authors as my guide, but the first page listed (p. 74) includes only the above information and not the full data. Given the thousands of footnotes in this book, a complete bibliography would have been most useful.[9]

In sum, this is a major study of a prominent chapter in the Torah, with very interesting results (especially on the larger questions of date, genre, function, and literary setting), even if the means to reach said results are at times less than satisfying.[10]

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HANS WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13-27. A Continental Commentary*. Translated by Thomas H. Trapp. Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1999. Pp. x + 624. Price: $65.00. ISBN: 0-8006-9509-7.

This is the second of three volumes of commentary on Isaiah 1–39 prepared by Professor Wildberger of Zürich which have placed all subsequent scholars heavily in his debt. The German original first appeared in 1978, but the reader need not feel put off by that fact, aware that a great deal has moved on in Isaiah studies since then. Wildberger's comprehensive and fresh treatment of the text, his cautious and wide-ranging coverage of the various attempts to locate the individual prophetic sayings, and his desire, unless there are strong reasons to think otherwise, to seek an authentic core of Isaianic material, make this invaluable as a basic guide. So it will be a very long time before Wildberger's three volumes will be edged out of their central position for students of these thirty-nine chapters.

Having said this, there are undoubtedly also some cautionary remarks that are needful. The present volume deals with some of the most difficult material in the entire Isaiah book, consisting of two major blocks of material: the 'Foreign Na-

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[9] Based on the enormous amount of material surveyed in this work, I must assume that de Hoop attempted to be as comprehensive as possible. Nevertheless, just by way of example, two of my own short studies on Genesis 49 were not cited: 'Janus Parallelism in Gen 49:26', *JBL* 99 (1980), 291–3; and 'Israelian Hebrew Features in Genesis 49', in R.J. Ratner, L.M. Barth, M.L. Gevirtz, and B. Zuckerman (eds), *Let Your Colleagues Praise You: Studies in Memory of Stanley Gevirtz* (Part 2) = *Maarav* 8 (1992), 161–70.

[10] While this review was in preparation, I received notice of another monograph devoted to the same poem: J.-D. Macchi, *Israël et ses tribus selon Genèse 49* (OBO 171, Fribourg 1999). Macchi reaches very different conclusions (e.g., the poem dates from the Persian period) and also includes an appendix in which he responds to de Hoop's work.