

# JOURNAL OF NORTHWEST SEMITIC LANGUAGES

VOLUME 20/2

1994

EDITORS:

F E DEIST  
P A KRUGER

J COOK  
I CORNELIUS (reviewd)

*at the University of Stellenbosch  
South Africa*

Editorial Board:

T Mafico (Atlanta), W T W Cloete (Western Cape)  
W Gross (Tübingen), S Mittmann (Tübingen)  
P J Nel (Bloemfontein), J P J Olivier (Stellenbosch)  
J J M Roberts (Princeton), A van der Kooij (Leiden)  
C H J van der Merwe (Stellenbosch), H F van Rooy (Potchetstroom)

Published by Department of Ancient Near Eastern Studies  
University of Stellenbosch

# CONTENTS

House rules for articles submitted	iii
Carroll, R P, On representation in the bible: An <i>Ideologiekritik</i> approach	1-15
Tropper, J, Das ugaritische Konsonanteninventar	17-59
Naudé, J A, Towards a typology of Qumran Hebrew	61-78
Van der Merwe, C H J & Wnckler, W K, Training tomorrow's translators in the context of today's translaions	79-109
Adair, J, A Methodology for using the versions in the Textual Criticism of the Old Testament	111-142
Swanepoel, C, Orality and literariness: The interface of values	143-154
Deist, F E, Orature, "editure", literature – reflections on orality, literariness and First Testament literature	155-163
Niehr, H, Zur Frage der Filiation des Gottest Ba'al in Ugarit	165-177
Althann, R, Approaches to prepositions in Northwest Semitic Studies	179-191
Cornelius, I, The visual representation of the world in the ancient Near East and the Bible	193-218
Book reviews	219-223
Book received	225
Addresses of Contributors	227

*Robert P Carroll (University of Glasgow)*

## **ON REPRESENTATION IN THE BIBLE: AN IDEOLOGIEKRITIK APPROACH**

### **ABSTRACT**

*One approach to reading the bible along Ideologiekritik lines is to analyze the text in terms of representation. Representation, the kinds of discourse and language used to represent matters in the text, is itself subject to scrutiny because it is a construction of the writers of the text. Commentators who paraphrase or repeat the representational discourses in the Bible are failing in their duty to produce a critical reading of the text. A prime example discussed is Hosea 1.2, where the reading of the text is framed by extra-textual assumptions of a cultural imperialist nature and 'copy-cat writing of tired textbooks' to produce an ideological interpretation of Hosea.*

*He felt with a smart of dejection that the man to whom he was speaking was a countryman of Ben Jonson. He thought: - the language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words home, Christ, ale, master, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language.*

Stephen Dedalus (Joyce 1964:189)

I'm not bad. I'm just drawn that way.

Jessica Rabbit (ZemECKIS 1988)

*Josef Tropper (Berlin)*

## **DAS UGARITISCHE KONSONANTENINVENTAR**

### **ABSTRACT:**

*The Ugaritic cuneiform alphabet in its longer version consists of 27 plus 3 signs. On condition that each of these 27 signs corresponds to a consonantal phoneme, Ugaritic would have an inventory of 27 consonants. The present examination of the consonantal system of Ugaritic proves that Ugaritic has indeed preserved not only bilabials, dentals, sibilants, velars and laryngals, i.e. consonant groups attested in all Semitic languages, but also the Semitic interdentals (/θ/, /θ/, /ð/) and uvulars (/ħ/ and /ʕ/). Besides there are indirect orthographic indications of the existence of the emphatic lateral /š/ in at least some Ugaritic texts, whereas no indications of the voiceless lateral /ś/ can be found.*

*Furthermore the present article shows that the consonants of the sibilantic triad, /s/, /š/ and /z/ (but not /š/), were pronounced as affricates ([<sup>t</sup>s], [<sup>t</sup>s<sup>2</sup>] and [d<sub>z</sub>]) in Ugaritic and that roots containing resonants, especially /r/, present specific problems, since resonants may influence and change the quality of adjacent fricatives, especially interdental and postvelars.*

*J A Naudé (University of the Orange Free State)*

## **TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF QUMRAN HEBREW**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Various language typologies, each based on different properties of a language, have been proposed in the literature. A recent development (in this connection) is the so-called principles and parameters approach of Chomskyan generative grammar. In this approach the initial state of language represents a system of innate formal principles with associated open parameters, the values of which are fixed by linguistic experience. The way in which the parameters are set determines the direction in which the grammar of a particular language will develop, that is, it determines the specific grammatical properties of that language in its mature state. The aim of this paper is to identify one of the parameters that is associated with the manifestation of clausal subjects, and to determine the value of this parameter for Qumran Hebrew. It will be argued that the way in which this parameter is set can account for a wide array of grammatical properties of Qumran Hebrew.*

*C H J van der Merwe, Eric Samson Chair for Biblical Hebrew Grammar,  
Department of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, and W K Winckler,  
Department of General Linguistics, both of the University of  
Stellenbosch*

## **TRAINING TOMORROW'S BIBLE TRANSLATORS IN THE CONTEXT OF TODAY'S TRANSLATIONS**

### **ABSTRACT**

*A partial outline is given of Gideon Toury's approach to the study of translation. The focus is on four of the key factors of this approach: existing translations, weakly adequate translations, translational shifts, and translational norms. The kind of analysis made possible by this approach is illustrated on the basis of the New Afrikaans Bible's translation of Genesis 22:1-14, 19. The overall aim of the paper is to illustrate how the performance of Touryan analyses of existing translations can help to foster the*

*many-sided sensitivity and informed self-criticism which the task of translating the Bible demands.*

*J R Adair (SBL, Atlanta) '*

## **A METHODOLOGY FOR USING THE VERSIONS IN THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Because of the monolithic character of almost all of the primary(i.e, Hebrew) witnesses to the OT, the secondary witnesses (LXX, P, T, V) play an important role in textual criticism. In order to use the versions in a methodologically sound manner, a critical text of the version itself must first be determined. Second, a quantitative measurement of the various components of the translation technique of each version is required to present a characterization of the version that is as complete and accurate as possible. Third, the textual critic can attempt to retrovert the version back into Hebrew. Finally, the retroverted Hebrew text that is produced may be used, with care, alongside the MT and other primary witnesses to the text.*

*C F Swanepoel (University of South Africa)*

## **ORALITY AND LITERARINESS: THE INTERFACE OF VALUES'**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The contemporary development of narratology significantly drew from Propp's structural analysis of the Russian fairytale. Paradoxically fairytales, folklore or oral literature at large, only marginally feature in the programmes of modern literature departments. Oral and written storytelling are two modes of literature which share vast areas of creative competence. As fields of literary enquiry their scientific insights can likewise be compared and shared.*

*This article looks at the prospects from an African literature point of view. Jakobson's communication theory is taken as basis for exploring the concept 'literariness' and the comparison is with examples of most forms of oral literature in Southern Sotho. The results are often surprising.*

*F E Deist (University of Stellenbosch)*

## **ORATURE, "EDITURE", LITERATURE - REFLECTIONS ON ORALITY, LITERARINESS ANP FIRST TESTAMENT LITERATURE**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The article reflects on areas in Ancient Near Eastern Studies that may benefit from an interdisciplinary co-operation with scholars from the field of African oral literature, for instance, the cultural function of oral literature, the influence of social change on literature, the effect of Verschriftlichung on the shape of orature, scholarly views of the nature of biblical Hebrew literature, and the definition of oral literary forms.*

*Herbert Niehr (Tubingen)*

## **ZUR FRAGE DER FILIATION DES GOTTES BA'AL IN UGARIT\***

### **ABSTRACT**

*Die Bezeichnung des Gottes Ba'al als Sohn der Götter El und Dagan ist aus den Gegebenheiten der ugaritischen Mythologie nicht zu erklären. Vielmehr ist auf die hurritische Mythologie nordsyrie§"zu rekurreren, in der Kumarbi als Vater des Wetter gottes TeSSup auftritt. Die in Nordsyrien und Ugarit nachweisbare Gleichsetzung von Kumarbi und Dagan zog auch ein Vater-Sohn-Verhdltnis von Dagan und dent in Ugarit mit TeSSup identifizierten Ba'al nach sich. Gleichzeitig wurden auch in Ugarit El und Kumarbi miteinander identifiziert. Die Verdmnung Kumar bis durch seinen Sohn, den Wettergott TeSSup, findet ihr Pendant in Ugarit in der Verdrängung Els durch seinen Sohn, den Wetter gott Ba'al*

*Robert Althann (Pontifical Biblical Institute)*

## **APPROACHES TO PREPOSITIONS IN NORTHWEST SEMITIC STUDIES**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Renewed interest in Hebrew prepositions was sparked off by the discovery that in Ugaritic there was no preposition *mn* for which *b* and *I* had to do duty. Some then tried to explain certain uses of *b* and *I* in the Hebrew Bible along the lines of 'interchangeability'. This led to much discussion. Today it is argued that prepositions should be regarded as part of a system and not be treated merely individually. It is the intention of this article to consider the methodology employed by some of the participants in the discussion.*

*Izak Cornelius (University of Stellenbosch)*

## **THE VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE WORLD IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND THE HEBREW BIBLE**

*To Ferdinand Deist on his fiftieth birthday (9 August 1994)*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The Hebrew Bible reflects the cosmology of ancient times, but most modern visual representations of the so-called 'biblical world' err in representing natural phenomena as they are understood in modern terms. These should be reconstructed from the ancient Near Eastern sources themselves. Ancient Near Eastern iconography supplies the modern researcher with such material. Ancient Near Eastern visual representations of the world are discussed and compared with concepts in the Hebrew Bible. It is concluded that the ancient Near Eastern mentality perceived phenomena such as the sea, heaven and sun not as natural entities, but as numinous powers. The idea of the tripartite world (heaven, earth and underworld or subterrestrial water) persists in all ancient Near Eastern cultures. The Hebrew Bible contains some of these ideas, e.g. the winged sun, the pillars of the earth and the chaotic ocean, but gave an interpretatio Israelitica to them. YHWH is the one who created with wisdom and controls the powers of nature. Finally, a modern visual representation of the biblical world is proposed.*

## BOOK REVIEWS

Matthews, V H & Benjamin, D C 1993. *Social world of Ancient Israel 1250-587 BCE*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers. pp. 307, indices. ISBN 0-913573-89-2

For a long time there has been a need for Matthews and Benjamin's kind of book. At least in the historicist paradigm of interpretation it would be a grave error to read biblical literature as if it were of modern, Western origin. But even those who subscribe to a post-structuralist or deconstructionist paradigm would find this kind of book useful, since, in order to say anything at all about a particular work's meaning, one has to, at least momentarily, curb the process of deferring by constructing a "frame" for the discussion. And few scholars would doubt that the cultural world of a work constitutes a necessary component of such a frame.

Since Pedersen and De Vaux nothing really comprehensive has been published on the cultural world of the First Testament. Useful as they are, these earlier works are not based on a recognized theoretical framework. This is especially true of De Vaux's *Institutions*. Incidentally, Matthews and Benjamin, like Pedersen, employ the notion of power as a colligatory concept for the description of ancient Israelite society. The definitions of the notion differs considerably, though. Whereas Pedersen's concept derives from the philosophy of culture Matthews & Benjamin borrowed their definition from anthropology. After a brief introduction to "the Bible and anthropology" (pp. ix-xxiii) and a useful section on ancient Israelite society (pp. 1-5), they discuss, first, a few institutions of village life and then of life under the monarchy. The institutions of Israelite social life are discussed under the following headings:

*village politics* (the father and the mother)

*village economics* (the farmer, the herder, the midwife)

*village diplomacy* (the host and the stranger, the chief, the legal guardian)

*village law* (the elder, the widow)

*village education* (the wise and the fool).

The institutions of the state are discussed under the headings:

*state politics* (the monarch and the virgin)

*state economics* (the priest and the slave)

*state diplomacy* (the prophet)

*state law* (the lawgiver)

*state education* (the storyteller).



The book contains a very useful 52 page bibliography as well as indices of concepts, authors and biblical references.

The discussion of some of the institutions are really useful, such as the father and mother, the farmer, the chief, the elder, etc. Several of them are, for me, problematic, though. I fail to see the relevancy of, for instance, the midwife, the widow, the virgin, and the slave as *social institutions*. One of the reasons for my difficulty to understand these categories as social institutions (compared to, for instance, priests and parents) is the absence in the book of an explicit cultural or social anthropological *model* with reference to which the authors identified and in terms of which they interpreted social institutions. For instance, according to which anthropological model can one classify widowhood as a social institution (p. 133)? The authors seem to have had some trouble in producing an argument for an *institutional* position for the host and the stranger (pp. 82ff). What is presented in this chapter as "village diplomacy" seems more like the description of *custom* than of institutions. A last example: I fail to understand the logic of discussing name-giving, clothing and physical appearance (pp. 145-148) under the heading "village education." Even if one could argue with the authors that name-giving has to do with assigning "social labels" and clothing with status, education involved much more than merely preparing children to fit their social labels. A clearly stated anthropological model would have made it much easier to follow and evaluate their line of argument. It would, for instance, have helped the reader to understand why the authors chose to focus on so-called institutions, while the *social life* of a people or a group involves much more than mere institutions. They may, for example, hold particular world views, subscribe to particular values, hold specific religious views, etc. all of which have a bearing on their social life. Similarly the environment and climate they live in have, like the available resources, an influence on their social life.

A second fairly basic problem concerns the assumption underlying this study regarding the status of Israel as a people. In the light of studies by Engelken (*B N* 52:47-63), Skjeggstad (*SJT* 6:159-186) and Lemche (*Nielsen Festschrift* 1993:76-89) and others before them a study like this should at least consider the question whether Israel may be treated as a separate *ethnic* entity or whether Israelites should be seen as a social class in *Syro-Palestinian* society as a whole.

Closely linked to the previous point is a third concern. The authors tend not to distinguish between various ages in the history of Israel or between the *literary* picture of Israel painted in the Hebrew Bible and the *historical* Israel. It is a well known fact that Israel underwent significant social changes between the 9th and the 7th centuries and again in the sixth century. The book, however, treats the group as a static entity. It is also a well-known fact that the final form of the Hebrew Bible dates from Roman times and that it had undergone various reworkings during the Neo-Babylonian, Persian and Hellenistic Ages. This fact, is however, not reflected in the book.

Apart from these more theoretical objections I have a number of reservations about certain customs which the authors suppose had existed in Israelite society. What follow are a few examples from the section on village culture that may serve as an indication of the kind of questions raised by the book. Is it really true that Israelite fathers "negotiated" through *midwives* with the divine assembly for a child (p. 68)? And even if this could be proved to have been the case, why would a child, whose life had been negotiated with the divine assembly, be considered stillborn until its biological father "adopted" it (p. 10-11)? The authors supply no biblical references for these "customs". In the case of the alleged adoption they refer to the Qur'an and two authors, one of whom (Wolff 1984), has unfortunately been omitted from the bibliography. The texts cited on pp. 72-73, apart from not illustrating adoption by the *father*, do not prove the existence of an adoption *rite*, but rather merely present *literary/folkloristic* explanations for names given long ago to their babies by the ancestors. In the matter of the social standing of the mother (pp. 23-24) I had the feeling that the authors "protested too much" - perhaps to defend the Bible? "... the world of the Bible may ... not be liberated, but it is liberating" (p. 23). The fact is that, in patriarchal societies, even though functions are distributed in a complementary way, institutions are structured *hierarchically* and authority functions top-down. In this context the worth of an individual (e.g. a mother) depends on the *function* assigned to him/her by the system and not by his/her position in the hierarchy. The existence of sacred prostitution (p. 29) is another custom that is at the least debatable, while the authors' explanation for the Israelite prohibition against prostitution, namely to distinguish subsistence culture from the influence of surplus cultures, sounds to me somewhat far-fetched. Whether the custom of "holy war" should be rationalized in terms of a deterrent to violence (p. 98) is another open question. Personally I prefer Liverani's cosmological explanation for the ancient Near Eastern philosophy of war to the one presented here. Further, if the tribe was primarily "an army at war" that did not concern itself with food production and procreation (p. 97) and if it was the *clan* that concerned itself with questions of inheritance (p. 9), it seems strange that the *tribe* would be responsible for appointing a legal guardian to look after the property of a man who died without an heir (p. 111). It is equally debatable whether the "foolish women" of Proverbs 7-9 may be understood to have included wives that could not bear children (p. 133) and whether prostitutes shared the same state of liminality as the widow, the orphan and the poor (p. 133). While various laws and admonitions instruct citizens to have empathy for the widow, the orphan and the poor, there is no law protecting prostitutes. If they shared the same status of liminality, this would have been a strange ruling.

There is no question about the importance of this kind of contribution to biblical scholarship. We badly need books on the social life in ancient Syro-

Palestine. The reservations expressed and criticisms leveled above should therefore not be seen as cynical comments. On the contrary, they are intended as a small contribution to a pioneering work on an important branch of Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

Ferdinand E Deist  
University of Stellenbosch

Simian-Yofre, H 1992. *El desierto de los dioses. Theología e Historia en el libro de Oseas*. Cordoba: Ediciones el Almendro. pp. 283. ISBN 84 8005 007 1.

Dieser Kommentar zum Hoseabuch aus der Feder des bekannten Alttestamentlers vom Päpstlichen Bibelinstitut in Rom eröffnet eine spanische Kommentarreihe, die dem Genus eine interessante neue Variante abgewinnt. Angesiedelt "am Schnittpunkt von Kommentaren und Monographien" (17), widmet der Band etwa zwei Drittel seiner Umfangs der fortlaufenden Erläuterung und den Rest einem systematischen Aufriß der Theologie des Hoseabuches. Ein zusammenfassendes Literaturverzeichnis sowie Indizes für Stichwörter, biblische Namen, zitierte Autoren und hebräische Wörter sind beigegeben.

Nicht nur der Aufbau, sondern auch der Inhalt überschreitet den Rahmen des Gewohnten. In der fortlaufenden Kommentierung (überschrieben: "lectura") sind die üblichen Techniken wie Erläuterungen zu Text und Übersetzung oder Sacherklärungen stark beschnitten; dafür treten Strukturbeobachtungen und ausgiebige semantische Studien in den Vordergrund. Wenn nötig, wird eigens in literaturwissenschaftliche Betrachtungsweisen eingeführt, wie etwa die Theorie der Allegorie. Infolgedessen sind die Anforderungen an die Leser auf sprachlichem und theoretischem Gebiet nicht gering. Es handelt sich also keineswegs um ein allgemeinverständliches Werk. Positiv berührt überall die hohe literarische Sensibilität in der Tradition des großen spanischen Exegeten Luis Alonso-Schökel.

Die theologische Synthese im zweiten Teil ("interpretaciones") ordnet den Stoff unter drei Überschriften: "Persönliche Erfahrung und prophetische Botschaft", "Religionskritik" und "Das Bild Gottes gegenüber seinem Volk". Ausschlaggebende Weichenstellungen vollziehen sich hier wie auch sonst auf literarkritischer Ebene: Simian-Yofre hält das Hoseabuch für weitgehend authentisch und rechnet nur mit einem kleinen Anteil jüngerer Zusätze. Von einer deuteronomistischen Redaktion ist nicht die Rede. Selbst Passagen wie 2, 1-3 sollen Hoseas Feder entstammen. Ganz gegen den Trend der deutschsprachigen Forschung betrachtet Simian-Yofre die Belege von בִּירָה in 6,7; 8,1 als authentisch und findet die Vorstellung eines "Bundes" zwischen YHWH und Israel bereits bei Hosea. Wie ein separater Anhang darlegt, wird die verbreitete These einer nachträglichen Adaption auf Juda akzeptiert, jedoch in erheblich eingeschränkter Form: die meisten Erwähnungen Judas

sollen bereits auf Hosea selbst zurückgehen. Dementsprechend findet sich in Hos 1-3 der Niederschlag persönlicher Erfahrungen Hoseas und keineswegs literarische Fiktion. Beeindruckt von den Arbeiten H Balz-Cochois', sieht sich auch Simian-Yofre in der Lage, eine Art Eheroman Hoseas zu rekonstruieren, der tiefe Einblicke in die individuelle Psyche des Propheten gestattet. Am Beginn steht Hosea als herrsch- und eigensüchtiger Patriarch mit fanatischen Zügen da, "ein frommer Jahwist, der gleichwohl YHWH in einen Baal verwandelt hat" (186). Die Krise einer Beziehung zu Gomer ist Ausdruck beschädigten Gottesbildes. In den Erfahrungen mit Gomer läutert sich Hoseas Gottesbild: Er lernt, daß YHWH nicht einfach als Gebieter Israels gefürchtet, sondern als "Gatte" geliebt werden will. Die Religionskritik Hoseas zeigt für Simian-Yofre säkularisierende, entmythologisierende Züge; entfaltet wird diese These aufgrund einer Dichotomie zwischen Jahwismus und zeitgenössischen kanaanäischen Religionen, in der letztere mit großer Entschiedenheit als Funktionalisierung des Göttlichen verstanden werden.

Man wünscht der Kommentarreihen viele interessierte Leser. Sie wird der Suche nach zeitgemäßen Formen der Kommentarliteratur fruchtbare Impulse gegeben und die Diskussion um Recht und Tragweite neuerer literaturwissenschaftlicher Betrachtungsweisen befruchten.

Hermann-Josef Stipp  
University of Stellenbosch