

Peter Altmann

Banned Birds

The Birds of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14

[Verbannte Vögel. Die Vögel in Levitikus 11 und Deuteronomium 14.]

Published in English.

The dietary prohibitions in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 represent one of the most detailed textual overlaps in the Pentateuch between the Priestly material and Deuteronomy, yet study of them is often stymied by the rare terminology. This is especially the case for the birds: their identities are shrouded in mystery and the reasons for their prohibition debated. Peter Altmann attempts to break this impasse by setting these flyers within the broader context of birds and flying creatures in the Ancient Near East. His investigation considers the zooarcheological data on birds in the ancient Levant, iconographic and textual material on mundane and mythic flyers from Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as studying the symbolic functions of birds within the texts of the Hebrew Bible itself. Within this context, he undertakes thorough terminological studies of the expressions for the types of birds, concluding with possible reasons for their exclusion from the prescribed diet and the proposed composition-critical location for the texts in their contexts.

Peter Altmann Born 1974; 2004 ThM and 2010 PhD in Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary; 2016 Habilitation from the University of Zurich; since 2008 doctoral and then post-doctoral researcher in Hebrew Bible Studies at the University of Zurich.



2019. X, 186 pages. ArchB 1

ISBN 978-3-16-158163-2
sewn paper 54,00 €

ISBN 978-3-16-158164-9
eBook PDF 0,00 €

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