Ramelli and Perkins' "Early Christian and Jewish Narrative: The Role of Religion in Shaping Narrative Form" (Book Review)

Lisa Cutforth-Anderson
Alberta Bible College

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Duns Scotus on Time & Existence: 
The Questions on Aristotle’s “De interpretation,”

Reviewed by Yvonne Wilber, Manager of Collection Development, Pearson Library, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA

This scholarly text contains the first translation in English of this important early work by Duns Scotus, and fills an important lacuna in Scotist studies.

John Duns Scotus (c. 1266-1308) was one of the outstanding theologians and philosophers of the later Middle Ages who sought to develop a new metaphysical discourse on the being of God and an intuitive mode of epistemology. Despite the brevity of his career, his influence on western philosophy is difficult to underestimate. His text on Aristotle’s De interpretatione was an early work, likely developed from classroom lectures in Oxford prior to the turn of the fourteenth century.

De interpretatione is the second text from Aristotle’s dialectic Organon and deals with the proposition of statement, which – according to Scotus – is “not an act of understanding itself, but is more what is done by the understanding.” In regard to De interpretatione, Scotus used the method of the “question commentary” in developing his lectures, a popular technique that considered philosophical questions raised by the study of Aristotle.

Based upon a new Latin critical edition of the text, Buckner and Zupko’s is a fine translation. Crisp and readable, it includes extensive commentary explaining more difficult passages, as well as citations to quotations from external texts. It is suitable for upper division undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate studies in theology and philosophy.

Early Christian and Jewish Narrative: 
The Role of Religion in Shaping Narrative Form, 
edited by Ilaria Ramelli and Judith Perkins. Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2015. 373 pp. $201.00. ISBN 9783161520334

Reviewed by Lisa Cutforth-Anderson, Learning Resource Coordinator and Old Testament Professor, Alberta Bible College, Calgary, AB

Ilaria Ramelli is a highly credentialed postdoctoral researcher and theological professor; Judith Perkins holds a Ph.D. and is a Professor Emeritus of Classics and
Humanities. These qualifications make these women the ideal editors to compile a volume tracing the influence of early Jewish and Christian writings on the development of narrative prose. As evidence for their argument that early Judeo-Christian writings contributed to the development of certain literature genres, they include articles from credentialed theology professors describing ancient Jewish narrative; Christian gospels, acts, biographies and martyrdoms; as well as pagan and Christian narratives, social worlds and philosophical agendas. There are a few typographical or grammatical errors, but they do not detract from these scholarly, documented articles. As with other offerings from the publisher, Mohr Siebeck, this volume includes graduate or doctoral level sources pertaining to a very specific subject. As the bibliographies attached to each article suggest, there is a plethora of material on this subject, yet these women have compiled a focused volume in which several articles cite each other. For literary researchers, this compilation is ideal because cited articles in one contribution are included in the same volume for easy reference.

These contributions compare and contrast Christian writings. The editors arranged the chapters in such a format as to show the dependence of each genre on preceding genres. Jewish poetry appears to be the foundation for early Jewish prose, which was a building block for early Christian martyrdoms, which contributed to the development of the early Christian novels. Apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings, Jewish and Christian scriptures, and numerous other ancient writings deftly support the particular arguments put forward by the contributors. As this volume has such a focused subject matter, it is most suitable for graduate or postgraduate research in ancient narrative art forms.

**Early Christian Communities Between Ideal and Reality,**
$150.00. ISBN 9783161526701

*Reviewed by W. Terry Martin, Director of Library, Louisiana College, Pineville, LA*

This new addition to the long-running series *Wissenschaftlich Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* contains the proceedings of an international symposium held at the University of Leuven in 2012. The subject of these eleven essays is the Christian community and its organization during the first half of the second century A.D. as seen in the writings of the apostolic fathers. Two of the essays are written in German and nine in English with a smattering of Greek and Latin phrases. In their attempt to provide a glimpse into the lives of early Christian communities, the authors consider a variety of aspects concerning the structure, function, and complexity of Christian