Wen-Pin Leow

# Like Mount Zion

## Conceptual Metaphor and Critical Spatiality in the Songs of Ascents

V&R



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# Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

Edited by
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Jennifer Knust

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To my wife—Xinyi,
and my children—Matthew, Nathaniel, and Sophie:
thank you for being God's faithfulness to me
(Ps 128:1–4)

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# Content

Table of Figures . . . . . 13

Articles Adapted in this Monograph . . . . . 15

Abbreviations . . . . . 17

Foreword . . . . . 23

Acknowledgements . . . . . 25

Chapter 1: Introduction . . . . . 27
1.1 Space and the Hebrew Bible . . . . . 27
1.2 The Spatial Turn in Biblical Studies . . . . . 28
1.3 Another Turn—Cognitive Linguistics . . . . . 30
1.4 Thesis and Structure of the Monograph . . . . . 31

Part I:
Methodology

Chapter 2: Critical Spatiality and Biblical Studies . . . . . 37
2.1 Survey of Critical Spatiality . . . . . 37
2.1.1 Michel Foucault—Utopias and Heterotopias . . . . . 37
2.1.2 Henri Lefebvre—On the Production of Space . . . . . 41
2.1.3 Edward W. Soja—Thirdspace . . . . . 46
2.1.4 Summary: Comparing Foucault, Lefebvre, and Soja . . . . . 49
2.2 Critical Spatiality in Biblical Studies . . . . . 50
2.2.1 Monographs on Critical Spatiality of the Hebrew Bible . . . . . 51
2.2.2 Critical Spatial Essays on Jerusalem/Zion . . . . . 54
2.2.3 Challenges in Applying Critical Spatiality to Biblical Studies . . . . . 58
2.3 Summary . . . . . 60

Chapter 3: Conceptual Metaphor Theory as Critical Spatial Method . . . . 63
3.1 Introduction . . . . . 63
3.2 A Lefebvrian-Foucaultian Influenced Approach to Critical Spatiality . . . . . 63

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ISBN Print: 9783525500064 — ISBN E-Book: 9783647500065

3.3 The Suitability of Conceptual Metaphor Theory as Critical Spatial Method . . . . . 66
3.3.1 Overview of Conceptual Metaphor Theory . . . . . 67
3.3.2 Resonances between Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Critical Spatiality . . . . . 68
3.4 A Nomenclature of Space . . . . . 70
3.4.1 Space-in-Text—Spatial Setting and Reified Space . . . . . 70
3.4.2 Performance Space—Actual and Implied . . . . . 72
3.4.3 Space vis-à-vis Metaphors and Metonyms . . . . . 73
3.4.4 A Lefebvrian-Foucaultian View of Space-in-Text and Performance Space . . . . . 74
3.5 Applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory to Spatial Study . . . . . 75
3.5.1 Orientational Metaphors . . . . . 75
3.5.2 Ontological Metaphors . . . . . 76
3.5.3 Structural Metaphors . . . . . 78
3.5.4 Conceptual Metonymy . . . . . 79
3.5.5 Conceptual Blends . . . . . 81
3.5.6 From Conceptualisation to Social-Historicity . . . . . 83
3.6 Summary . . . . . 84

Part II:
Prolegomena to the Case Study

Chapter 4: The Songs of Ascents and Zion Theology . . . . . 87
4.1 Introduction . . . . . 87
4.2 Overview of the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 87
4.3 The Songs of Ascents as a Critical-Spatial Case Study . . . . . 90
4.4 Survey of Scholarship on Zion Theology . . . . . 93
4.4.1 Zion Tradition . . . . . 93
4.4.2 Diversity in Zion Theology . . . . . 96
4.5 Zion Theology in the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 98
4.5.1 Philip Satterthwaite . . . . . 98
4.5.2 Corinna Körting . . . . . 99
4.5.3 Erich Zenger . . . . . 100
4.5.4 Michael Rohde . . . . . 101
4.6 Synthesis: Assessing Zion Theology in the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 102
4.7 Summary . . . . . 104

Chapter 5: Pilgrimage in the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 105
5.1 Pilgrimage and the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 105
5.2 Pilgrimage in the Ancient World . . . . . 107

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5.2.1 Pilgrimage in Classical and Hellenistic Greece . . . . . 107
5.2.2 Israelite Pilgrimage in Pre-Persian Biblical Texts . . . . . 109
5.2.3 Jewish Pilgrimage in the Late Second Temple Period . . . . . 110
5.2.4 Conclusion . . . . . 113
5.3 Jewish Pilgrimage in Persian-Era Biblical Texts . . . . . 113
5.3.1 Zechariah . . . . . 114
5.3.2 Haggai . . . . . 116
5.3.3 Trito-Isaiah . . . . . 116
5.3.4 Ezra–Nehemiah . . . . . 118
5.3.5 Chronicles . . . . . 120
5.3.6 Summary . . . . . 122
5.4 Criteria for Assessing Pilgrimage in the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 123
5.5 Conclusion . . . . . 125

## Part III:
## Case Study of the Songs of Ascents

Chapter 6: Psalms 120–124 . . . . . 129
6.1 Introduction . . . . . 129
6.2 Psalm 120 . . . . . 129
6.2.1 Translation . . . . . 129
6.2.2 Exegesis of Ps 120 . . . . . 130
6.2.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 120 . . . . . 138
6.3 Psalm 121 . . . . . 141
6.3.1 Translation . . . . . 141
6.3.2 Exegesis of Ps 121 . . . . . 142
6.3.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 121 . . . . . 150
6.4 Psalm 122 . . . . . 152
6.4.1 Translation . . . . . 152
6.4.2 Exegesis of Ps 122 . . . . . 153
6.4.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 122 . . . . . 159
6.5 Psalm 123 . . . . . 163
6.5.1 Translation . . . . . 163
6.5.2 Exegesis of Ps 123 . . . . . 164
6.5.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 123 . . . . . 169
6.6 Psalm 124 . . . . . 172
6.6.1 Translation . . . . . 172
6.6.2 Exegesis of Ps 124 . . . . . 172
6.6.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 124 . . . . . 180
6.7 Summary . . . . . 183

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ISBN Print: 9783525500064 — ISBN E-Book: 9783647500065

Chapter 7: Psalms 125–129 . . . . . 185
7.1 Psalm 125 . . . . . 185
7.1.1 Translation . . . . . 185
7.1.2 Exegesis of Ps 125 . . . . . 185
7.1.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 125 . . . . . 192
7.2 Psalm 126 . . . . . 199
7.2.1 Translation . . . . . 199
7.2.2 Exegesis of Ps 126 . . . . . 200
7.2.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 126 . . . . . 208
7.3 Psalm 127 . . . . . 210
7.3.1 Translation . . . . . 210
7.3.2 Exegesis of Ps 127 . . . . . 211
7.3.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 127 . . . . . 217
7.4 Psalm 128 . . . . . 222
7.4.1 Translation . . . . . 222
7.4.2 Exegesis of Ps 128 . . . . . 223
7.4.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 128 . . . . . 226
7.5 Psalm 129 . . . . . 233
7.5.1 Translation . . . . . 233
7.5.2 Exegesis of Ps 129 . . . . . 234
7.5.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 129 . . . . . 234
7.6 Summary . . . . . 248

Chapter 8: Psalms 130–134 . . . . . 251
8.1 Psalm 130 . . . . . 251
8.1.1 Translation . . . . . 251
8.1.2 Exegesis of Ps 130 . . . . . 252
8.1.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 130 . . . . . 258
8.2 Psalm 131 . . . . . 262
8.2.1 Translation . . . . . 262
8.2.2 Exegesis of Ps 131 . . . . . 262
8.2.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 131 . . . . . 267
8.3 Psalm 132 . . . . . 270
8.3.1 Translation . . . . . 270
8.3.2 Exegesis of Ps 132 . . . . . 272
8.3.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 132 . . . . . 278
8.4 Psalm 133 . . . . . 282
8.4.1 Translation . . . . . 282
8.4.2 Exegesis of Ps 133 . . . . . 283
8.4.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 133 . . . . . 286

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ISBN Print: 9783525500064 — ISBN E-Book: 9783647500065

8.5 Psalm 134 . . . . . 292
8.5.1 Translation . . . . . 292
8.5.2 Exegesis of Ps 134 . . . . . 292
8.5.3 Metaphor and Spatiality in Ps 134 . . . . . 294
8.6 Summary . . . . . 299

## Part IV: Conclusion

Chapter 9: Synthesis . . . . . 305
9.1 Zion Theology and the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 305
9.1.1 Arguments against a Singular Zion Tradition/Theology . . . . . 305
9.1.2 Diverse Conceptions of Zion . . . . . 306
9.1.3 Zion's Conceptual Matrix . . . . . 310
9.2 Pilgrimage and the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 311
9.2.1 Evaluating Past Reasons Given for a Pilgrimage Reading . . . . 311
9.2.2 Comparing the Songs of Ascents to Evidence-Based Pilgrimage Criteria . . . . . 312
9.2.3 Final Evaluation of the Pilgrimage Hypothesis . . . . . 315
9.3 Reconsidering the Purpose and Provenance of the Songs of Ascents . . . . . 316
9.3.1 Fostering Zion-Centric Unity . . . . . 316
9.3.2 Addressing Agrarian Communities in Yehud . . . . . 317
9.3.3 A Levitical Provenance for the Collection . . . . . 319
9.4 Evaluating the Spatial-Metaphorical Method . . . . . 321
9.4.1 Strengths of the Method . . . . . 321
9.4.2 Limitations of the Method . . . . . 323
9.5 Summary . . . . . 324

Bibliography . . . . . 325

Index . . . . . 341

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# Table of Figures


Figure 2.1 Utopia and heterotopias as social-analytic tools . . . . . 40

Figure 3.1 Structuring of the LOVE domain in terms of the JOURNEY domain . . . . . 78

Figure 3.2 Basic conceptual blending diagram . . . . . 82

Figure 6.1 Subject and objects of *yiqtols* in Ps 120:3 . . . . . 133

Figure 7.1 Solomonic allusion as structural metaphor . . . . . 221

Figure 7.2 FARMHOUSE AS FARMLAND structural metaphor . . . . . 230

Figure 7.3 Underlying structural metaphor YHWH AS A PATERFAMILIAS . . . . . 232

Figure 7.4 Conceptual blending—ISRAEL'S MILITARY OPPRESSION AS FARMING . . . . . 237

Figure 8.1 Spatiality in Psalm 130 . . . . . 261

Figure 8.2 Conceptual blending—ATYPICAL ABUNDANCE IN ZION . . . 289

Figure 8.3 Spatial configuration established in Ps 134:1b–2b . . . . . 296

Figure 8.4 Spatial configuration established in Ps 134:3 . . . . . 298

Figure 9.1 Use of the terms ציון and ירושלם in the Songs of Ascents . . . 306

Figure 9.2 Overarching spatial framework of the Songs of Ascents . . . 309


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———. 'Changing One's Tune: Re-Reading the Structure of Psalm 132 as Complex Antiphony'. *Old Testament Essays* 32, no. 1 (2019): 32–57.

———. 'Farming for Meaning: Dynamic Extended Metaphor and Conceptual Blending in Psalm 129'. *Asia Journal of Theology* 34, no. 1 (2020): 1–22.

———. 'Trust under Siege: Psalm 125 as Theological Reflection'. In *Offering the Light: Essays in Honour of Philip E. Satterthwaite on the Occasion of His Retirement*, edited by Tze-Ming Quek, Kiem-Kiok Kwa, and Wen-Pin Leow, 16–40. Singapore: Biblical Graduate School of Theology, 2022.

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# Abbreviations

## Modern Publications

| | |
|---|---|
| *AAAG* | *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* |
| AAR | American Academy of Religion |
| AB | Anchor Bible |
| ABS | Archaeology and Biblical Studies |
| ACCS | Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture |
| AIL | Ancient Israel and its Literature |
| *AJT* | *Asia Journal of Theology* |
| *ANET* | *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by James B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969. |
| AOAT | Alter Orient und Altes Testament |
| ArBib | The Aramaic Bible |
| ARM | Asian Resources for Ministry |
| *Aug* | *Augustinianum* |
| AYB | Anchor Yale Bible |
| *BASOR* | *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* |
| BBRSup | Bulletin of Biblical Research Supplements |
| BDAG | *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Edited by Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 3rd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000. |
| *BeO* | *Bibbia e oriente* |
| BETL | Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium |
| *BHS* | *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* |
| *Bib* | *Biblica* |
| *BibInt* | *Biblical Interpretation* (journal) |
| BIS | Biblical Interpretation Series |
| *BN* | *Biblische Notizen* |
| BibTS | Biblische-Theologische Studien |
| *BpT* | *Baptistic Theologies* |
| *BSac* | *Bibliotheca Sacra* |
| *BT* | *The Bible Translator* |
| BZAW | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| *CANE* | *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Jack M. Sasson. 4 vols. New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1995. |
| CBC | Cornerstone Biblical Commentary |
| CC | Continental Commentaries |
| CIS | Copenhagen International Seminar |
| ConBOT | Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series |
| *CurBR* | *Currents in Biblical Research* |
| *DBI* | *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery.* Edited by Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998. |
| *DCH* | *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by David J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014. |

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| | |
|---|---|
| *DCHR* | *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew Revised.* Edited by David J. A. Clines. 2 vols (incomplete). Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2018–2019. |
| *DDD* | *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill, 1999. |
| EABS | European Association of Biblical Studies |
| ECC | Eerdmans Critical Commentary |
| *EHLL* | *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*. Edited by Geoffrey Khan. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2013. |
| ESV | English Standard Version (2016) |
| *ETL* | *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* |
| ET/s | English translation/s |
| *ExpT* | *The Expository Times* |
| FAT | Forschungen zum Alten Testament |
| FJD | Forschungen zum judisch-christlichen Dialog |
| FOTL | Forms of the Old Testament Literature |
| FRC | Family, Religion, and Culture |
| *GBHS* | *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. |
| GBS | Guides to Biblical Scholarship |
| GKC | *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Edited by Emil Kautzsch. Translated by Arthur E. Cowley. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1910. |
| *HALOT* | *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999. |
| HAR | Hebrew Annual Review |
| HAT | Handbuch zum Alten Testament |
| HBM | Harvard Bible Monographs |
| HHBS | History of Biblical Studies |
| *HS* | *Hebrew Studies* |
| HThKat | Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament |
| *HUCA* | *Hebrew Union College Annual* |
| *HvTSt* | *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* (English name: *HTS Theological Studies*) |
| *IBHS* | *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990. |
| ICC | International Critical Commentary |
| *Int* | *Interpretation* |
| *ISBE* | *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.* Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995. |
| *ITP* | *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, King of Assryia: Critical Edition, with Introductions, Translations and Commentary.* Edited by Hayim Tadmor. Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994. |
| *JAJ* | *Journal of Ancient Judaism* |
| JAJS | Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements |
| *JAOS* | *Journal of the American Oriental Society* |
| *JArS* | *Journal of Archaeological Science* |
| *JBL* | *Journal of Biblical Literature* |
| JBLMS | Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series |
| JCPS | Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series |
| *JHS* | *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* |

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| | |
|---|---|
| *JNSL* | *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* |
| Joüon | *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Paul Joüon. Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991. |
| *JSem* | *Journal of Semitics* |
| *JSJ* | *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods* |
| JSJSupp | Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism |
| *JSOT* | *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* |
| JSOTSupp | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series |
| *JT* | *The Jerusalem Talmud: Complete Edition* (Studia Judaica). Edited and translated by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer. 17 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020. |
| *JTS* | *The Journal of Theological Studies* |
| KJV | King James' Version |
| LAI | Library of Ancient Israel |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. |
| LHBOTS | Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies |
| LSAWS | Linguistics Studies in Ancient West Semitic series |
| LSTS | The Library of Second Temple Studies |
| MATRIX | Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context |
| Moran | *The Amarna Letters*. Edited and translated by William L. Moran. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1992. |
| NAC | The New American Commentary |
| NASB | New American Standard Bible (1977) |
| *Noé* | *The Noé Edition Koren Talmud Bavli*. Edited by Tzvi Hersh Weinreb and Joshua Schreier. 42 vols. Jerusalem: Koren, 2018. |
| NIB | New Interpreter's Bible |
| NICOT | New International Commentary on the Old Testament |
| *NIDOTTE* | *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997. |
| NIV | New International Version (2011) |
| NLT | New Living Translation (2007) |
| NTMr | New Testament Monographs |
| OBO | Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis |
| OBT | Overtures to Biblical Theology |
| *Or* | *Orientalia* |
| OTL | Old Testament Library |
| OTR | Old Testament Readings |
| PHSC | Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and its Contexts |
| PSZAT | Poetologische Studien zum Alten Testament |
| POS | Pretoria Oriental Series |
| *PRSt* | *Perspectives in Religious Studies* |
| *RB* | *Revue bibilique* |
| RGRW | Religions in the Greco-Roman World |
| RSV | Revised Standard Version (1971) |
| RUS | Ralahine Utopian Studies |
| SBL | Society of Biblical Literature |
| SBLDS | Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series |
| SBLMS | Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series |
| SBS | Stuttgarter Biblestudien |

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| | |
|---|---|
| SCJ | Studies in Christianity and Judaism |
| *SJOT* | *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* |
| SNTSMS | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series |
| SPOT | Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament |
| SSN | Studia Semitica Neerlandica |
| StBibLit | Studies in Biblica Literature |
| TBN | Themes in Biblical Narrative |
| *TBei* | *Theologische Beiträge* |
| *TDOT* | *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 17 vols. Edited by Helmer Ringgren et al. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975–2018. |
| TNK | Jewish Publication Society TANAKH (1985) |
| TSAJ | Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum |
| *TWOT* | *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. 2 vols. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980. |
| *TynBul* | *Tyndale Bulletin* |
| *VSBH* | *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew.* Jan Joosten. Jerusalem: Simor, 2012. |
| *VT* | *Vetus Testamentum* |
| VTSup | Supplements to Vetus Testamentum |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| WBBC | Wiley Blackwell Bible Commentaries |
| WC | Wisdom Commentary |
| *WW* | *Word and World* |
| YJS | Yale Judaica Series |
| *ZAH* | *Journal of Althebräistik* |
| *ZAW* | *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* |

## Ancient/Rabbinic Literature

| | |
|---|---|
| 1QIsa[a] | Isaiah Scroll ("The Great Isaiah Scroll") |
| 4Q522 | 4QProphecy of Joshua |
| 4Q87 | 4QPsalms[e] |
| 11Q5 | 11QPsalms[a] ("The Great Psalms Scroll") |
| 11Q6 | 11QPsalms[b] |
| ʿArak. | ʿArakin |
| *A. J.* | Josephus, *Antiquitates judaicae* |
| b. | Babylonian Talmud |
| Ber. | Berakot |
| *B. J.* | Josephus, *Bellum judaicum* |
| *C. Ap.* | Josephus, *Contra Apionem* |
| DSS | Dead Sea Scrolls |
| EA | El Amarna, i. e., the Amarna Letters |
| Gen. Rab. | Genesis Rabbah |
| Ḥag. | Ḥagigah |
| *Hist.* | Herodotus, *Historiae* |
| Ibn Ezra | Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra (circa 1089–1164) |
| Jdt. | Judith |
| *Legat.* | Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* |
| m. | Mishnah |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Meg. | Megillah |
| Menaḥ. | Menaḥot |
| Mid. | Middot |
| Midr. Teh. | Midrash Tehillim |
| Pe'ah | Pe'ah |
| *Prov.* | Philo, *De providentia* |
| Pss. Sol. | Psalms of Solomon |
| Radak | Rabbi David Kimhi (circa 1160–1235) |
| Rashi | Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (circa 1040–1105) |
| Sir. | Ben Sira |
| *Spec.* | Philo, *De specialibus legibus* |
| Suk. | Sukkah |
| t. | Tosefta |
| Taʿan. | Taʿanit |
| Tg. Ps.-J. | Targum Pseudo-Jonathan |
| Tg. Pss | Targum Psalms |
| Tob. | Tobit |
| y. | Jerusalem Talmud |

## General Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| // | parallel to |
| BCE | before the Common Era |
| CE | Common Era |
| cf. | confer, compare |
| D | Deuteronomist |
| E | Elohist |
| e.g. | *exempli gratia*, for example |
| esp. | especially |
| HB | Hebrew Bible |
| *hi.* | *hiphil* |
| i. e. | *id est*, that is |
| J | Yahwist |
| LBH | Late Biblical Hebrew |
| LXX | Septuagint |
| MT | Masoretic Text |
| n. | footnote |
| *nif.* | *niphal* |
| *pi.* | *piel* |
| *qat.* | *qatal* |
| *qot.* | *qotel* |
| *yiq.* | *yiqtol* |
| vb | verb |
| v(v). | verse(s) |
| *wayyiq.* | *wayyiqtol* |

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# Foreword

When Wen-Pin Leow told me, in the autumn of 2017, that he intended to write his Master's by Research thesis at the University of Aberdeen on the Psalms of Ascent, I immediately agreed. Ever since my student days, Psalms 120–134 have been greatly important to me—because of the poetic beauty of the individual psalms, the way in which they hang together, their theological message and their historical background. I vividly remember the lectures Andrew Macintosh gave to us, a small group of advanced undergraduates and Diploma students in 1988–9 at the Faculty of Oriental Studies (now famously renamed as 'Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies'!) of Cambridge University. They introduced us to philological subtleties and historical dimensions we had hitherto been unfamiliar with, and they kindled our interest in Hebrew poetry.

So I am very glad today to write this foreword. Wen-Pin Leow has turned an excellent piece of research of the typical size of a Master's thesis into an even better, massive study of the 'Pilgrim Songs'. It provides a fresh perspective on them, approaching them from the angle of Cognitive Linguistics and Critical Spatiality, with a particularly interesting 'take' on Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault.

I hope that Wen-Pin's study will enable scholars and the educated public more deeply to understand the Psalms of Ascent and to savour their more hidden features. I commend it to the reader with enthusiasm.

Aberdeen, in December 2023 Joachim Schaper

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# Acknowledgements

This monograph is a significantly-expanded version of my Master of Theology thesis submitted to the University of Aberdeen in June 2018. From its original length of 40,000 words focusing on only selected elements of conceptual metaphor theory and limited to Psalms 125–129, it has been expanded into its present 135,000-word form (exclusive of the bibliography and index). Previously-written chapters have been comprehensively revised, expanded, and improved. The methods advocated in the original thesis have been added to and refined. Many new chapters have been added in order to provide a comprehensive study of the entire corpus of the Songs of Ascents through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory applied to critical spatial study. This process of writing has been a long four-year journey.

The Puritan preacher Thomas Goodwin once commented that, "The most thankful person is the most fully human." Indeed, as I look back over the writing process of this monograph, my heart is filled with thankfulness for the support of numerous individuals and organisations, without whom this work would have been impossible.

First, a huge word of thanks to my academic mentor, Professor Joachim Schaper, who provided me with unfailing support in my academic work. He was the one who first saw the potential of this work and encouraged me to expand it into its current state. Even after I graduated, he continued to keep in touch with me and encouraged the publication of this work. At times, I wondered when Prof. Schaper's grace to me would run out but it never did. These words from Ruth 3:10 ring true of my experience of him: היטבת חסדך האחרון מן הראשון.

Warm thanks also go out to the editorial board of "Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments" for accepting this work for publication in their venerable series. It is an honour to publish this book on the Songs of Ascents in a series founded by Hermann Gunkel, that remarkable pioneering scholar of the Psalter. Thanks must also be accorded to the diligent editorial team at Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, especially to Dr Izaak J. de Hulster, who helped to carry this project to completion.

I would also like to thank (i) the University of Aberdeen for providing me with two postgraduate travel grants as well as (ii) the International Academic Forum for awarding me the Stuart D. B. Picken Scholarship and Grant. These sources of funding allowed me to present some of the work in this monograph at two international conferences, giving me an opportunity to receive valuable feedback on my work.

Thanks also to three institutions that supported the writing of this volume. First, the Biblical Graduate School of Theology (Singapore) which appointed me to a

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visiting fellowship in the second half of 2019 during which a significant portion of the work for this monograph was completed. Second, Trinity Theological College (Singapore) which granted access to their well-equipped library from August 2019 to March 2020. Third, Bethany Evangelical Free Church (Singapore) which provided me a workspace in their beautiful church-in-a-garden in 2023 to work on the finishing stages of this monograph.

Several colleagues provided valuable help in the process of writing this monograph: (i) Dr Pieter van der Lugt generously provided a complimentary hardcopy of his *Cantos and Strophes in Biblical Hebrew Poetry III* when I was unable to obtain it in Singapore; (ii) Dr Peter C. W. Ho gifted me a copy of his *The Design of the Psalter: A Macrostructural Analysis* hot off the presses; (iii) Dr Gert Prinsloo, Dr Beat Weber, and Dr Jonathan Trotter emailed me some of their articles that I could not otherwise obtain; and (iv) Dr Philip Satterthwaite provided helpful feedback on two chapters of this monograph.

Further thanks are due to dear friends who have supported me throughout this project. Thanks to Mr Chan Kong-Wah and Mrs Chan Poh-Leng, for their deep love over the years and for their Christlike example. Warmest thanks also go to my friend and mentor, Rev. Dr Desmond Soh—you are a dear brother in Christ! Thank you for guiding and loving me throughout the years.

This volume is dedicated to my family. To my wife, Xinyi: you are my anchor and my soulmate. To my three children, Matthew (מתתיהו), Nathaniel (נתנאל), and Sophie (חכמה): you are my sunshine and my joy. You remind me of the truth of God's Word when he says in Ps 127:3, "הנה נחלת יהוה בנים שכר פרי הבטן".

Finally, my highest thanks go to God Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and the Saviour of His People. To Him be all glory, praise, and thanks! Indeed, ברכו את יהוה כל עבדי יהוה (Ps 134:1)!

Wen-Pin Leow
Christmas 2023
Singapore

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Space and the Hebrew Bible

"The Hebrew Bible is obsessed with space."[1] Indeed, much of the Hebrew Bible (HB) revolves around the relationship that the people of YHWH have with the land of Israel.[2] The land is described as created, cursed, partitioned, polluted, promised, inherited, contested, lost, regained, renewed, and transformed. This drama of the land animates the narrative of the HB—it is a story of the people's land even as it is also their story. However, the spatial concerns of the text extend far beyond the land of Israel. Not satisfied with offering a spatial vision for the Promised Land, the text boldly extends itself to offer prophetic (re)interpretations of the lands of other nations (e.g., Assyria: Mic 5:4–5;[3] Babylon: Jer 50–51; Egypt: Ezek 29:1–16), and even further, to comment on the very limits of ancient Near Eastern cosmology: from the heights of the heavens, to the depths of Sheol, to the uttermost ends of the sea (e.g., Ps 139:8–9). Thus, space is often a key concern of the text. It is treated not just as a neutral physical setting within which the action of the text happens, but as a central player in the HB's social, historical, and theological construction of its narrative.

Moreover, space is not just a passive object constructed and commented upon by the HB. As a literary work whose production was situated at multiple points in space and time, the HB cannot escape its own spatial origins. It frequently portrays itself as written in specific spaces, indicating an interest in its own spatial heritage. It could thus be said that it is not just a text writing about space, but written because of space. Spaces inspire the text, with its varied authors drawing upon the diverse character of their spatial surroundings as they compose the text. One cannot help but be struck by the variegated spaces that have worked themselves

1 Jon L. Berquist, "Critical Spatiality and the Construction of the Ancient World," in *"Imagining" Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Constructs in Honour of James W. Flanagan*, ed. David M. Gunn and Paula McNutt, JSOTSupp 359 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2003), 25.

2 See Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd ed., OBT (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002); Norman C. Habel, *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies*, OBT (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); Christopher J. H. Wright, *God's People in God's Land: Family, Land, and Property in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990).

3 Verse numbering in this monograph will follow the numbering convention in the Hebrew text of the *BHS*.

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into the HB: the arid barrenness of the wilderness (e.g., Jer 17:6), the awe-inspiring grandeur of the mountains (e.g., Ps 76:5), the foreboding ebb and flow of sea waters (e.g., Ps 46:4), the energetic hustle and bustle of ancient Jerusalem (e.g., Ps 122), the numinous and liminal vistas of the apocalyptic dreamscape (e.g., Dan 7), and more.

The spatiality of the HB also extends into its reception. The very words of the text bear witness to the fact that the HB was not flatly received in a disembodied and abstract fashion. Rather, the text was performed within space. Hence, its reception demanded the interaction between bodily space and spatial setting, resulting in its audience undergoing rich spatial experiences. Furthermore, the text was not just restricted to use in sacral spaces such as the Temple in Jerusalem or in synagogues. It was also used in private homes (e.g., Ps 128), sung at communal celebrations (e.g., Ps 150), wailed at places of lament (e.g., Ps 137) etc. Moreover, a distinctive characteristic of the HB is that a sizeable portion of the text consists of spatial blueprints for the construction of places and objects (e.g., Exod 25–40; Ezek 40–48), with Scripture itself becoming integrated into spatial settings (e.g., Deut 6:8–9; 11:18–20). Thus, the reception of the text resulted in placemaking, whether in physical reality or in the mind's eye. This manner of reception continues today in the influence that the HB continues to exert on modern places of worship across multiple religious traditions, as well as on other types of architecture.

## 1.2 The Spatial Turn in Biblical Studies

The spatial reception of the HB has been energised in the last two decades by a paradigm shift in the study of spatiality in biblical scholarship,[4] paralleling a similar spatial turn in the humanities and the social sciences.[5] The introduction of this paradigm—known as "critical spatiality"—into biblical scholarship can be traced back to a seminal article by James W. Flanagan entitled "Ancient Perceptions of Space/Perceptions of Ancient Space" published in issue 87 of *Semeia* ("The Social World of the Hebrew Bible").[6] This article had its roots in the 1996 and 1998 meetings of the AAR/SBL "Constructs of the Social and Cultural Worlds of the Antiquity" group. In the article, Flanagan surveys social theory in general, champions the rise of critical spatiality as a conscious corrective to earlier

4 Matthew Sleeman, "Critical Spatial Theory 2.0," in *Constructions of Space V: Place, Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Gert T. M. Prinsloo and Christl M. Maier, LHBOTS 576 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 49.

5 Berquist, "Critical Spatiality," 18–21; Patrick Schreiner, "Space, Place and Biblical Studies: A Survey of Recent Research in Light of Developing Trends," *CurBR* 14.3 (2016): 340.

6 James W. Flanagan, "Ancient Perceptions of Space/Perceptions of Ancient Space," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 15–43.

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over-emphases on sociality and historicity, and proposes two possible areas (the study of genealogies and territoriality) where a critical spatial approach might enhance studies into the social world of the Bible.[7]

Flanagan's proposed implementation of critical spatiality in biblical studies took on a more substantive form through the founding of the SBL/AAR "Constructions of Ancient Space" seminar in 2000 (by James Flanagan and Jon Berquist), which was later renamed the "Space, Place and Lived Experiences in Antiquity" program unit.[8] The work of this group, along with that of other related study groups,[9] has produced a substantial corpus of work, most prominent of which are the five edited volumes in the Constructions of Space sub-series published under the LHBOTS series.[10]

This corpus of work has given fresh attention to the nature of space and place in the biblical text. This new wave of scholarship has viewed space, not as an independent absolute, but rather as a contested construct. As a construct, space is recognised as very much shaped by people; yet, at the same time, its ability to shape and influence people is also acknowledged. As a contested entity, space is understood as arising from the complex interaction of "the physical, the social, and even the imaginative".[11] In this regard, the spatial theorists whose work has been the most influential are Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, and Edward W. Soja. In particular, the latter's formulation of First, Second, and Thirdspace epistemologies has been especially impactful in understanding the varied facets of space.[12] Work in this area continues, with one scholar observing that "this may be the best of times to be a spatialized reader of biblical texts … [and that] the spatialization of biblical studies is irreversible and ongoing."[13]

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7 Flanagan, "Ancient Perceptions," 26–27, 36–39.

8 Schreiner, "Space, Place and Biblical Studies," 352.

9 E.g., The EABS "Bible and Sacred Space" research group (no longer extant).

10 Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp, eds., *Constructions of Space I: Theory, Geography, and Narrative*, LHBOTS 481 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2008); Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp, eds., *Constructions of Space II: The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces*, LHBOTS 490 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2008); Mark K. George, ed., *Constructions of Space IV: Further Developments in Examining Ancient Israel's Social Space*, LHBOTS 569 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013); Gert T. M. Prinsloo and Christl M. Maier, eds., *Constructions of Space V: Place, Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, LHBOTS 576 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014); Jorunn Økland, J. Cornelis de Vos, and Karen J. Wenell, eds., *Constructions of Space III: Biblical Spatiality and the Sacred*, LHBOTS 540 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016). Note that the series ordering is not chronological, with the third volume being the latest volume to be published.

11 Schreiner, "Space, Place and Biblical Studies," 360.

12 Christopher Meredith, "Taking Issue with Thirdspace: Reading Soja, Lefebvre and the Bible," in *Constructions of Space III: Biblical Spatiality and the Sacred*, ed. Jorunn Økland, J. Cornelius de Vos, and Karen Wenell, LHBOTS 540 (New York: T&T Clark, 2016), 75–76.

13 Sleeman, "Critical Spatial Theory 2.0," 65.

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Notwithstanding this, the application of critical spatial methods to biblical studies has not been without its challenges. Two challenges, in particular, stand out (see § 2.2.3 for a more detailed discussion):

1. The *disciplinary* challenge of transposing critical spatial approaches from social-scientific studies to biblical studies. The challenge consists of identifying and addressing the differences in disciplinary assumptions and goals between the two fields.
2. The *methodological* challenge of adapting the frameworks proposed by these theorists, which were originally intended for the examination of social spaces, to the literary spaces of biblical text.

For critical spatial hermeneutics to continue to flourish despite these challenges, there is therefore a need for further methodological innovation in the study of spatiality in the biblical text.

## 1.3 Another Turn—Cognitive Linguistics

One discipline that might fuel such a development of theory and method in critical spatiality is the field of cognitive linguistics. Like critical spatiality, cognitive linguistics is a relatively new discipline, having only been founded in the early 1970s by theorists such as George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Len Talmy.[14] It has been described as "a 'movement' or an 'enterprise' because it is not a specific theory … [but rather] it is an approach that has adopted a common set of guiding principles, assumptions and perspectives."[15] Broadly speaking, cognitive linguistics "focuses on language as an instrument for organizing, processing, and conveying information … [with] the analysis of the conceptual and experiential basis of linguistic categories [being] of primary importance."[16] This cognitive understanding of language is particularly evident in conceptual metaphor theory which argues that "our ordinary conceptual system … is fundamentally metaphorical in nature",[17] in contrast to the common view of metaphor as a mere stylistic rhetorical device.

That critical spatiality and cognitive linguistics might be good methodological bedfellows is suggested by their common emphasis on the embodied nature of human living. Critical spatiality avers that "being embodied creatures means

14 Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens, "Introducing Cognitive Linguistics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, ed. Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

15 Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green, *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 3.

16 Geeraerts and Cuyckens, "Introducing Cognitive Linguistics," 3.

17 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3.

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humans must also be 'implaced' or rooted creatures."[18] Likewise, cognitive linguistics argues that "human physical, cognitive and social embodiment ground our conceptual and linguistics systems."[19] If these two preceding statements are considered in tandem, it can be concluded that necessarily-spatial embodiment implies necessarily-spatial thinking. That is, spatiality must be an essential part of our conceptual and linguistic understanding. By extension, biblical texts which are products of human conception must also be fundamentally spatial in nature, pointing to the importance of spatiality in biblical interpretation.

Given this methodological resonance, cognitive linguistics is a potential candidate for furthering critical spatial study of the HB. Given the numerous advances in cognitive linguistics that allow it to stand as a well-established discipline within the broader field of linguistics,[20] cognitive linguistics could then provide the biblical exegete with novel and robust methods to systematically investigate spatiality in biblical texts. Indeed, although limited only to the last twenty years, the impact of cognitive linguistics (especially conceptual metaphor theory) on biblical scholarship has already been substantial, affecting numerous subdisciplines within the study of the HB, most notably Hebrew poetry.[21] This already-sizeable influence on biblical scholarship further commends cognitive linguistics as a plausible method for the critical spatial study of the HB.

## 1.4 Thesis and Structure of the Monograph

The thesis of this monograph is that conceptual metaphor theory (a branch of cognitive linguistics) can be used as a methodological bridge to undertake rigorous critical spatial analysis of the HB. While other dimensions of text will be taken into consideration, this work follows Flanagan's seminal article in focusing its spatial analysis on the study of the social world of the biblical text, concentrating on the spatial contexts denoted or implied by the text and their accompanying spatial

18 Schreiner, "Space, Place and Biblical Studies," 341. See also the discussion on embodiment in Berquist, "Critical Spatiality," 28.

19 Tim Rohrer, "Embodiment and Experientialism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, ed. Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 27.

20 In general, cognitive linguistics can be broken down into the three major fields of cognitive semantics, grammar, and phonology. See, for example, the discussions of cognitive linguistics as a field in Evans and Green, *Cognitive Linguistics*; Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007); Friedrich Ungerer and Hans-Jorg Schmid, *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006).

21 Some key works include (in alphabetical order, only full-length works on the Hebrew Bible are listed) Alec Basson, *Divine Metaphors in Selected Hebrew Psalms of Lamentation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); William P. Brown, *Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor* (Louisville,

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worldviews. This thesis will be tested by applying it to the exegetical study of a corpus of poetic texts in the HB: the Songs of Ascents (Pss 120–134).

This volume is structured in four major parts. The first section of the work (Part I—Methodology) outlines how conceptual metaphor theory can be adapted for critical spatial analysis of the HB. To begin with, Chapter Two surveys the thinking of major critical spatial theorists (Foucault, Lefebvre, Soja) who have influenced biblical scholarship and provides an overview of how biblical scholars have applied their work. It then discusses challenges faced in applying critical spatiality to biblical studies. Following this, Chapter Three shows how conceptual metaphor theory can be used as a methodological bridge to apply critical spatial methods to biblical texts. A particular framework influenced by Lefebvre and Foucault will be proposed as the critical spatial approach to be applied to biblical texts. Then, conceptual metaphor theory will be surveyed. An explanation will be given concerning why it can meaningfully serve as a bridge for the proposed spatial approach. A nomenclature will then be proposed for spaces associated with biblical texts to facilitate spatial analysis. Then, using this nomenclature, specific methods for spatial analysis using conceptual metaphor theory will be articulated.

Having developed the method in substantial detail, the monograph will then turn to focus on its application on a specific corpus of biblical texts: the Songs of Ascents. However, prior to the actual case study of those psalms, the monograph will first undertake some preparatory work in Part II (Prologomena to the Case Study). Chapter Four begins the section by providing a critical introduction to the corpus. It reviews the character of the corpus and justifies the corpus' suitability as a case study for evaluating the proposed critical spatial methods. Following this, focus is then shifted to discussing two major spatial themes surrounding scholarship of the Songs of Ascents. (These themes will be focal points during the

KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002); Alison Ruth Gray, *Psalm 18 in Words and Pictures: A Reading through Metaphor* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Lance R. Hawley, *Metaphor Competition in the Book of Job*, JAJS 26 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018); Job Y. Jindo, *Biblical Metaphor Reconsidered: A Cognitive Approach to Poetic Prophecy in Jeremiah 1–24* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010); Albert Kamp, *Inner Worlds: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach to the Book of Jonah*, BibInt 68 (Boston, MA: Brill, 2004); Philip D. King, *Surrounded by Bitterness: Image Schemas and Metaphors for Conceptualizing Distress in Classical Hebrew* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012); Antje Labahn, ed., *Conceptual Metaphors in Poetic Texts: Proceedings of the Metaphor Research Group of the European Association of Biblical Studies in Lincoln 2009*, PHSC 18 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2013); Joseph Lam, *Patterns of Sin in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphor, Culture, and the Making of a Religious Concept* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jennifer Metten Pantoja, *The Metaphor of the Divine As Planter of the People: Stinking Grapes or Pleasant Planting?*, BIS 155 (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2017); Nicole L. Tilford, *Sensing World, Sensing Wisdom: The Cognitive Foundation of Biblical Metaphors*, AIL 31 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2017); Ellen van Wolde, ed., *Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009); Pierre van Hecke, ed., *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, BETL 187 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006); Pierre van Hecke and Antje Labahn, *Metaphors in the Psalms*, BETL 231 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010).

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case study. The effectiveness of the proposed spatial-metaphorical approach will be gauged on how much interpretative insight they provide on these two themes.)

The first of these spatial themes is the corpus' Zion theology, which will be discussed in the remainder of Chapter Four. Older scholarship on Zion tradition is outlined, followed by a discussion on more recent views on the diversity of Zion motifs in the HB. Then, scholarly views on Zion in the Songs of Ascents are also examined. Thereafter, Chapter Five addresses the second spatial theme: pilgrimage. However, unlike many previous works, it is not assumed that the corpus is a pilgrimage psalter. Rather, the chapter surveys pilgrimage in the ancient world from varied perspectives: in classical and Hellenistic Greece, as well as in biblical pre-Persian, Persian, and late-Second Temple texts. Through this survey, a set of criteria for assessing the pilgrimage character of the Songs of Ascents is developed.

In Part III (Case Study of the Songs of Ascents), Chapters Six to Eight thoroughly examine each psalm in the corpus by applying the proposed spatial-metaphorical approach, complemented by existing methods associated with grammatical-historical exegesis of poetic biblical texts. Each chapter contains an analysis of five psalms in canonical order. Each psalm is translated, exegeted, and then analysed with regard to its spatial-metaphorical character. Special attention is paid to the two aforementioned major spatial themes (Zion and pilgrimage).

In Part IV (Conclusion), Chapter Nine then undertakes a synthesis of the findings of the previous three chapters. The Zion theology of the collection is first assessed as a whole, followed by an overall evaluation of the pilgrimage character of the corpus (using the criteria developed earlier). Thereafter, the purpose and provenance of the collection are discussed. Finally, in conclusion, the strength and limitations of the proposed spatial-metaphorical method are evaluated based on the synthesised findings from the case study, especially in relation to the insight provided by the method on the corpus' Zion theology and pilgrimage character.

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