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## CONTENTS

<i>Abbreviations</i>	v
<i>Editorial</i>	ix
R Althann, <i>bĕrēʿšit</i> Jer 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 49:34	1-7
W T W Cloete, Verse and Prose: Does the Distinction Apply to the Old Testament?	9-15
A F Conradie, The Fragmentary Ashurnasirpal II Inscription in Detroit	17-26
J Cook, The Qumran (Biblical Scrolls) Data Base	27-40
Izak Cornelius, Paradise Motifs in the “Eschatology” of the Minor Prophets and the Iconography of the Ancient Near East	41-83
F C Fensham, Liability of Animals in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Law	85-90
F C Fensham, Notes on Keret 194-206 (CTA 14: 194b-206)	91-99
W Gross, Israel’s Hope for the Renewal of the State	101-133
Louis C Jonker, <i>hyh mwšl</i> : An Exegetical Note on the Use of the Participle Active in 1 Kings 5:1	135-141
P A Kruger, Prophetic Imagery: On Metaphors and Similes in the Book Hosea	143-151
Garth I Moller, Towards a New Typology of the Syriac Manuscript Alphabet	153-197
M F Rooker, The Diachronic Study of Biblical Hebrew	199-214
H F van Rooy, Deuteronomy 28, 29: Superscript or Subscript?	215-222
<i>Reviews</i>	223-231
<i>Addresses of Contributors</i>	233

**NO ABSTRACTS**

## REVIEWS

William L. Moran, *Les lettres d'El-Amarna*, 1987, pp. 627, Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient 13, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris. N.P.

In collaboration with V. Haas et G. Wilhelm Prof. William Moran has prepared this outstanding translation of the Amarna Correspondence. (This book is translated into French by Dominique Collon and the notes by Henri Cazelles). But it is more than a mere translation. The book is furnished with a very important introduction (pp. 13-56) in which various topics are discussed in light of the latest research. Although J.A. Knudtzon's edition in collaboration with O. Weber and E. Ebeling in *VAB2* in 1907-1915 is still valuable, the study of this correspondence has advanced considerably, especially after the Second World War. And one of the important contributors in this regard is William Moran. After Knudtzon's edition new material is discovered and conveniently published by A. Rainey, cf. *AOAT 8* (1970), second edition in 1978. Most of the latest research is published in a wide variety of journals and monographs. It is, thus, necessary to have the latest views in one publication compiled, and this is precisely what M. has done. It is not a mere compilation, but accompanied by a penetrating discussion, in many instances with the necessary criticism. Our knowledge since Knudtzon's edition has advanced in many ways. The author draws our attention to this straight through his study, e.g. in the reading of cuneiform signs and the schools of writers associated with that, the advancement of grammatical methodology and our knowledge of semantic values of terms (the Ugaritic texts were discovered after the Knudtzon edition!), the historical background and the international relationship by treaty, the vassal's relationship with his overlord etc., etc. One is impressed by the author's lucid translation and his balanced views on the problems involved. And there are problems! This is admitted by the author. There is still much to be done to understand certain passages of this correspondence, sometimes due to the broken state of the tablets and sometimes by difficult expressions and terms used. But the author has advanced our knowledge considerably.

The policy of the publishers of this French series is to give a translation in French with notes on the difficult passages. What one desires, is that in the tradition of Knudtzon's edition a transcribed text is a necessity, or even with photo-copies of the tablets like e.g. A. Herdner's edition of the Ugaritic tablets. This is a tall order, but one could wish that William Moran with his excellent expertise would move in the direction of publishing a transcription of the correspondence with his outstanding translation.

This book is further very useful because of the indices at the back. I want to draw the attention especially to the list of personal names and the translation thereof, also the place names and their situation.

One can heartily recommend this outstanding work for further study.

F.C. Fensham

K. van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia*, 1985, 258 + 9 plates. Van Gorcum en Comp., Assen en Maastricht, NP.

This is a dissertation written under the guidance of Prof. Dr. M. Stol with a copromoter Prof. Dr. C. Houtman, both of them of the Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. This is a solid piece of scholarly work, done throughout from the primary sources. The author comes occasionally in his discussion with surprising fresh views. It is a well-known fact that our knowledge is enriched in the past 50 years or so with thousands of cuneiform texts from Mesopotamia and North Syria. A comparison of these texts with the Old Testament became a necessity (cf. e.g. D.J. Wiseman, *The expansion of Assyrian Studies*, 1962 and H.W. Saggs, *Assyriology and the Study of the Old Testament*, 1967). With the scientific progress we have made, we are on much firmer ground now than the proponents of the Pan-Babylonian school at the beginning of this century. At the same time many voices of warning are directed against a too simplifying approach of comparison of two different cultures. It all depends on how different the cultures were. If we accept a common culture for the Ancient Near East with some differences of development, a comparison can be made.

The author discusses in an introductory chapter his approach to comparison and the dangers in it. To my opinion he has succeeded in giving a firm base for his approach. The first part of his study (pp. 10-99) uses the synchronic method of comparison and the second part (pp. 100-112) the diachronic approach. But this is not a pure structural study. The author explores many avenues of research and sometimes even new avenues to reach certain conclusions.

The whole study is dedicated to the conception of ethics and morality in Mesopotamia and Israel. Certain laws are discussed and the background of these laws considered. The whole problem of sin and also its relation to illness is explored. The rôle of the gods in this is tackled. The author gives us an excellent introduction into the "medical" literature of Mesopotamia and the Old Testament. Informing is also his view on oaths, treaties and covenant. His study on the search for a secret sin, especially present in Mesopotamian literature and to a lesser degree in the Old Testament is of great interest. However, one would say his diachronic study under the heading "Class Conflicts and Moral Antithesis" is the most important of them all. But one can wonder if the statement about money (p. 108) is acceptable. It is so that scholars think that the use of silver and gold as exchange for products can be seen as the beginning of a monetary system. But this has nowhere resulted in a common system where silver and gold were exchanged for every product. It is still better to accept that a full scale monetary system came into operation only in Persian times. It is not so much the monetary system which had caused the appearance of the nouveau riches, but trade, as the author correctly observes on p. 109. In an appendix the author discussed the Sigû Prayers and various other footnotes, there is also a bibliography. Indexes conclude the study.

Although the author refers here and there to Egyptian material, the importance of this material for this kind of subject is real. One time or another such a study must be made.

The author gives us at the end of his study (pp. 113-115) an evaluation of his results. He points out "that most of the ethical demands are strikingly similar in Mesopotamia and Israel". But while the suffering individual did not disturb the conscience of the community in Mesopotamia, this is not the case in Israel. There individual as well as the multitude worshipped one God. No rival deity was allowed. The Israelite was, thus, bound by the authority and law of one God. And this created a big difference in the approach of Israel overagainst that of Mesopotamia.

This study can be strongly recommended.

F.C. Fensham

Sabatino Moscati - Maria Luisa Uberti, *Scavi al tofet di Tharros. I monumenti lapidei*, 1985, pp. 155 + figures 58 + tables XCVIII. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto per la Civiltà Fenicia e Punica, Roma. N.P.

Since excavations started at Tharros in Sardinia 10 reports were published in *RSF* from 1975 to 1984. For the importance of Tharros cf. Sabatino Moscati, *Fenici e Cartaginesi in Sardegna*, 1968, 159-163. The book discussed here, is concerned with the stone-monuments discovered at the tofet. It is a thorough study taking into account all possible avenues of approach. The authors discuss after an introduction the material for the monuments, viz. the geological classification of the stone, the techniques applied in manufacturing the monuments with ample references to the discoveries at other sites such as Mozia, Nora, Monte Sirai etc., the typology of the sculpture, the iconography and most interesting in this regard is the figurization and the comparison with examples at Sulcis (cf. our discussion in this periodical) and Mozia, the chronology in which the sculpture is placed from the Sixth to the transition of the Fourth and Third Centuries B.C., the epigraphic material, the workshop of the stone, the Phoenician-Punic background where important comparative material is furnished from the whole Mediterranean world under influence of the Phoenicians and finally a number of conclusions are presented. It is of interest that the authors have found no evidence that children buried in the tofet were sacrificed to a god. Child mortality was high and the children buried seem to have died of natural causes (p. 83). The next important part of the book is dedicated to a catalogue of 308 pieces of monuments in stone, drawings of the monuments and photographs of the monuments. It is, thus, clear that we have here a scholarly work of the highest order which takes our knowledge in connection with Phoenician-Punic stone monuments a strong step forward. This work is done by two able scholars well-known for their excellent knowledge in this regard.

It can be recommended without reserve.

F.C. Fensham

Sabatino Moscati, *Le stele di Sulcis. Caratteri e confronti*, 1986, pp. 106 + figures + tables XXXII. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto per la Civiltà Fenicia e Punica, Roma. N.P.

This review must be read in combination with the one on *Scavi al tofet di Tharros*. Prof. Sabatino Moscati, sometimes with the assistance of Maria Luisa Uberti, has enriched our knowledge in connection with Phoenician and Punic sculpture (cf. also Moscati-Uberti, *Scavi a Mozia - Le stele*, 1981). The method applied can be depicted as holistic. Everything in connection with the monument or sculpture is investigated, even the geological origin of the stone used. As result of this important conclusions have been made, e.g. that two sculptures usually ascribed as coming from Nora, can now be on account of the type of stone used, be classified as from the island Sulcis near Sardinia (p. 14). It illustrates the value of this kind of approach.

In this volume the usual broad approach is applied as also in other earlier publications. The author starts off with the geological material and the technique used, he continues with the typology, the figures set in the square, geometrical figures, human figures like the males and females discussing every particular about them, the animal figures (cf. also his earlier publication "Stele sulcitanee con animale passante", *RANL* 36 (1981), 3-8), the chronology in which he places the stelae between the middle of the Sixth century and the end of the Second century B.C.; he also discusses the Phoenician and Punic background in which his remarkable knowledge of the Phoenician world and its Mediterranean setting is displayed, and finally the workshop is discussed. The book is concluded with drawings and a number of photographs.

This book is to be recommended heartily.

F.C. Fensham

Gösta W. Ahlström, *Who were the Israelites?*, 1986, pp. 134. Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, IN, U.S.A. Price: 12,50 U.S. dollars.

This interesting book reminds one immediately of the book written by the Swedish scholar, Alfred Haldar, *Who were the Amorites?*, 1976. Prof. Ahlström tackles in his book some of the vexing problems in connection with the Israelites in the Hebrew Bible. Due to the uncertainty created by the interpretation of the sources, Biblical as well as extra-biblical, one has to enter a minefield of problems, problems sometimes created by modern scholars. The author tries to find his way through all these uncertainties by using a rigid scientific historical method. One has the impression that he has succeeded in giving a more or less satisfactory explanation of most of the thorny problems he has discussed.

The plan of the book is to follow the usage of the name Israelites through from the earliest times up to the Persian period. The result is that the author is convinced that the name Israel was initially used to denote a territory without referring to any ethnic group living therein; then it was applied as a national name which became restricted in post-exilic times to designate those that accepted Ezra's law - finally it became an ideological characterization. In his introduction the author discusses the different views on the origin of the nation Israel and gives a highly critical exposition of the views of Mendenhall and Gottwald. In the chapter "Population Groups and Theories" the author discusses especially the term *ʿapiru*, taking as basis the prisoner of war list of Amenhotep II. Here again the author is critical to the view of Mendenhall. Against the idea of Gottwald that in the forming of the highland communities a retribalization took place in the 13th and 12th centuries, the author presents his own view, viz. that the new hill settlements could be characterized by *bēt 'ab* which is a larger family group within a clan (*mišpāḥā*). In chapter 3 the author takes notice of the latest archaeological work on the transition c.a. 1200 B.C. from Late Bronze to Iron I. According to him "biblical archaeologists have had a hard time finding anything typically Israelite (i.e. different from Canaanite) in the 12th century material culture of ancient Palestine". (p. 35). In chapter IV the author expounds his theory that a territory in the hill country was called Israel in the time of Merenptah, so called in the famous Israel-stele. In chapter 5 the author writes about his hypothesis that the Exodus and the passage through the sea, must be regarded as mythological historiography (pp. 45-55). In the longest chapter (6) of the book the author discusses the peoples of the territory Israel (pp. 57-83). Interesting is his study of the Egyptian term *ḫ3sw yhw* (pp. 59-60). In chapter 7 Israel as a national name is discussed. It is the author's conviction that this name started to become a reality in the time of Saul. Under David and Solomon an international culture developed amongst the peoples of the mountains. After the United Monarchy broke up the northern part, Israel became an independent political unit. In chapter 8 the idea is discussed that Israel became an ideological term. In this a theological dimension is to be detected, viz. the people of Yahweh as the *qahal yisra'el*. After the destruction of Jerusalem the process of the development of the ideological term was intensified.

One may expect that on certain views of the author there will be much discussion and difference of opinion. The originality of his approach cannot be ignored. Because of this, this book can be recommended for further study.

F.C. Fensham

Sergio Ribichini - Paolo Xella, *La terminologia dei tessili di Ugarit*, 1985, pp. 102. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto per la Civiltà Fenicia e Punica, Roma. N.P.

There is a growing tendency to publish a commentary on certain categories of Ugaritic text. The epic material has received exhaustive treatment. But there remain a great number of texts of various other categories which do not receive much attention. This study of Ribichini and Xella is concerned with the terminology of textile material in the Ugaritic texts. In light of the above mentioned this is to be welcomed. In a very important introduction the authors discuss the bare material with interesting remarks on wool and linen, the terminology concerning persons who held themselves busy with the textile material and finally the products fabricated.

The main part of the book is dedicated to the terminology in alphabetic order. All together 78 terms are discussed according to the philological method. One of the problems of the authors is to make sense out of terms encountered only in one text and sometimes in a broken text. One can only admire the thorough investigation dedicated to some obscure term with a very low frequency of usage. It is impossible to go into all the interesting proposals of the authors. To some terms are accorded a longer investigation than to others, quite understandably why. We want to single out the discussions on *mrđt*, *nps* and *ššimt* which are interesting. E.g. *mrđt* has received not long ago an investigation by W. Mayer and his conclusion is that it means "carpet". This is subjected to a rigorous investigation by Xella and he concludes that this term might not necessarily be a carpet, but a kind of cover or bed-cover.

After the initial work done on some of these terms by Heltzer, Loretz and Dietrich, Sanmartín and De Moor, this study by Ribichini and Xella is to be welcomed, because it supplies us with an overall view of this kind of terminology. The selection of texts at the end of the book is also valuable.

It can be recommended for further study.

F.C. Fensham

Wolfgang Richter, *Untersuchungen zur Valenz althebräischer Verben*, I, 'rk, 1985, pp. 180. Münchener Universitätschriften, Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament, 23 Band, Eos Verlag St. Ottilien. Price DM 30.

This grammatical study is a continuation of Prof. Richter's work on Hebrew grammar. With this study he has reached the stage of syntax and semantics. All the scholars who followed Richter's linguistic scientific method, are thankful to see him reaching this stage in his approach. By applying modern linguistic research he makes a methodological study of the valence of the Hebrew verb. He concentrates on the verb 'rk in the Hebrew Bible and Jesus Sirach and as an addendum on its usage in Northwest Semitic. His study of this term in Northwest Semitic is to be welcomed, although, according to his method, he does not succumb to the temptation to apply the philological method of comparison. It is to be granted that from a diachronic standpoint it is very difficult to follow the development of 'rk through from Late Bronze writings to the Hebrew Bible. In his diachronic approach Richter follows for the dating of his sources the results of the literary-critical approach (p. 33). He has, however, problems to fix dates for the material in Psalms and Proverbs, but his main approach seems to be sound.

With his method finer distinctions can be made. It is also obvious that with the tracing of the different grammatical categories to form syntagmata the combinations in which the term 'rk are used, become much clearer. It is Richter's view that the available concordances on the Hebrew Bible and the dictionaries are inadequate in light of modern linguistic research. By using a meta-language the author tries to pinpoint the syntactic and semantic usage as precise as possible. It is now up to scholars to master the



meta-language to follow the author in his exposition of grammatical constructions. On pp. 160-161 he gives an example of a valence-dictionary. This is very interesting in light of his whole study. It seems that in future this kind of approach can be very fruitful for the pinpointing of the grammatical combinations and more important, for a better understanding of a given term.

All in all this study is to be heartily recommended for further study.

F.C. Fensham

A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Label et J. Riaud (ed.), *Hellenica et Judaica*. Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky, 1986, pp. 519. Editions Peeters, Leuven-Paris. Price 2880 FB.

This volume of important studies is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Valentin Nikiprowetzky who died in 1983. During his scholarly career Prof. Nikiprowetzky has enriched the scholarly world with various excellent and original publications. Sometimes with the hand of an artist he has written delightful contributions. He had a wide variety of interests. We want to single out his excellent work on Philo of Alexandria. Prof. Nikiprowetzky had rare knowledge and excellent insight in the Hellenistic world and the part played by Jewish savants in it.

In this *in memoriam* André Caquot and Mireille Hadas-Label wrote about the life of Prof. Nikiprowetzky and give especially attention to his scholarly activities. The first part of contributions by scholars is concerned with Philo, 9 articles in all. The second part is dedicated to Josephus with three articles. The third part has Qumrân as subject also with three contributions. Here we want to single out the excellent article by André Lemaire with the title: "L'enseignement essénien et l'école de Qumrân". The fourth part is concerned with Late Biblical Writings and Pseudepigrapha with six articles. Interesting here are the contributions by Caquot and Schwartz. The fifth part is dedicated to ancient Judaism with five articles. I have found the contribution of Hadas-Label very interesting. The sixth part has Medieval and Modern Judaism as subject with five contributions, the seventh part is concerned with Christianity with four articles and the eighth part with four contributions is dedicated to diverse subjects. The book is concluded with a bibliography of Prof. Nikiprowetzky. It is, however, a pity that this important book has not been furnished with indexes.

This collection of contributions of a wide variety can be heartily recommended for further research.

F.C. Fensham

Herbert Donner, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel und seiner Nachbarn in Grundzügen*, II 1986, pp. 233-511, Grundrisse zum Alten Testament, ATD Ergänzungsreihe 4/2. Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen. NP.

The first volume of this important history of Israel is discussed in *JNSL* XII (1984), pp. 165-166. In the second volume the history is taken from the beginning of the Divided Kingdom up to the Second Jewish Revolt against the Romans which was suppressed in 135 AD. The history from Hellenistic times up to 135 AD is rather written only in outline. The important discussion of this volume is dedicated to Israelite and Judaic history up to the time of Ezra. One of the main achievements of this study is the valuable discussion of the neighbours (Nachbarn) and the interaction between them and Israel and Judah. With a sound approach to the vassalage introduced by the Assyrians and taken over by the Babylonians the author has made very important observations (cf. his remarks on the influence of Assyrian religion, on Judaic religion as result of vassalage, pp. 329 ff.). One can also only endorse the author's views on the profound influence of

Nehemiah and Ezra on the development of later Judaic religion (especially p. 431. Cf. e.g. "Die Epoche der Restauration unter Nehemia und Esra war der Geburtsstunde des Judentums").

In his foreword the author stresses the fact that although much more sources are available than for the earlier period discussed in volume I, these sources do not solve all the problems and sometimes necessitate: "Das wissen wir nicht". The cause of this is that some of the problems are approached with caution and the uncertainty is confessed with candour - and this is to be welcomed. It would be impossible to discuss all the remarks one can make on this excellent work. One example may suffice: The author mentions the twelve kings in the inscription of Shalmeneser III which describes the battle at Qarqar. In later inscriptions "the twelve kings" becomes stereotyped (pp. 262-263). It is, however, important to note that the numeral twelve could have been symbolic from the beginning, a typical Semitic way of expressing the totality of the Syriac Kings. That may explain why Phoenicia (Sidon) is omitted in the initial list and later suddenly appears. Unfortunately here and there the proofreading was not properly done, e.g. on p. 336 "Kultusprostitution" has become "Kulturprostitution" and "assyrischer" "assyrischer".

These two volumes on the history of Israel are major contributions to our knowledge. The author with rare insight and a rigid application of the principles of the science of history has peeled off the thick layer of the religious bias in the Old Testament to present as far as humanly possible the bare facts. Scholars may have problems with some of the results of this study, but they could not ignore it.

This study will remain standard for a long time and can be recommended without reservation.

F.C. Fensham

Walter L. Michel, *Job in the Light of Northwest Semitic*, I, 1987, pp. xviii + 438, Biblical Institute Press, Biblica et Orientalia 42, Rome. Price 44 US dollars.

This is a philological commentary on Job up to the end of chapter 14. The author sets out to the task to give special attention to the numerous remarks of M. Dahood on the Book of Job published in a wide variety of publications. The author even takes into account the remarks of Dahood on the ms. of his commentary and made in private to him. In light of this it is to be expected that in the commentary Ugaritic is profusely used to explain the many difficulties of the language of Job. The author makes use of the method employed by Dahood and his students, although in some cases with some caution. As we know Dahood started shortly before his death to study Eblaite and to use it to explain some problems in the Hebrew Bible and also in the Ugaritic texts. The author takes notice of these proposals.

It is quite understandable that on certain issues discussed by the author there will be disagreement, e.g. his acceptance of Dahood's view that *me'od* sometimes denotes the the divine appellative in the meaning "the Grand one" (pp. 185-186). One can argue that this hunch of Dahood cannot be sustained, because in Akkadian *madum* means "much, plenty" and not "big". (cf. Von Soden, *AHW* II, 573-574) and nowhere a clearcut example can be produced where this term means "big" or "grand". On the other hand many useful remarks are introduced on account of Ugaritic and even Eblaite, e.g. on the use of *rešef* (pp. 114-115) *btlt* for the goddess Anat (pp. 2, 105-106) and on *mt*, the god of death (e.g. pp. 42, 76, 125, 173). The author, by stressing the importance of Canaanite mythology, has made a very useful contribution indeed. It is also interesting that although in some cases progress in solving problems has been made, other instances still defy explanation (cf e.g. the discussion on *mas* in Job 6:14, pp. 141-142). The South African Bible translator Prof. J.D. du Toit said once: "Job doesn't want to speak Afrikaans" referring to the difficult task to translate Job into Afrikaans. But one could more appropriately say: "Job doesn't want to speak Hebrew", because the Northwest Semitic

dialect in which it is written, is definitely not pure Hebrew.

In light of this every contribution in the field of Northwest Semitic to explain the problems of Job is to be welcomed. And in this book we have a major contribution which must be carefully considered by scholars. We can heartily recommend this book for further study and we are looking forward to the publication of volume II.

F.C. Fensham

Maria Giulia Amadasi Guzzo, *Scavi a Mosia - le iscrizioni*, 1986, 105 + figures 14 + tables XV. Collezione di studi Fenici, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Roma. NP.

This is a meticulous study of the Punic texts discovered with the excavations in the tofet of Mozia in Sicily. Some of these texts were already published earlier. But in her study of these texts the author applies a broad approach entailing the philology of the texts, their style and paleography to ascertain their time of origin. She discusses after a short introduction the inscriptions on stelae and on potsherds, the inscriptions with the votive formula which forms the largest part of her study, the onomastics and the chronology. Because of the fixed form of the votive formulae with some minor variations, these inscriptions do not present new lexical material. Very important, however, are the personal names and their composition which is ably discussed under the heading "L'onomastica." Also important are the names of the gods. Obviously Baal is the most important, usually represented with the appellative 'dn. Interesting is that 'dn is furnished in text 25 with the possessive pronoun first person plural 'dnn (p. 32). This is the only text amongst the 40 published in which this trait of personal piety is to be detected. Her study is concluded with an excellent study on the chronology. It consists of two parts. Firstly she tackles the excavation of the strata to come to certain conclusions. Secondly she gives an exhaustive analysis of the paleography, making good use of Peckham's study *The Development of the Late Phoenician Scripts*, 1968. She discusses the difficulties of the script of the inscriptions, especially the fact that various authors worked with the material. After careful observations she holds that the votive texts must be placed from the Sixth to the Fifth Centuries B.C. and the ostraca not before the Sixth and not after the Fourth Century (cf. pp. 93-95). This book is concluded with a valuable reproduction of the inscriptions and photo-material of the texts.

For any scholar interested in Phoenician and Punic and in the paleography of the scripts this study is strongly recommended.

F.C. Fensham

Cyrus H. Gordon - Gary A. Rendsburg - Nathan H. Winter, *Eblaitica: Essays on the Archives and Eblaite Language*, I, 1987 pp. 145. A publication of the Center for Ebla Research at New York University, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake IN 46590, U.S.A. Price 22.50 dollars.

Eblaite studies are beginning to flourish. With publications like the journal *Studi Eblaiti* and source publications like *Materiali epigrafici di Ebla and Archivi reali di Ebla-Testi* the curtain is beginning to lift to give us a glimpse of the texts discovered and the almost insurmountable problems involved. Slowly and sometimes rapidly vexing problems are solved, but much remains to be done. It is, thus, to be welcomed that a Center for Ebla Research is operating at New York University with the wellknown Prof. Cyrus H. Gordon at the head. We owe the publication of this book to the work of the Center and the promise of more to come.

Various scholars have contributed to this book. Gordon writes a very interesting introduction with some important remarks on the morphology of Eblaite. It is of interest that certain features of Eblaite can be related to Old Akkadian and some others to Northwest and South Semitic (p.15). Gone are the days when Eblaite was regarded as Old Canaanite or the like. In a second contribution he makes a number of interesting remarks on Eblaitica comparing it with some material from Biblical Hebrew. Another short article of Gordon must be seen in conjunction with contributions by Constance Wallace and Gary A. Rensburg. It concerns *wm* - in Eblaite, Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew. The article of Rensburg is a full representation of this phenomenon. It is shown that *wm* - must be regarded as the conjunction with enclitic *m*. This approach solves many a problem in the Old Testament, e.g. in Neh. 5:11 where *ûme'at* of the MT must be vocalised *ûma-'et*, the conjunction *w* + *m* encliticum + nota accusativi (cf. Constance Wallace p. 31). In the important article of Rensburg he also discusses the function of *wm*-. He is of opinion that it emphasizes what follows (p. 39), but one wonders if it is not used to indicate a final clause as Rensburg has correctly observed (p. 40) and nothing more. Robert R. Stieglitz writes about Ebla and Dilmun in which on account of the presence of the Dilmun shekel at Ebla the trade relationship between Ebla and Dilmun is stressed.

Four very important contributions are written by Alfonso Archi, one of the most important exponents of Eblaite studies. In his two longer contributions "Reflections on the System of weights from Ebla" and "The Sign-list of Ebla" Archi shows his vast knowledge of Eblaite studies and also contemporary material from Mesopotamia and Northern Syria. His study on the weights is a masterpiece and very important for further study in the trade of the Ancient Near East. In the two shorter articles on "Gifts for a Princess" and "More on Ebla and Kish" the same mastering of the sources is visible. The relationship of Ebla and Kish and the independent development of both cities is very interesting. The last contribution of M.J. Geller is also of great interest and should merit further research on his assertion. According to him Ebla was a satellite of Mari and not a city with a large political sphere of influence. His arguments are mainly built on the terms LUGAL for the Kings of Mari and EN for the overlords of Ebla.

This book is excellently published by the publishers with clear photographs of the cuneiform material at the exceptionally low price of 22.50 dollars.

This book can be recommended without reservation.

F.C. Fensham