events, figures, and outlooks. Joel B. Green (“Modern and Postmodern Methods of Biblical Interpretation”) offers a basic guide to critical methods from the Enlightenment period to contemporary approaches. Finally, Stephen Fowl (“Theological Interpretation of the Bible”) explains the current shift to (re-)appreciating the value of approaches to Scripture that, like premodern methods, place interpreting the text for the purpose of “ordering and comprehending the world” (p. 212) in terms of a relationship with God as the center and chief purpose of the entire enterprise without ignoring the value of historical-critical and various ideological methods.


While the book’s clear intention is to be a “global, ecumenical introduction to the Christian Bible” (p. xx), it seems to me there would have been value in including a chapter on Jewish exegesis and perhaps one on contemporary Jewish spirituality. Nevertheless, this finely produced volume will be highly useful for serious study groups and introductory courses.

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New Testament scholars have long struggled with the possibility that Christian and/or biblical anti-Judaism may have paved the way for the Holocaust. This important volume, edited by Katherine Hockey and David Horrell, intervenes in this contentious debate and advances the terms of the debate considerably. According to Horrell, the goal of the volume is to “explore and illuminate how ideas and ideologies of ethnicity, race, and religion contribute to the construction and interpretation of Jewish and Christian identities in biblical and early Christian texts and in the traditions of scholarship dealing with those texts” (p. 8). The volume includes a helpful introduction by Horrell and twelve essays divided into three groupings.

Part 1 (“Ethnicity, Religions, and Identity in Antiquity”) takes up the contentious question of whether, and how, modern categories of ethnicity and identity can be applied to
the very different world of antiquity. The essays, by Teresa Morgan (“Society, Identity, and Ethnicity in the Hellenic World”), John M. G. Barclay (“Ἰουδαῖος: Ethnicity and Translation”), and Judith M. Lieu (“Identity Games in Early Christian Texts: The Letter to Diognetus”), provide broad historical contexts for thinking about these categories in antiquity. The authors, rightly in my view, see ethnicity/race as socially constructed rather than biologically given. Morgan is particularly helpful on shifting views on ethnicity in the Greek and Hellenistic worlds, while Barclay takes on the much-debated question of whether Ιουδαῖος is best understood as a religious, ethnic, or racial label, and Lieu explores ethnic identity in the Letter to Diognetus. These essays provide the reader with both modern theoretical categories and careful attention to the way that these categories were employed in a variety of ancient texts, customs, and social settings.

Part 2 (“Ethnicity, Race, and Religion in European Traditions of Biblical Scholarship”) changes the focus from antiquity to modern scholarship and raises the crucial yet distressing question of the degree to which formative scholarship reflects the racial values of its own historical context. This question has received far less attention in biblical scholarship than it has in the rest of the academic world, and this volume is to be praised for bringing it to the fore. Perhaps because this line of inquiry reflects my own scholarly interests, I found this section to be especially engaging and challenging. Gregory L. Cuéllar (“S. R. Driver and Higher Criticism: Mapping ‘the Differences of Race’ in Genesis”) uncovers the fascinating and appalling examples of overt racism (racialization is too benign a term) in formative scholarship on Genesis. He examines this work within the highly racialized world of nineteenth-century museums, universities, and libraries. Kathryn Ehrenperger (“What’s in a Name? Ideologies of Volk, Rasse, and Reich in German New Testament Interpretation Past and Present”) connects Nazi-aligned German biblical interpretation to earlier racialized versions and explores the way that this history shapes and perhaps limits contemporary German scholarship on ethnicity. Halvor Moxnes (“From Ernest Renan to Anders Behring Breivik: Continuities in Racial Stereotypes of Muslims and Jews”) traces the migration of popular racial prejudices into scholarly discourse by identifying parallels between Renan’s Islamophobia, which shapes his analysis of biblical Judaism, and that of the mass murderer Anders Breivik. James G. Crossley (“Other Problems from a British Perspective: ‘Jewishness,’ Jesus, and the New Perspective on Paul”) explores the rhetoric of the New Perspective, showing that it maintains problematic elements (i.e., a reified and essentialized Judaism) and locates this rhetorical shift within the larger geopolitical context of neoliberalism.

Part 3 (“Challenging White, Western Traditions of Interpretation: Critique and Alternatives”) asks how scholarship might begin to free itself from Western racialization. The section opens with a persuasive analysis by Denise Kimber Buell (“Anachronistic Whiteness and the Ethics of Interpretation”), which demonstrates the whiteness of mainstream biblical scholarship, a racialization made all the more potent by its racial invisibility. This is followed by a series of powerful essays by scholars of color who challenge mainstream scholarship to both open itself up to marginalized scholars and to learn from their scholarship. Musa W. Dube (“The Bible in the Bush: the First ‘Literate’ Batswana Bible Readers”) explores the complicated way that the Tiv people responded to early Christian storytelling and how the European missionaries closed themselves off from genuine communication, ultimately creating an appalling and incoherent translation of the Bible. Here overt racism
prevented a healthy and productive reading of the Bible that respected Batswana oral culture. Ma. Marilou S. Ibita (“Exploring the [In]Visibility of Christ-Believers’ Trans-ethnicity: A Lowland Filipina Catholic’s Perspective”) explores the complex way that Filipino Catholics engage both halves of their identity. The essay includes important insights into obstacles that block Asian scholars from participating in the scholarly conversation (pp. 190-93) and proposes a dialogic way forward. Love L. Sechrest (“Double Vision for Revolutionary Religion: Race Relations, Moral Analogues, and African-American Biblical Interpretation”) puts Martin Luther King’s reading of the Good Samaritan parable in dialogue with more conventional scholarly readings and shows how African American scholars are well positioned to see, and interpret for, other marginalized groups and to offer fresh interpretive insights that are hidden from mainstream scholarship. Wei Hsien Wan (“Re-examining the Master’s Tools: Considerations on Biblical Studies’ Race Problem”) maps a framework for developing a new, ethically grounded hermeneutical scholarly framework.

I highly recommend this uniformly excellent collection of essays. They demonstrate that the white male gaze remains the default scholarly position and put forth important steps to confront this moral and intellectual disciplinary failing. Ethically responsible biblical scholars should engage with these issues, and the book should be required reading for graduate students as they explore the history of the discipline and develop their own critical scholarly tools.

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ALAN KIRK, Memory and the Jesus Tradition (Reception of Jesus in the First Three Centuries 2; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018). Pp. xiii + 297. $128.

Alan Kirk’s book consists of thirteen essays, twelve previously published between 2001 and 2016, with an added introduction. The twelve chapters are grouped together in four parts, Formation of the Jesus Tradition, Memory and Manuscript, Memory and Historical Jesus Research, and Memory in Second-Century Gospel Writing. In the added introduction (“Memory and Method: Towards a New History of the Tradition”), K. states the aim of the collection, namely, to “flesh out precisely how memory provides the basis for a comprehensive, unified account of the history of the Jesus tradition” (p. 8). In what follows, K. sticks to this aim, arguing that memory theory should replace the form-critical paradigms that are being used to investigate the historical Jesus tradition. Only memory theory, K. argues, is able to account for the origins and history of the Jesus tradition.

In part 1, K. introduces “Social and Cultural Memory” (chap. 2), linking the social aspect of memory with the identity of groups memorizing events. In chap. 3 (“Memory Theory: Cultural and Cognitive Approaches to the Gospel Tradition”), K. elaborates on the main argument of the previous chapter, arguing that a tradition’s autonomy is the fact that it is the artefact of memory. Tradition in itself is a memory system (the product of memory forces), material remembered and retold for the sake of identity formation. As such, memory is always cultural memory. Chapter 4 (“The Memory–Tradition Nexus in the Synoptic Tradition: Memory, Media and Symbolic Representation”) reiterates K.’s point of view: the memory approach, although it incorporates some elements of form criticism, breaks radi-