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University of Stellenbosch
Private Bag X1, Matieland, ZA-7602
SOUTH AFRICA
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Alberto Soggin (University of Rome)

THE EQUALITY OF HUMANKIND FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CREATION STORIES IN GENESIS 1:26-30 AND 2:9, 15, 18-24

ABSTRACT

Genesis 1 and 2 both agree on the equality of humankind without any distinction of race. Actually the very concept of race is absent from the creation stories. Gen 9:20-27, although unclear in many details, refer to the peoples surrounding Israel and have therefore something totally different in mind. In Gen 1 man and woman together form one human being. In Gen 2 the approach is different but the result the same: man alone is nothing. The use of with God as agent excludes any inferiority of the woman, against what has often been stated (starting from St. Paul).

Z Kallai (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

"DAN WHY ABIDES HE BY SHIPS" – AND THE RULES OF HISTORIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

The most pressing problem concerning the characterisation of elements in Genesis–Numbers as being of Deuteronom(ist)ic origin concerns the search for well-founded criteria. Reliable arguments can only be based on meticulous analysis of the linguistic data of a text. This means that a detailed and comparative investigation into the vocabulary, style and compositional schemes of a pericope is necessary in order to relate it to the Deuteronom(ist)ic literature. In the work of Erhard Blum, however, a rigorous rejection of a linguistic analysis of the biblical text in order to substantiate or to deny its proto-Deuteronomic or Deuteronomistic character can be found. Therefore, in the present contribution, the necessity of linguistic criteria in this matter will be accentuated in confrontation with Blum's contention.

Yehoshua Gitay (University of Cape Town)

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ABSTRACT

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Bénédicte Lemmelijn (KU Leuven)

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN DOING OLD TESTAMENT TEXT-CRITICAL RESEARCH?

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing scholarly interest in textual criticism since the discoveries of the Dead Sea scrolls, one can observe that literary studies on biblical pericopes have not given enough attention to text-critical matters, and when they do, it is often in a methodologically incorrect manner. Moreover, there is a lack of clarity as to the theoretical aim and task of textual criticism, and this especially with respect to the discussion about the eventual existence and reconstruction of a so-called 'Urtext'.

Eep Talstra (Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam)

TENSE, MOOD, ASPECT AND CLAUSE CONNECTIONS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW.

A TEXTUAL APPROACH

ABSTRACT

The question whether the verbal system of classical Hebrew is based on categories of time or on categories of aspect limits the field of research to only clause-level categories.

This paper proposes a larger field of research by using the following line of argumentation:

1. *To make a clear distinction between an approach based on clause-level grammar and one based on text-level grammar (§ 2).*
2. *To perform an analysis of the verbal forms of an entire text in terms both of text-grammatical and of clause-grammatical categories (§ 3.1).*
3. *To propose a clear ordering of grammatical observations and conclusions: from categories of text-grammar to categories of clause-grammar and next to categories of a more functional or pragmatic type (§ 3.2).*

For example, 'domain' and 'perspective' are categories that organise the 'world of the text', whereas 'time reference', 'actio' and 'aspect' are clause-level categories that connect statements made in the text to human experiences in the 'real world' addressed by the text.

The discussion of exegesis and translation of Joshua 23 is taken as an example of procedures of the linguistic analysis proposed.

Josef Tropper (Humboldt-Universität, Berlin)

LEXIKOGRAPHISCHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM BIBLISCH-ARAMÄISCHEN

ABSTRACT

The present article discusses questions of etymology, semantics, morphology and syntax of selected Biblical-Aramaic lexemes. This is being done in critical dialogue with fascicle 5 of HAL, the most recent German-speaking dictionary of Aramaic.

J Barrie Evans (Christian Reformed World Missions, Guinea)

DOES BLOOD CRY OUT? CONSIDERATIONS IN GENERATING THE COGNITIVE ENVIRONMENT

ABSTRACT

A commonly advocated 'dynamic' approach to translation claims that meaning is all-important and that the linguistic form of the source text is of no consequence in translation. This begs two questions: first "what is meaning?" and second "in what way is meaning mediated by form?" This paper proposes that a linguisticly sound approach to translation needs to be based on a theory of interpretation. Similar to Gutt (1991), the paper uses a recently developed theory of interpretation, namely Relevance Theory, to investigate these two questions in the context of Genesis 4:10. Relevance Theory claims that utterance interpretation, and therefore meaning, results from the inferential interaction of a decoded utterance and the 'cognitive environment' of the hearer or reader, which is continually being updated by the interpreted utterances. The paper suggests that for successful communication to take place the translator should therefore be concerned about the way his translation is contributing to the hearer's 'cognitive environment', and that such a concern requires that he pay attention not only to what is said but also to the way something is said.

Dominic Rudman (King's College, London)

QOHELET'S USE OF לפני

ABSTRACT

Qohelet uses the preposition לפני in both its temporal sense and a spatial one in which the context is of the subject acting "before" an authority figure. The translators of LXX and Vg felt that Qohelet used לפני temporally in 1:10, 16; 2:7, 9; 4:16. Their interpretation of 4:16, in which Qohelet uses the phrase היה לפני, is disputed by most modern commentators on contextual grounds, however. The phrase היה לפני also occurs in 1:16; 2:7, 9, in a royal context similar to that of 4:16, where modern commentators follow the Versions and interpret temporally despite their reservations about similar hermeneutical problems arising therefrom. An examination of idioms in the Hebrew Bible involving the preposition לפני reveal that the verbs עמד, הלך and

היה *are all attested to with the preposition* לפני *in the sense of serving/being subject to a king. The royal context in which the expression* היה לפני *occurs in 1:16; 2:7, 9; 4:16 therefore supports a spatial, rather than temporal, interpretation.*

Dirk Büchner (University of Durban-Westville)

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CAMP: THE HALAKHIC BACKGROUND TO CHANGES IN THE SEPTUAGINT LEVITICUS, WITH REFERENCE TO TWO QUMRAN MANUSCRIPTS

ABSTRACT

In this paper I will indicate that by considering the data presented by the total evidence from Qumran, one cannot, as has been a very popular practice until recently, simply put down additions or omissions of a text to haplography due to homoioarchton, for instance. I shall try to show that an addition appearing in a number of texts was a deliberate addition and motivated by exegetical considerations apparent also in the Jewish commentaries.

A question that arises from this particular addition is whether the Qumran, Alexandrian and Samaritan communities could have regarded themselves as ideal communities true to the period in the desert vis-à-vis mainstream (Pharisaic) Judaism in Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period.

Douglas Lawrie (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)

TELLING OF(F) PROPHETS: NARRATIVE STRATEGY IN 1 KINGS 18:1-19:18

ABSTRACT

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purposefully shaped as a narrative unit with a specific rhetorical intent. As a result the main character, Elijah, becomes the target of subtle irony. By implication the more fanatical aspects of the prophetic tradition are gently criticised.

Hermann-Josef Stipp (University of Stellenbosch)

LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF THE MASORETIC EDITION OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH:

AN UPDATED INDEX

ABSTRACT

*There is ongoing debate on the relationship of the Masoretic and Alexandrian editions of the Book of Jeremiah. The following list presents 37 linguistic units (lexemes, phrases, and grammatical constructions) that only occur in the readings (mostly surpluses) particular to the Masoretic recension. Altogether, Jer*MT *contains more than 130 cases of this diction, which may be termed the pre-Masoretic idiolect. This material appears to pose a major challenge to theories favouring the priority of the Masoretic edition over the Alexandrian one.*

Julie Claassens (University of Stellenbosch)

THEME AND FUNCTION IN THE JEPHTHAH NARRATIVE

ABSTRACT

It is suggested in this article that theme and function have a close relation in Hebrew narratives. Some suggestions regarding the function of the Jephthah narrative within its society are made. It is shown that the Jephthah narrative could have two different themes, when read within diverse literary contexts. In view of the different themes of the narrative, it is suggested that the narrative had the function of (1) instructing people and (2) serving as anti-monarchic literature.

Izak Cornelius (University of Stellenbosch)

SOME PAGES FROM THE RECEPTION HISTORY OF GENESIS 3: THE VISUAL ARTS

ABSTRACT

Gen 3 has a long history of reception. In this regard the visual arts reflect that artists are more than illustrators, but also function as interpreters. Especially interesting is the way in which the serpent *was understood and consequently represented visually. The serpent was shown as a reptile, sometimes standing on its tail, but also with the head of a female. At another stage, the serpent became a monster and finally the Devil himself. The tale of Eden has been adopted in two other contexts, namely the Eve versus Mary typology and crucifixion scenes reflecting a reading of Gen 3:15 as a* protoevangelium.

Jimmy R Adair (Scholars Press, Atlanta)

TC - A JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL TEXTUAL CRITICISM: A MODEL FOR SUCCESSFULL ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

ABSTRACT

This note is intended to provide information on a relatively newly founded, and quite successful, project in electronic publishing. TC is a professional electronic endeavour which is related to an academic discussion list called tc-list. TC has laudable goals and has a number of advantages compared to print journals, the most prominent being that it provides an opportunity to publish research results much quicker than traditional journals.

BOOK REVIEWS

Lozachmeur, H (ed.) 1995. *Présence arabe dans le croissant fertile avant l'Hégire.* (Actes de la table ronde internationale Paris, 13 Novembre 1993). Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations. pp. 148. ISBN 286538 2540.

The objective of the "round table" of the *Semitic Studies* unit of the CNRS was to reveal what is known about these pre-Islamic Arabs who, in the ancient Near East, kept close to other Semitic peoples about whose civilisations we are better informed. The twelve papers in French can be grouped as follows:

Arab presence in Syria

Arnaud outlines some themes on traces of "Arabs" in the Syrian texts from the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC until the Neo-Assyrian time. First millennium documentation is characterised by extrinsic evidence: the name of the Arabs is mentioned in all the cuneiform letters, while second millennium documentation shows the exact opposite characteristics. Arnaud, a pioneer on the study of the Emar texts, offers several examples to show that they, aware of the fact that they did not speak Babylonian, spoke a language that can be linked with South Arabian and Ethiopic. With regard to the extension of this vernacular, he refers to Palmyra.

Gawlikowski discusses the Arabs in the urban territory of Tadmar (Palmyra) a millennium later. Palmyra, an oasis on the trade route in Eastern Syria, included an important part of the Syrian desert and had strong ties with the nomad chiefs in order to protect passing caravans. The Nabataeans, a kingdom north of Arabia with Petra as capital and multilingual (Aramaic and Arabic dialects) are often referred to in the papers and were present in Palmyra where Safaitic (South-Arabian) inscriptions were found.

Finally, F Israel discusses Arabic onomastics in the inscriptions of Syria and Palestine: the termination *waw* and the formal structure of proper nouns. He concludes that there was a formal continuity in pre-Islamic northern Arabic onomastics.

Arab presence in Palestine

Puech shows that the Nabataeans, regularly indicated in Jewish sources as Arabs, spoke an Aramaic dialect with the persistence of Arabisms. The author concludes that the Nabataean, Aramaic and Greek papyri found in the archives of Babata and others, discovered in "The Cave of Letters" of the Wadi Khabra/Nahal Hever, contribute to a better knowledge of this part of the province of Arabia at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century AD.

Although originating from Palestine, the contribution of H Rouillard-Bonraisin is of a completely different nature. He claims that if the Fertile Crescent stops where the Arabian-Syrian desert begins, then the majority of Biblical allusions to the Arabs should be excluded since our texts are chiefly concerned with the tribes and places of the Arabian peninsula. The author points out to what extent Biblical theology of the 5th century BC sheds light on the religious practices of the ancient Arabs.

Arab presence in Arabia

Lemaire deals with ancient Aramaic inscriptions of Teima (Biblical Tema). The presence of Aramaic inscriptions at Teima, although surprising, becomes evident in the light of the geographical-historical context which Lemaire sets out. This gives an example of Aramaic acculturation at a large oasis in North Arabia in the 2nd half of the first millennium BC.

M C A MacDonald reflects on the Saracens, the inscription of Rawwafa and the Roman army. We know that before Islam, the term "Saracen" was used by non-Arab peoples of the Middle East for Arabs; after the establishment of Islam the term was usually synonymous with Muslim. The origin of the word is uncertain. The author considers four possibilities, especially that of Graf and O'Connor who derive "Saracen" from *šrkt*, known from the Greek-Nabataean bilingual inscription found at Rawwafa in Arabia, NW of Theima. They translated the term by "federation, confederation". MacDonald prefers the concept of a military unit in the service of Rome.

F Scagliarini's paper deals with Al-'Ula/Dedan, in NW Arabia, some 110 km SW of Teima. The author proposes an adjustment to the accepted Dedanite and Lihyanite chronology; "Dedanite" is used for the older phase of the history of the oasis of Al-'Ula, the Biblical Dedan. In reality, the difference between the two is conventional. The paleographic criterion which leads to different datings of the list of texts discussed here is arbitrary. It is, however, very interesting that the king, presented as king of the city of Dedan in the older period is later indicated as king of the Lihyan tribe.

Scagliarini then discusses the relation between the Dedanite (graffiti) "proto-Arabic" inscriptions and Teimanite (Taymanite). We have a series of Lihyanite inscriptions dated according to the rule of a king and they serve as a basis for chronological reconstructions. Recently Lihyanite inscriptions have supplied new evidence. Indirect sources come from Assyria and the Bible, Taymanite inscriptions, texts of Nabonidus and Minaean texts and classical authors. Thanks to these sources certain adjustments regarding the reconstruction of the chronology of the oasis of Al-'Ula could be made.

Finally F Briquel-Chatonnet, with reference to the Nabataean inscriptions, discusses the penetration of Fertile Crescent culture into Arabia. Being the last paper in the book, it also offers a good conclusion. The cultural influences of the Fertile Crescent on Arabia in the time of the Nabataean inscriptions are numerous and multiform. It was already a syncretistic, composite culture which penetrated Arabia where it seems to have been profoundly assimilated. This triple symbiosis (Semitic of the North-West, Hellenic and Arabic) is expressed beyond the borders of the Nabataean kingdom. The Nabataean cultural symbiosis played an important part in the Christianisation of Arabia until the birth of Islam.

F Bron discusses traces of South-Semitic writing in the Fertile Crescent. In 1933 a cuneiform alphabetic text was discovered at Beth-Shemesh in South Palestine and dated to the 13th century BC – the only cuneiform alphabetic text found outside Ugarit. In 1987 the Russian scholar A Lundin identified an ABC-text which gives the order of the letters of the South-Semitic alphabet, as a result of which some scholars consider the Ugaritians as Arabs. (Yet, Caquot in his postscript to the book states that in spite of criticism against panarabism, Arabic has contributed more to the deciphering of Ugaritic than Hebrew, Phoenician and Aramaic). What is certain is that

the order of the South-Semitic alphabet and consequently the South-Semitic alphabet itself were known in the Fertile Crescent by the end of the Bronze Age.

Nearby the steppe world, the Decapolis offers an example of contact between the cities of hellenised Syria and the Arabs in antiquity. The following aspects of the subject are treated by P L Gatier: Nabataean domination, the Arab population and the religious influence. The author concludes: the Arab presence in the Decapolis, and in particular at Gerasa and Philadelphia, is not the result of massive settling of Arab and Nabataean populations but the consequence of numerous contacts, political and cultural influences and perhaps of commercial exchanges. The cities of the Decapolis were proud of their Hellenism and undoubtedly suspicious of the Arabs. The relations were, however, inevitable, especially with the interior of the province of Arabia.

B Aggoula starts the paper on Seleucide-Parthian times by defining certain terms. Note the indication *High* or *Roman Mesopotamia*. Inscriptions from Hatra, a Parthian city in the Wadi Tharthar in Mesopotamia helps to determine the true significance of the geographical extent of "Arabia". The term ʿrb may have a variety of meanings as is evident from this discussion.

The book ends with a postscript by André Caquot. It includes photos and copies of inscriptions, two maps and a geographical index which helps to identify place-names which are spelled variously in the book. The editor could have chosen a single spelling for a place-name. The list of abbreviations is incomplete. As the book is intended for a wide readership terms like "lagidi, lagides" (p. 111) and Lagides (p. 128) should have been explained. Some familiarity with pre-Islamic South Arabian is assumed (see A F L Beeston, *ABD* IV:223-226). On p. 74 n4 "Irak" should be corrected to "Iraq". But these are minor shortcomings. My overall impression of the book is that of sound scholarship and readability and it is informative on a subject that is important for all who are interested in the development of civilisations in that part of the world.

Lukas Muntingh
Stellenbosch

Miller, Cynthia L 1996. *The representation of speech in Biblical Hebrew narrative. A linguistic analysis* (HSM 55). Atlanta: Scholars Press. pp. 466. ISBN 0 7885 0248 4. US $44.95.

In this revision of her doctoral dissertation Miller addresses the following question: "What are the grammatical resources for the representation of speech in ancient Hebrew and how are those resources meaningfully employed?" (p. 2). For these purposes she sets out to describe and analyse the different lexical and syntactic devices that are employed in Genesis to 2 Kings to represent reported speech in Biblical Hebrew in terms of their distribution and (what she terms) discourse-pragmatic functions.

Miller finds previous grammatical and literary studies of reported speech in Biblical Hebrew inadequate on two grounds: (1) no attempt has yet been made to compile a taxonomy of the syntactic forms of direct and indirect speech and (2) no attempt has yet been made to consider "the distribution and discourse-pragmatic functions of the forms of reported speech within the contexts of both the dialogue exchange and the encompassing narrative" (p. 13). It is from the outset clear that she wants to describe the theoretical assumptions and methodological assumptions of her

investigation as clearly as possible. She starts with those factors that have to be reckoned with due to the fact that Biblical Hebrew is a written or unspoken language. Thereafter she explains why she believes her corpus provides a "relatively homogeneous and representative" portion of texts. Finally she explains how she envisages dealing with "external" factors when she interprets the linguistic data of this corpus.

She displays a remarkable sensitivity to the large range of factors that might come into play when one tries to interpret data of an ancient religious text. On the one hand, one has to reckon, she argues, with the intersection of disciplines. She indicates clearly in her investigation how she deals with (a) philological evidence like epigraphic material, (b) comparative data from the Northwest Semitic languages, (c) data of languages spoken in the vicinity of Palestine and (d) evidence from topologically related languages. On the other hand, she argues, a distinction has to be made between linguistic variations that are due to diachronic variation and those that should be attributed to synchronic variation. Granting that "the question of linguistic variation is extremely complex," she maintains that "we should expect to find linguistic variation (and some evidence of its discourse-pragmatic functions) alongside variation that is the result of diachronic or sociological factors" (p. 28). The way in which Miller carefully evaluates and positions each of these possible variables in her study is remarkable. That this is more than window dressing of her thorough knowledge of both traditional (comparative) philology and modern linguistics is underlined by the way she applies these theoretical choices later in the study. A good example in this regard is provided by her discussion of the linguistic status of לאמר (pp. 163-212).

In the main part of her book she deals with cases of linguistic variation of reported speech at three levels, viz. the level of the utterance, the conversation and narrative context. At the *level of the utterance* she describes the varieties of syntactic patterns (a syntagmatic analysis) that includes the quotation of reported speech, the quotative frames introducing the quotation and the relationship between the two. Also analysed at this level is the paradigmatic relationship of the lexical items used in the quotative frame. In Chapter Two she elaborates on what she calls her "metapragmatic" frame of reference and outlines her criteria (deixis and syntactic incorporation) for distinguishing between direct and indirect speech. In Chapters Three and Four she describes the syntactic varieties of indirect and direct speech respectively. At *the level of the conversational content* the social relationships that are indexed in reported speech and the way characters interact in dialogue are described. With regards to the latter she draws from recent studies on conversational analysis in which "adjacency pairs" turn out to provide the basic structure of dialogue. In Chapter Five the dialogue structure and the social relationships of speech participants of interactive reported speech are discussed in the first part. In the second part of the chapter non-interactive reported speech is dealt with. At *the level of narrative context*, the perspective of an entire conversation comes into play and one of the main questions that is asked is: "How does direct speech introduced with one quotative frame (e.g. a multiple-verb frame) differ from direct speech introduced with another quotative frame (e.g. a לאמר frame)? Are there functional and/or distributional differences among the three types of quotative frames?" (p. 299). The three types are single-verb frames, e.g. אמר, multi-verb frames, e.g. וענן and ויאמר, and לאמר frames. For these purposes Miller first determines the distribution of matrix verbs within quotative frames. She distinguishes

three types of configurations: (1) variable and invariable, (2) central and marginal (based on the frequency) and (3) marked and unmarked (based on the syntactic complexity and frequency). Significant of her findings is the fact that single-verb frames are the unmarked category and that they do not have a larger discourse-pragmatic function. In contrast multiple-verb frames, e.g. וען and ויאמר and לאמר frames, do convey a discourse-pragmatic function. What exactly the latter function is, she determines by examining the verbs which appear typically in these two frames. She finds that "a לאמר frame is used when a variable configuration indexes in its semantics and discourse-pragmatics that a non-dialogue feature is present. A multiple-verb frame is used when dialogic features are highlighted; the frame usually indexes a particularly prominent utterance within the dialogue" (pp. 405-406).

Miller's work does not only constitute a benchmark for the study of representation of speech in Biblical Hebrew. It also represents a fine example on the way that light could be shed on the pragmatics of a non-spoken language like Biblical Hebrew by a soundly based linguistic analysis that takes full cognisance of what philology and a typological comparison with other languages have to offer. The only weak spot in her work is that she does not provide any parameters of the structure of conversations in Biblical Hebrew to be considered when one tries to identify or understand the exact "discourse-pragmatic" function of a multiple-verb frame. When a particular utterance is indexed as *prominent* by a multiple-verb frame, the question remains: in terms of what is that utterance prominent? In other words, in what way does the information conveyed in the prominent utterance contribute to communication involved? Of course, we do not know much in this regard, at least as far as Biblical Hebrew is concerned. However, a better view of how information is processed, as described in inferentially orientated communication theories (e.g. relevance theory) may be helpful when one tries to assess the relative importance of an utterance in a conversation.

C H J van der Merwe
Ancient Near Eastern Studies, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

Revell, E J 1996. *The designation of the individual. Expressive usages in Biblical narrative* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology. Volume 14). Kampen. Kok Pharos Publishing House. pp. 432. ISBN 90 390 0161 8.

The purpose of this book is to describe and analyse "the way individual characters are referred to or addressed in the biblical narratives" (p.11). It rests on the assumption "that the usage studied is self-consistent, and that variation is deliberate and is likely to carry meaning" (p. 12). Such a point of departure, of course, requires a synchronic approach. Revell uses Judges, Samuel and Kings as his corpus.

In the first part of the introduction Revell discusses the theoretical frame of reference for his investigation. He states, among other things, that his views of language and meaning derive from standard works in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. He concedes that some designations in his corpus may be due to scribal errors or to the style of a particular author. However, he believes that his study provides enough objective evidence to regard the inconsistencies in the designation of individuals as deliberate choices for expressive contrast (p. 28). That his views are firmly grounded is apparent, firstly, in the clear definitions of his understanding of the notions "expressive choice" and "marked and unmarked usage." Secondly, he takes trouble to explicate how he classifies the "context" of each designation he investigates. This is

crucial to the line of thought he follows because he does not maintain that each different form signals a particular function. The significance of any signal is determined by the context of that signal. One can certainly not find fault with such a (solid structuralist) type of argument in which the markedness of a designation is determined by its distribution. Thirdly, he describes the functional label "immediacy" as follows: "Material which is a serious concern for the speaker or narrator, material central to the message which he wishes to convey, is 'immediate'" (p. 22). Elsewhere he continues "Where information is 'immediate for' or 'central to the concerns of a speaker or narrator', particular features can be used to 'draw attention to it', and so ensure that the addressee concentrates on it. It is thus given 'prominence', 'highlighted, or 'foregrounded'" (p. 23).

In the second part of the introduction Revell describes the structure of the society portrayed in his corpus and the way in which its members are designated. He commences with the general categories like אִישׁ, אִשָּׁה, יֶלֶד, נַעַר and נַעֲרָה. He then proceeds to relationships and occupations and rounds this section off with the combination of factors that determines the status of individuals. In the next (third) part of the introduction Revell discusses the range of patterns that could be used to designate individuals. He shows special interest in cases where there is variation in concord between the pronominal and nominal reference of an individual or group, e.g. a collective noun that is the subject of a verb may have a singular form, but the pronominal reference to it in the verb may be plural or singular. This phenomenon is relevant to him because he is of the opinion that this choice of number and gender reflects "the ideas or perceptions of the speaker or narrator" (p.53). Furthermore, most of the patterns designating individuals involve, according to Revell, similar patterns of binary contrast. These binary pairs may be used to indicated "immediacy." He even points out that any sort of marking of prominence, e.g. also that signaled by means of word order, is regarded as marking "immediacy" (p. 56).

In the final part of the introductory section Revell deals with the use of nominal and pronominal designations. His main concern is cases of relexicalizations, the use of compound designations and the delayed use of a name. He maintains nearly across the board that whenever a designation is more specified than is needed, it could be interpreted as marking "immediacy" because "the narrator's purpose requires that the involvement of the character in the narrative must be marked as immediate, and so more forcefully impressed on the reader" (p. 80).

In the second section Revell systematically discusses designations of rulers in his corpus. David, Saul and Solomon and foreign kings are dealt with separately from the kings of Judah and those of the Northern Kingdom. Maintaining the distinction between narration and speech, a distinction is made between cases where the kings are (1) the addressers or the addressees, (2) the agents or the patients of actions or (3) referred to in any other way. Significant are his findings that the designation of Saul and the kings of the Northern Kingdom displays features that could be contrasted with those of the designations of the kings of Judah, David and Solomon. The author of his corpus is namely clearly biased towards the kings of the Southern Kingdom. This could be deduced from his restraint in using the title "king" to refer to Saul and the Kings of the North in narrative sections (p. 153). He clearly did not regard them as legitimate rulers of the community with which the narrator identifies.

In the third section designations of priests, prophets, named individuals, unnamed characters and God are dealt with in a similar way. Revell finds, among other things,

that while the simple designation of a priest is his name and the addition of a priest's title could be used to draw attention to the status of the priest or an action unexpected of the priest, the designations of prophets are less consistent.

The fourth section Revell calls "The logic of concord." He then discusses concord with collective nouns, concord with compound nominals and variation in number in the first and second person. On account of his comparison of cases where collective nouns occur with singular verb forms and those where the verb forms are plural, he concludes that the latter types "marks the clauses in question as immediate" (p. 228).

In section five Revell deals with the use of deferential forms. These are forms that are used when an addressee is superior in status to the speaker. Although he makes a distinction between the use of these forms in modal, interrogative and declarative clauses, he comes to the conclusion "that the structure of the clause is not the factor which determines usage. The choice of designation is determined by the desired or expected perlocutionary effect, by what the speaker intends, expects or fears will be the effect of his speech on the addressee" (p. 311).

In the final section of his book Revell discusses "interlocutors" like vocatives, the free first person singular pronoun and cases where a speaker or addressee is referred to by his/her name. As far as vocatives are concerned, two factors are important, (1) the status of the speaker and addressee and (2) the position of the vocative in the clause. When an inferior is addressed, the initial position in the clause is marked to express politeness or a kind feeling. When a superior is addressed the sentence's final position represents the more marked case that expresses urgency (p. 340). BH speakers have two free first person singular pronouns at their disposal, viz. אֲנִי and אָנֹכִי. According to Revell his investigation has shown that אֲנִי tends to mark immediacy while אָנֹכִי could be interpreted as the default usage, irrespective whether God or a human is the speaker.

Revell's book certainly makes a contribution towards developing a clearer sense of the way in which individuals are designated in Biblical Hebrew. It is clear from the outset that Revell tries to put the treatment of his problem and the analysis of the data in his corpus on a linguistically sound footing. He also applies his structuralist approach of investigating the paradigmatic distribution of designations to individuals in Biblical Hebrew consistently and with great care. Ultimately he provides us with a clearer and more complete picture of the distribution of these designations in BH than that was hitherto been described. However, even though it may be argued that he has exhausted the possibilities his structural approach allows him, his explanation of the functional value of what he regards as "marked constructions" is not convincing. He not only restricts the function of the entire variety of constructions he investigates to the psychologically based, and very narrow, notion of "immediacy." He even lumps them together with the functional values that could be expressed by means of word order (p. 56). In the process his notion of "immediacy" does not differ much from the notion of "emphasis." The shortcomings of this "catch-them-all" term has already been convincingly argued in earlier publications (see van der Merwe, C H J 1990. *The Old Hebrew particle gam.* St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 37-47). One just has to consider the numerous ways in which Revell spells out the content of his notion of "immediacy" to realize how vague it really is, e.g. "material which is presented as the significant core of a communication," "narrative prominence," "material which is central to the concerns of the speaker," "the expression of emotion or urgency or of

politeness, deference, or distance." He also remarks "focus of this sort (i.e. expressed by means of word order – C H J van der Merwe) is used to draw attention to a shift of topic or a contrast, or to mark urgency or emotion: the various factors included under the term 'immediacy'" (p. 382).

Advancing from the "objective" description of the distribution of constructions in a language to the description of what exactly a narrator or speaker intends to accomplish with these constructions is no easy task. We do have fairly sophisticated theories of pragmatics (language use) that tell us that human communication is as infinitely complex as we humans can be and that the entire conceptual worlds of speaker and hearer are involved when they communicate. However, the entire range of variables involved in the communication processes, how they interact and their respective values we still have to come to terms with. This is perhaps one of the reasons why Revell's brave attempt fails to convince. In my opinion its value lies rather in its stimulating effect on the research community than in providing explanations for many of the so-called "marked" designations that Revell has identified.

C H J van der Merwe
Ancient Near Eastern Studies, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

De Vaan, J M C T 1995. *"Ich bin eine Schwertklinge des Könings". Die Sprache des Bēl-ibni*. Pp. 557. Verlag Butzon & Bercker: Kevelaer & Neukirchener Verlag: Neukirchen. ISBN 3 7887 1536 7 & ISBN 3 7666 9979 2.

This work is a valuable contribution to the study of and research in the field of New Babylonian. It also gives direction in the method of and approach to the study of different lects in New Babylonian, using the lect of the Bel-ibni letters as model. To put it in the words of the author, "ein Versuch, ein besseres Verstandnis der Neubabylonischen Sprache zu bekommen."

An appropriate demarcation suggested by the author is that only the language phase of the Sargonic period is to be considered for this study. As point of departure for his research he rightfully concentrates on the New Babylonian letters of the Sargonic period. The Bel-ibni letters were chosen since they represent the largest closed group of the New Babylonian letters. The author realised that for a study of this scope more than just a study of a lexical nature, the situation to date, is imperative. What is important for a study of this kind is to establish the morphology and morphosyntax of the different parts of speech as well as the sentence structure (syntax) of the lect or lects used in these letters. This task he has executed most effectively and with great efficiency enhanced by his methodology in discussing all the appropriate aspects in a comparative study of New Babylonian letters and the Bel-ibni letters.

1. In a period and situation such as is applicable to the study of New Babylonian letters in this study, the influences of other neighbouring peoples and contact with them in respect of their language, culture and religion are of great importance. The author successfully addresses this aspect in considering the following peoples generally and politically: the Arabs, Arameans, Babylonians, Chaldeans, Elamites as well as the Seacountries.

2. Since Bel-ibni was a general in the Assyrian army during the internecine wars ("Bruderkrieges") between Assurbanipal and Shamas-shum-ukin (651-648), his activities in this capacity and clashes with his rivals are reflected in his

letters. The author therefore finds it necessary to discuss the role of Bel-ibni in the internecine wars and Elam battles. Though his discussion regarding the course of events is very informative and presents a well-defined historical outline of the appropriate events, the inclusion of a map of the territory of these events would have been very helpful.

3. Who is Bel-ibni? The author, in a most efficient way attempts to answer this question in identifying the man Bel-ibni as a person with respect to his family and vocation, pointing out that, though he was no diplomat, he was quite confident within the official structures at the court and knew how to utilise them to his own benefit. He also identifies Bel-ibni as the general. In this respect Bel-ibni is referred to as *ālik-pani* (commander of troops), *ša-reši* (courtier) and *turtani* ("high official"?). Bel-ibni is the author of the letters. In the relevant letters there are at least four persons by this name. The author considers only those letters written by Bel-ibni, dispatched by him or referring to him. The author finds that in the New Babylonian texts there are numerous examples of the name Bel-ibni – "Bel has created" – and two ways in which it is written, namely mdEN-ib-ni mdEN.DU., quoting the appropriate texts. This is followed by a lengthy and informative discussion of the different persons who could answer to this name in letters from/of Bel-ibni as author or co-author, letters to Bel-ibni and letters concerning Bel-ibni. Since the letters are not only of linguistic value, but also of historical value, the author presents us, within a historical context, with an enlightening descriptive chronology of the letters in relation to the different battles in which Bel-ibni was involved.

4. Chapter IV is the actual crux of this work and, though it is titled "Die Syntax", it deals with much more than just syntax. A more appropriate heading would have been "Die Sprache". The comparative study of the Bel-ibni letters with other New Babylonian letters regarding the linguistics of the letters is most instructive and of a high academic standard. If this chapter may be taken as the erection of a building of esthetic value, the "Orthographie" can be regarded as the foundation, "Die Satzteile" as the walls, "Die Satzarten" as the doors and windows and "Stil und den dialektischen Eigentumlichkeiten des Bel-ibni" as the roof. The author has gone through a lot of trouble to present a thorough dicussion of all the elements, alternative structures and nuances involved in the compilation of the different letters included in his investigation.

5. It can be agreed with the author that the investigation of the Bel-ibni correspondence is of great importance and value as part of the investigation regarding the New Babylonian language. It is also important to take note of his suggestion that to present any future linguistic analysis of this period, an inventory will have to be made of everything pertaining to New Babylonian.

The author distinguishes two writers of the Bel-ibni correspondence: one he calls the bookkeeper who wrote 38 letters and the other the calligrapher who wrote 14 letters. His investigation led him to conclude that the most important interim result is that writing mistakes ("Schreibfehler") and Assyrian-like writings ("assyriastische Schreibungen") were displayed only by the bookkeeper. From this it may be rightly inferred that the bookkeeper must have been an Assyrian.

What is important, as pointed out by the author, is the fact that if the letters of the internecine wars and Elam battles are placed side-by-side, it becomes clear that such a

great change as is revealed by the elegant cursive writing/script of the Elam letters could not have taken place in half a year.

In conclusion the author points out that from his research it has become quite clear how fragmentary the picture of the New Babylonian language actually is. Hence, for a meaningful comparison to be made between the New Babylonian language and other languages of this period (Aramaic, Arabic, etc.), a thorough research and investigation of the entire language must be made and described. A complete presentation according to authors therefore becomes the first great task for the future.

The value of this work for the Assyriological scientific world is enhanced by its appendices (particularly I-V). The transcription and translation with commentary as well as the glossary are of inestimable value, not disregarding the other appendices (especially IV and V).

Although this work is of value in its own right for the serious Assyriologist, it should not be regarded as the last word on this research project. My conviction, in line with that of the author, is that this work could be used in a meaningful way as a guideline for further research on this topic and in this area of research.

In conclusion I would suggest that this work should be used as a reference work by those Assyriological scholars who intend to acquire a better understanding of the New Babylonian language.

J P van der Westhuizen
Department of Semitics, UNISA, Pretoria, South Africa