

Editor's Preface

This volume brings out some of the contributions presented at the International Academic Symposium on The Old Testament as Inspiration in Culture, which was held in Prague in September 1995. This symposium was co-organised by four distinguished academic institutions – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Charles University in Prague, and The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. The very special opportunity to this meeting was prepared by the unique, wide-ranging and multiform Art Festival, which was held in Prague in the summer and fall of 1995 under the title The Old Testament in the Arts. The main aim of the festival was to present the historical rootedness as well as the actual inspirational power of biblical traditions in various types of arts (see further the introduction of Dr. Moshe Yegar); the purpose of the academic symposium was to accompany the cultural events with multidisciplinary scholarly discourse and to reflect on the problems of understanding and interpretation of artistic works (see further the introduction of Prof. Shemaryahu Talmon).

Only a selection of symposium-papers could be published here. Short characteristic of all the unpublished contributions are attached at the end of the book, together with the List of Participants. These attachments are meant to document the symposium.

Much editorial work was done by Mikuláš Vymětal and David Nečil, students of the Charles University in Prague at the Protestant Theological Faculty. I would like to express my gratitude and recognition to them at this place.

Unfortunately, the genesis of this volume has become a long and knotty story. After all, it is published now in the authority

of the Centre for Biblical Studies of the Academy of Sciences in Czech Republic and of the Charles University in Prague. This Centre was established last year to promote permanent multi-disciplinary and cross-institutional co-operation in the field of Biblical Studies. Prof. Petr Pokorný, Director of the Centre and Dr. Vilém Herold, the Head of the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Academy Council, The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic deserve special appreciation for their supporting the project—without their constitutive sustain this publication could not be achieved.

In Prague, summer 2000

Martin Prudký