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CONTENTS

Articles

Homage to Hannes Olivier	i-iv
Echart Otto, Human Rights: The Influence of the Hebrew Bible	1-20
Jim Robert, The Legal Basis for Saul's Slaughter of the Priests of Nob (1 Samuel 21-22)	21-29
Siegfried Mittmann, Eine Prophetische Totenklage des Jahres 701 V. Chr. (Micha 1:3-5a. 8-13a. 14-16)	31-60
Max Miller, Notes on Benjaminite Place Names	67-73
Robert Althann, Atonement and Reconciliation in Psalms 3,6 and 83	75-82
Stefan Timm, Wo Joseph Seinen Vater Traf Oder: Von Einem der Auszog, eine Biblische Stadt zu Suchen und Einen Neuen Gott Fand (Überlegungen zu HĒRŌNPOLIS)	83-95
Andrew Dearman, YHWH = S House: Gender Roles and Metaphors for Israel In Hosea	97-108
Herbert Niehr, Zu den Beziehun zwischen Ritualen und Mythen in Ugarit	109-136
Arie van der Kooij, The City of Alexandria and the Ancient Versions of the Hebrew Bible	137-149
Hermann-Josef Stipp, Jeremia 24: Geschichtsbild und Historischer Ort	151-183
Niels Peter Lemche, Are We Europeans Really Good Readers of Biblical Texts and Interpreters of Biblical History?	185-199
Robert Salters, Using Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara On Lamentations	201-213

Philip J Nel, The Symbolism and Function of Epic Space in Jonah	215-224
Harry F van Rooy, The “Hebrew” Psalms Headings in the Syriac Manuscript 12T4	225-237
Yehoshua Gitay, The Failure of Argumentation in the Book of Job: Humanistic Language Versus Religious Language	239-250
Johann Cook, Apocalyptic Terminology in the Septuagint of Proverbs	251-261
Sakkie Cornelius, The Iconography of Weapons and Warfare in Palestine/Israel C 1500-1200 BCE	263-275
Review Article	
Christo van der Merwe, Towards a better Understanding of Biblical Hebrew Word Order	277-300
Book Reviews	301-311
Books Received	313
Addresses of Contributors	315

Eckart Otto (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

HUMAN RIGHTS: THE INFLUENCE OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

ABSTRACT

This contribution intends to show that the modern recognition of human rights was not only rooted in the Enlightenment. Outlines can be found further back, not only in Attic democracy and in disputes about tolerance in the philosophical schools in Greek and Roman antiquity, but also in the Hebrew Bible which had a deep impact on the formation of the modern world (Max Weber). The theology of the book of Deuteronomy and the anthropology of the creation traditions of the Hebrew Bible are especially relevant in this case.

Jim Roberts (Princeton Theological Seminary)

THE LEGAL BASIS FOR SAUL'S SLAUGHTER OF THE PRIESTS OF NOB (1 SAMUEL 21-22)

ABSTRACT

Saul's slaughter of the priests of Nob in 1 Samuel 21-22 is read against the legal and cultural background provided by the diviner's loyalty oath from Mari. This background suggests that Saul's action, if politically unwise, was not irrational and had a firm legal basis in Ancient Near Eastern law.

Siegfried Mittmann (Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen)

EINE PROPHETISCHE TOTENKLAGE DES JAHRES 701 V. CHR. (MICHA 1:3-5A.8-13A.14-16)

ABSTRACT

In a previous study (JNSL 16, 1990, 91-106), the author hinted that Micah 1:3-5a.8-13a.14-16 reflects the situation of the catastrophic year 701 B.C. against the background of the expansionist Philistine policies of Hezekiah in his later years. The goal of the present contribution is to support this thesis with an exegesis of the text in Micah 1. The interpretation is based on the analysis of the structure. The elemental core of Micah 1 is an artfully composed poem consisting of two parts (A and B), each having two strophes (a and b) of the same or equivalent quantity. Part A (vs. 3-5a.8-9) portrays an event that is played out on the level of a visionary superreality. In a theophany Yahweh descends to pass judgment on Jacob/Israel (= Judah) (Aa), and the prophet reacts with a lament over Judah and Jerusalem (Ab). Part B (vs.10-13a.14-16) observes the effects of the divine judgment at the historical level in the form of a call for lamentation, i.e., to six Philistine towns (Ba) and five Judean towns of the Shefelah, plus Jerusalem (Bb). However, the main addressee is the political centre Jerusalem, explicitly referred to at the end of verses Ab, Ba and Bb.

Max Miller (Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Atlanta)

NOTES ON BENJAMINITE PLACE NAMES

ABSTRACT

The biblical books of Joshua, Judges and 1-2 Samuel are rich with geographical details about the tribal territory of Benjamin. Some of the place names mentioned can be located with a reasonable degree of confidence, but the location of others remain disputed. It makes a difference, for example, whether one reads the biblical materials as straight history or is attentive to literary-critical factors. This paper gives examples of possible implications of literary-critical analysis for Benjaminite toponymy.

Robert Althann (Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome)

ATONEMENT AND RECONCILIATION IN PSALMS 3, 6 AND 83

ABSTRACT

Many psalms sung at worship portray a situation requiring reconciliation. Malefactors and enemies are mentioned so frequently in the Psalter that they can be described as a literary topos, but where there is hostility there is need for reconciliation. We shall study three psalms with a view to seeing how their authors set about removing the effects of wrongdoing in order to achieve reconciliation.

Stefan Timm (Universität Hamburg)

WO JOSEPH SEINEN VATER TRAF ODER: VON EINEM DER AUSZOG, EINE BIBLISCHE STADT ZU SUCHEN UND EINEN NEUEN GOTT FAND (ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZU HĒRŌNPOLIS)

ABSTRACT

The Septuagint translators inserted the town of Hērōn in their text (Gen 46:28) to have a famous place where the East met the West, where Joseph met his father. At the same time they transformed the spelling of the place name (etymologically "City of [the Thrakian rider-god] Hērōn") to Hērōōnpolis because Joseph and his father were famous heroes of the Jewish people.

Andrew Dearman (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary)

YHWH=S HOUSE: GENDER ROLES AND METAPHORS FOR ISRAEL IN HOSEA

ABSTRACT

The proposal of J. J. Schmitt that the mother in Hosea 2 is a metaphor for Samaria is examined and found to be unpersuasive. There are valid reasons contextually to see the people Israel portrayed metaphorically in a feminine role. It is suggested, furthermore, that the root metaphor behind the depiction of Israel as both wife and children is that of the people as members of YHWH's household (= family).

Herbert Niehr (Universität Tübingen)

ZU DEN BEZIEHUNGEN ZWISCHEN RITUALEN UND MYTHEN IN UGARIT

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the mutual relationship of ritual and mythical texts from Ugarit. In the first place information is obtained from those texts which have both ritual and mythical parts. But by means of an "archival approach," which discusses the distribution of the relevant texts in the libraries of Ugarit, further results can be obtained. A distinction between ritual and myth is indicated by their different "Sitz im Leben": rituals served as "aides-mémoires" in the cult, while myths seem to have been theological lectures in the development of cult officials and also served as school texts.

Arie van der Kooij (Leiden University)

THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

ABSTRACT

In antiquity, Alexandria was the most famous city on the African continent. It was, among other things, the place where Jewish scholars translated books of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, first of all the Pentateuch. This contribution to the volume in memory of Hannes Olivier is about passages in ancient versions of the Bible where the city of Alexandria is mentioned or referred to. Firstly, places in the Vulgate and the Targum to the Prophets are discussed where the name of Alexandria is given explicitly (Jer 46:25; Ezek 30:14-16; Nahum 3:8), and secondly, with regard to the Septuagint, it is argued that LXX Isaiah 18:1 contains an allusion to this famous place in Egypt, built by people from abroad.

Hermann-Josef Stipp (Universität Stellenbosch)

JEREMIA 24: GESCHICHTSBILD UND HISTORISCHER ORT

ABSTRACT

Jeremiah's vision of the fig-baskets is an enigmatic piece that so far has resisted attempts to determine its original setting and purpose. The present article surveys previous suggestions and offers a new solution: Jer 24 was intended to support exclusivity claims of the post-exilic Palestinian Jewry against the diaspora. In order to justify this privilege, the author conveyed the idea that his favoured group was entirely descended from the Babylonian Golah which enjoyed Yhwh's special favour. For that, Judean history is redrawn in major aspects. First, the assertion is being made that the entire Babylonian Golah derived from the deportation of 597, associated with Jehoiachin. Further, the exile is cast into a new light: From a tool of judgement it is turned into a way of salvation from judgement. Moreover, the exiles are proclaimed to be the recipients of a prophecy of restoration disclosed to Jeremiah. On the other hand, the non-deportees – associated with Zedekiah – are going to be dispersed and will ultimately face annihilation. As a result, there is no room for a second deportation, and all the Jews living in post-exilic Judah must appear as descendants of the blessed exiles, whereas the diaspora is doomed to destruction.

Niels Peter Lemche (University of Copenhagen)

ARE WE EUROPEANS REALLY GOOD READERS OF BIBLICAL TEXTS AND INTERPRETERS OF BIBLICAL HISTORY?

ABSTRACT

Biblical scholarship has mainly been an extension of Western imperialism, pleading that an ancient text must be read as we are used to read texts. That this may not be true is demonstrated by a number of examples — the story of the flood, or the narrative about young David among others. These examples show that the unintended meaning of ancient literature may have little to do with modern western sentiments of what literature is supposed to be. Modern literary studies are welcomed for the time being but are probably nothing but another example of western misunderstanding of literature that originates in so-called 'magical societies'.

Robert Salters (St Andrews)

USING RASHI, IBN EZRA AND JOSEPH KARA ON LAMENTATIONS

ABSTRACT

This paper consists of reflections on the exegetical contributions of Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara to the study of the book of Lamentations. Questions raised are about authorship, acrostics and consistency in exegesis; and the three mediaeval exegetes are compared as they tackle several passages. All three have something to offer the would-be commentator.

Philip J Nel (University of the Free State)

THE SYMBOLISM AND FUNCTION OF EPIC SPACE IN JONAH

ABSTRACT

Narrative analysis may easily be regarded as amongst the most productive branches of literary approaches to biblical stories over the last couple of decades. Gradually a much better impression of the artistry of biblical narrative has been developed. But a seemingly unaccountable lack of focus on the epic category of space is observable in narrative studies. The article seeks to analyse the dimensions of epic space in the text

of Jonah as well as the contribution of space to the structuring of the text and its meaning. The thesis to be substantiated here is that epic space is employed thematically throughout the story and that it may be regarded as an authentic mechanism of fictional discourse. In all episodes an intricate pattern of reversed experiences of epic space is encountered that revolves around redemption (compassion) and rejection (death). It is also shown how the fish episode of the second chapter dovetails with the thematic scheme of epic space. In conclusion it is maintained that biblical narrative employs epic space thematically to externalise inner or private space.

Harry F van Rooy (Potchefstroom University)

THE "HEBREW" PSALM HEADINGS IN THE SYRIAC MANUSCRIPT 12T4

ABSTRACT

The oldest published description by Addai Scher of this Syriac manuscript dates from 1907. The manuscript is a liturgical document containing the Psalms (including Psalms 151-155) and Odes. Scher also mentions that every Psalm is preceded by headings ascribed to Eusebius, Athanasius and Theodore of Mopsuestia. What he did not mention is that the set of headings for each Psalm starts off with a heading in Syriac referred to as a Hebrew heading. The Peshitta does not contain the Masoretic Psalm headings. The Syro-Hexapla contains headings from the Septuagint and these are thus indirectly related to the Masoretic headings. The Hebrew headings of 12t4 are, however, not identical to those of the Syro-Heaxpla. Especially important are those cases where the Syro-Hexapla, following the Septuagint, disagrees with the Masoretic headings. In many of these cases 12t4 has variants, indicated by "another manuscript" or "other manuscripts". In some of these cases the variants contain the heading of the Syro-Hexapla. This paper discusses a number of these headings with their variants. The author of this manuscript interpreted the headings of the Hebrew Old Testament independently of the LXX and the Syro-Hexapla, though it is also evident that he was influenced by them in some instances.

Yehoshua Gitay (University of Cape Town)

THE FAILURE OF ARGUMENTATION IN THE BOOK OF JOB: HUMANISTIC LANGUAGE VERSUS RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the reasoning of Job, the friends and God, as the key to understanding the problems of effective communication (and the disability of Job, on the one hand, and the friends, on the other). The paper studies the rhetorical presuppositions of each side, pointing out different languages of reasoning: Job's humanistic language versus the friends' religious language. However, God communicates with Job through their common language, that is, the humanistic language. The principles of the two different languages of argumentation employed in the book will be presented and analysed.

Johann Cook (University of Stellenbosch)

APOCALYPTIC TERMINOLOGY IN THE SEPTUAGINT OF PROVERBS

ABSTRACT

The Septuagint of Proverbs is characterised by the abundant application of contrasts and moralising terminology. In many instances these contrasts act as a direct rendering of similar phenomena in the Hebrew parent text. However, in a rather large number of cases the person(s) responsible for this unit actually adds contrasting terms where the Hebrew has no reference to contrasts. The same applies to the application of moralising terms. Some of these examples seem to be the result of the smaller and even larger internal context. However, it is the contention of this article that in the final analysis the profuse use of contrasting and religious terminology should be related to the apocalyptic climate that prevailed when this unit came into being.

Sakkie Cornelius (University of Stellenboch)

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF WEAPONS AND WARFARE IN PALESTINE/ISRAEL C. 1500-1200 BCE

ABSTRACT

Various sources are available in the study of ancient warfare and weaponry: physical remains of weapons and fortifications, texts describing battles, but also visual representations (iconography) of weapons and their use. This article looks at the iconography of weapons and warfare in Palestine/Israel in the period 1500-1200 BC, especially as it is represented on seal-amulets. In this period warfare was one of the central symbols in the iconographic repertoire. The motifs of the Egyptian pharaoh represented in his chariot and smiting the enemy are studied as well as deities connected with war such as Baal and Reshep.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Christo van der Merwe (University of Stellenbosch)

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF BIBLICAL HEBREW WORD ORDER

ABSTRACT

Walter Gross's work on the function of BH word order in the verbal sentences of Deuteronomy, Judges and 2 Kings is regarded as a high-watermark in the study of BH word order. It also sets an example for the application of the insights of modern linguistics to the study of BH. In this review article the value of Gross's approach is illustrated, in particular the way in which he scrutinizes existing studies and formulates criteria for an adequate study of BH word. However, Gross's theoretical frame of reference is investigated and some of his views are challenged. It is argued here that Gross's definition of the concept of focus is too narrow. Furthermore, the fact that Gross decided not to treat the notion of "topic" leads to an excessive number of examples that are not accounted for in terms of a coherent theory. A theoretical frame of reference is proposed that may complement the work of Gross.

BOOK REVIEWS

Vogelsang, W J 1992. *The rise & organisation of the Achaemenid empire – the eastern evidence* (Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East Vol. III). Leiden: Brill. pp. 344. ISBN 90-04-09682-5.

This monograph is a fresh and refreshing attempt at interpreting aspects of the all-encompassing Persian empire and more specifically the Achaemenid empire. There is a current trend according to which various ancient Near Eastern cultures are (re)studied in the light of contemporary developments as far as methodology, exegetical tools and historical insights are concerned. In the past Egypt has received the special attention of the scholarly world. It is reassuring to note that Persia, which is an equally important culture, is also being researched exhaustively. The author deals with one of the initial phases of the enormous Persian empire, namely the Achaemenid empire. However, he does not analyse the whole empire. The key to this study is the sub-title *The Eastern Evidence*.

Vogelsang has adopted a lucid and systematic approach to this problematic theme. The study commences with an orientating introduction in which the problem is outlined. The following questions are addressed by Vogelsang (p. 1): How did the Persians under Cyrus succeed in establishing such an enormous empire and manage to preserve it for so long, while other famous and successful generals, such as Alexander, were unable to prevent their huge empires, conquered in the course of a life-time, from dissolving upon their deaths? What were the basic factors that made the diverse subject lands of Cyrus's kingdom eventually amalgamate into the Persian Achaemenid empire?

In his preface the author calls the monograph "a book with a bias". One could argue that the study represents an inductive approach to the subject matter. Vogelsang concentrates on the Eastern Iranian evidence in contrast to the majority of scholarly endeavours which analyse the western evidence. This is a significant contribution to the discussion. His working method (p. 17) seems to be "an integral study" of the subject matter. The study is source orientated but also realistic, because the author realises that not all sources can be analysed (p. 17). He has made a representative selection of source material which consist of a combination of primary written sources such as provincial lists, the Behistun text, reliefs, classical references to Eastern Iran, inter alia, Herodotus, on the one hand, and archaeological artifacts, on the other hand.

The initial methodological orientation is unfortunately not exhaustive and it is actually only in the actual reading of the book that one gets behind the method applied by the author. Geography and ecology clearly play major roles in the author's analyses. Chapter 2, *The Lands of Eastern Iran*, therefore acts as an indispensable introduction to the interpretation of the mentioned sources. The necessary background is sketched by means of maps and tables. Of decisive significance is the migratory routes discussed by Vogelsang (p. 91). All "routes" effectively lead back to the Altai mountains in the Eurasian Steppe from where the Sakas/Scythians, according to Vogelsang, moved southward during the first half of the first millennium BCE (p. 93).

Chapter 3 is devoted to the Achaemenid sources on Eastern Iran. More methodological insights are provided by the author, for he now states that "sources

thus ought to be studied and interpreted *within their own context* (my italics)" (p. 94). Ecological, geographical, contextual and general historical information is used by Vogelsang in order to describe the movements of the nomads from the Central Asian Steppes.

The author looks critically at the available sources. He correctly chose to work exclusively with the original, in this case Old Persian, forms of geographical names. This is done in order to avoid a biased identification of the appellations with the names transmitted in classical sources (p. 95). Vogelsang analyses a number of sources. A prominent source is the Behistun inscription. Vogelsang finds a Median bias in this list which to him is an indication of the fact that the Achaemenids did not wish to evade references to their former overlords. The location of this list is of course in Media. A characteristic of this monument of Darius is that it was written in Old Persian, Elamite and Akkadian. That this list was not exclusively meant for Median usage is also borne out by the fact that copies were found in various corners of the empire. However, it would seem that Media indeed played a special role in the Achaemenid empire, initially apparently even more than Pârsa (p. 124). The central location of Behistun in the whole empire certainly had an influence in this regard.

Another characteristic of this inscription is the references to a campaign which Darius undertook against the Scythians east of the Caspian sea soon after taking over the reigns in Persia. It would seem as if the tribes to the northeast were not loyal to the Persian king. These hostile peoples of course posed a serious threat to the trade routes in the region and had to be kept at bay.

Vogelsang offers penetrating and illuminating interpretations of royal reliefs, tombs and other primary archaeological artefacts. He carefully discusses the various delegates found in the tomb reliefs, as well as on the Darius statue from Susa and the Apadâna delegations. Their clothing is analysed, as is the depiction of their horses, etc. Vogelsang draws far-reaching conclusions on the basis of these analyses. He finds typical Scythic features among the peoples from the Amu Daryâ delta, the Zarafshân valley, from the confines of the Karakum desert, Parthia and Bactria. He even pointed out similar influences among Medic groups in northwestern Iran which, according to him are missing from the Persians themselves (p. 174). Two features of Scythian culture, the *akinakes* and trousers, are discussed in detail.

The author does not contend that there is no sign of Scythian influence in Persian circles to the contrary. The use of Scythian archery, the *sagaris* (battle-axe) and the quiver are implements which, according to him, "indicate that the Scythians, probably via the Medes, influenced the Persians" (p. 175). As a matter of fact, he deems the initial impact of the Medes on the ancient near east to be enormous. In his own words, "by the mid-sixth century B.C., on the eve of the Persian revolt against the Medes, the latter's realm extended in a wide belt from the banks of the Kizil Irmâk, through Cappadocia and Armenia to the Median homelands, south along the Zagros chain to Persis, and east along and across the Alburz to ancient Hyrcania and Parthia, perhaps extending into the Karakum desert to the north and into Kuhistân in the south". It is, however, the structure of this realm that is of special interest to Vogelsang.

The author (p. 177) builds upon Khazanov's thesis that the Medic society was a stratified one consisting of a combination of local people and a Medic/Scythic dominating class of invaders. The author is of the opinion that the Persians under Cyrus actually inherited this organization and which Darius adapted to some extent. The primary difference was that Mâda was now ranked lesser than Pârsa. Another

characteristic of the Persian organizational structure is that all satrapies were treated on an equal footing. They actually took ownership of their part of the empire.

After completing the Achaemenid sources, Vogelsang moves on to the early classical references to eastern Iran in Chapter 4. The contention of this chapter is to reconsider Herodotus's interpretation of Scythian migration as being of a South Russian origin (p. 180). To the author the general routes taken by many invasions from the east are a decisive argument for accepting an eastern origin in this regard.

Three issues proved decisive for Vogelsang as far as his interpretation of Alexander the Great's excursions into Eastern Iran are concerned. First is the interrelatedness of political relations. Persian rulers and local subjects cooperated excellently throughout the Achaemenid empire in Eastern Iran. The secondly issue is the strength of the Scythian/Saka element in this area, who made up a significant portion of the warring parties against the Macedonians. Third is the penetration of the Saka into Dardistân and the Kâbul valley (p. 242). Vogelsang makes an interesting reconstruction of the organizational structure of the Achaemenid empire. He argues that it had a stepped organization, a hierarchy of Persians over against the upper strata of the local authorities, who handled their own affairs. According to him the Persians preferred to keep aloof from internal affairs. He paints a picture of a careful balance between gift-giving and gift-taking, the distribution of subsidies and the taking of taxes. Chapter 6, *The Archaeological Evidence*, corroborates this picture. Scythian arrowheads are important evidence. According to Vogelsang they antedate the advent of the Persian Achaemenids (p. 299) and they probably originated in the lands of West Central Asia.

Vogelsang has dealt with a rather complicated theme in an exhaustive manner. During his discussion it became evident that the lands of West Central Asia were invaded violently or infiltrated more peacefully by tribes from the north. An integral part of his working hypothesis is that an invasion by Scythian people occurred in the Northeast and along the Iranian plateau. This migration by deviating tribes took place in various periods of time. According to Vogelsang, by the end of the seventh century (p. 305) certain Scythians played a major role in the establishment of the Medes, who found themselves in the north. The Persians, so he argues, who lived in the central part of the empire, took over aspects of the Scythian culture, especially the military-based social organization. He uses a modern Saudi-Arabian system as a model to understand the Persian system (p. 313). It consists of four levels: the king; the provincial governors; the local potentates and the local masses. As far as the Persian rule goes he argues that its organization is built up of three levels: king, intermediaries, and masses. In his view the role of the local potentates is paramount. From their clothing he deduces that they were delegates of the local ruler and not representatives of the masses. This is an indication of the recognition by the masses of Persian hegemony (p. 314). To him the empire was not based on military or economic strength, but on authority: that of the Persian kings and of the local rulers (p. 314).

Vogelsang's monograph represents a forceful synthesis of the Eastern Iranian evidence concerning the actual functioning of the Achaemenid Empire. His interpretations are creative, partly novel and utterly necessary. Whether the details of his arguments will hold water, time will tell. However, he has filled a long-standing gap in scholarly activity. This important monograph can be used fruitfully as the basis for further research.

Johann Cook
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Zevit, Ziony 1998. *The anterior construction in Classical Hebrew* (The Society of Biblical Literature. Monograph Series 50). Atlanta: Scholars Press. pp. 94. ISBN 0-7885-0443-6.

Zevit's aim is to investigate a construction that he believes may help to understand better the finer nuances of Classical Hebrew narratives. Since the semantic function of this anterior construction implies that the Classical Hebrew verbal system marks time, Zevit also explores the implications of this device for understanding the verbal system's role as temporal marker.

Having stated the above-mentioned objectives in the first chapter, he indicates in the second chapter how the earlier Jewish grammarians observed texts where narrative events were mentioned out of chronological sequence. Nineteenth-century grammarians also identified this phenomenon. However, most of them treated it as a grammatical phenomenon, viz. a perfect form that has to be translated as a pluperfect. It is only recently that Kutscher mentioned that the pluperfect is expressed by the subject preceding the predicate. According to Zevit (p.13) "His terse description of the matter, though correct, was incomplete." In Chapter 3 he then provides formal criteria for identifying anterior constructions, viz. *we* + subject + *qatal*. A necessary condition for their realization, however, "is a past tense verb, *w(yqt)* or *qtl*, in the narrative of the preceding clause" (p. 15). Furthermore, it excludes "1) the form *whyh*, "and it was," which is sometimes the equivalent of *whnh*, ... when it functions as a presentative, not as a verb; 2) It excludes verbs in parenthetical, inserted sentences that interrupt the main narrative flow; 3) It also excludes participles ... " (pp. 15-16). He then distinguishes for heuristic purposes between cases where a pluperfect and preperfect are involved although they are not formally recognizable. After explaining a representative number of examples of each, he provides a list of verses with anterior constructions indicating (1) a pluperfect relationship and (2) a preperfect relationship. With these criteria for identifying anterior constructions, illustrated by examples and then eventually supplemented with apparently exhaustive lists of anterior constructions, Zevit ensures that his examples can, on the one hand, be scrutinized by scholars in terms of his own criteria, but can also, on the other hand, be used for reference purposes by students, exegetes and translators.

As far as the above-mentioned criteria are concerned, I do not know on what grounds Zevit identifies a *וַיְהִי* that functions as *וַיְהִי*. To my knowledge *וַיְהִי* does not have such a function. (Cf. Van der Merwe, C H J 1999. The elusive particle *וַיְהִי*. *Hebrew Studies* 60). While most of his examples are very helpful, one may argue that the fronting of the subject in Gen 4:2 (p. 22) may also be due to a comparison of two active topics. It would have been most helpful if Zevit could have indicated if, and how, a fronted subject of the anterior construction differ from those cases where a subject is fronted for other purposes. Furthermore, though of no relevance to what he wants to illustrate, I find the translation of *וַיְהִי* as both "even" and "also" in Gen 4:3-4 (p. 23) unwarranted. The construction used only justifies "and Abel *also* brought"

In Chapter 4 Zevit delimits anticipatory backgrounding, i.e. the type of backgrounding normally signalled by an anterior construction, from retrospective backgrounding. The former refers to detail or an event that may not be relevant to its immediate context, but normally becomes more obvious as the story unfolds (p. 34). It bears the "mark of skilled literary craftsmanship while the latter indicates careless afterthought" (p. 35). Zevit acknowledges that his analysis of the anterior construction and its relationship with the Hebrew verbal system is correct only if the verbal system is a tensed and not

an aspectual one. In Chapter 5 he then provides well-justified arguments why he believes tense is grammaticalized in the Classical Hebrew verbal system, while aspect is rather indicated in a variety of other ways. For example, he points out that if the Hebrew verbal system were grammaticalizing only aspect but not tense, it would have been unique among known natural languages. These arguments are in accord with similar convincing views put forward by Tal Goldfajn (1998. *Word order and time in Biblical Hebrew narrative*. Oxford: Clarendon).

With reference to, among other things, data from Moabite, Punic-Phoenician and Aramaic, Zevit argues in Chapter 6 that Classical Hebrew has two tenses but four forms. The forms *yiqtol* and *qatal* are marked by accent and therefore actually represent four different forms, viz. *yiqtol*-past and *yiqtol*-present and *qatal*-past and *qatal*-present. He regards an "euphonic override of phonemic accents" as the reason why the accent is sometimes displaced, e.g.; in Exod 25:12, Lev 26:25 (p. 58). Whether and how contra-arguments in this regard by Garr (Driver, S R 1998. *A Treatise on the use of the tenses in Hebrew and some other syntactical questions. With an introductory essay by W. Randall Garr*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) undermines Zevit's position, merits an investigation. Of course, Garr, like Driver, is of the opinion that Hebrew has an aspectual verbal system.

In the final chapter of his book Zevit speculates on how the anterior construction emerged in Classical Hebrew. According to him, writers "evolved a device that thickened the texture of their tales by manipulating the chronological flow of events, by indicating parallel and intersecting chains of events, and by hinting at the existence of untold narratives" (p. 72).

Apart from the last chapter, which I find rather speculative, Zevit's book is a persuasive study. His views on a phonemic marking of the *qatal* will certainly not go unchallenged, but he has shown that most of the intuitions of the earlier Jewish scholars can be trusted. Zevit has indeed provided Hebrew scholars, exegetes and translators with explicit criteria and justified arguments for recognizing anterior constructions in Classical Hebrew.

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Wagner, Andreas (Hrsg.) 1997. *Studien zur hebräischen Grammatik*. (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 156). Freiburg Schweiz & Göttingen: Universitätsverlag & Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. pp. 199. ISBN 3-7278-1139-0 & 3-525-53792-1.

This book contains the contributions of the Hebrew grammar section: "The next generation of projects" of the 1996 *International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature* held in Dublin. According to the editor, it represents current and forthcoming projects of younger scholars in the field of Hebrew grammar and "provides an overview of the main problems of current research in hebraistic grammar." Furthermore, it demonstrates that there are concerted efforts to put the results and methods of general linguistics to good use for the study of Hebrew.

The volume contains the following: "Grammatik statt Ekstase! Das Phänomen der syntaktischen Wiederaufnahmen am Beispiel von Am 7, 1-8,2" by Achim Behrens; "Alternatives for the accusative in Biblical Hebrew" by Jan H Kroeze; "Überlegungen zur Analyse und Leistung sogenannter Zusammengesetzter Nominalsätze" by Reinhard G Lehman; "Gesplattene Koordination in biblischen-hebräischen

Verbalsätzen. Am Beispiel von Ex 34,27/Ps. 11,5/Neh 10,36-37" by Andreas Michel; "hæsed wæ^æmæt" by Diethelm Michel; "Formgeschichte und Textgrammatik am Beispiel der alttestamentlicher 'Lehrrede' in Prov 1-9" by Achim Müller; "Zu einigen ungewöhnlichen Partikelfunktionen" by Hans-Peter Müller; "Zur Bedeutung der Formel *wajjehi* im Übergang zum mittelhebräischen Tempussystem" by Andreas Schüle; "Wer is dein Knecht? Ein Hund!" Zu Aufmerksamkeitsserregern und Überleitungsformeln in hebräischen Briefen" by Dirk Schwiderkski; "Der Lobaufruf im israelitischen Hymnus als indirekter Sprechact" by Andreas Wagner; "Zentrale Aspekte der Semantik der hebräischen Weg-Lexeme" by Markus Zehnder; and "Subjects preceded by the preposition 'et in Biblical Hebrew" by Tamar Zewi. An index of texts cited concludes the book.

Most of the contributions demonstrate solid scholarship. Many of the linguistic arguments imply structuralist-oriented investigations of the distributional patterns of specific linguistic phenomena. Most acknowledge the importance of distinguishing between the different levels of linguistics, e.g. syntax, semantics, text-linguistics and pragmatics. However, what I found lacking in most of the contributions (with the exception of Michel and Kroeze) is a well-defined linguistic frame of reference. Insights from specific modern linguistic theories are also seldom brought into the picture to address a particular problem. Although this book provides more of an overview of current research in the field of Hebrew grammar in some parts of Europe than in the rest of the world, it deserves the attention of Hebrew scholars.

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de Regt, L J 1999. *Participants in Old Testament texts and the translator. Reference devices and their rhetorical impact* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 39). Assen: Van Gorcum. pp. 119. ISBN 90-232-3444-83367-0.

De Regt investigates the way in which participants are introduced, traced and re-introduced in BH texts. He deals with examples from narratives and other genres, as well as with texts from early and late material. Acknowledging a wide range of variables that need to be taken into account, he first identifies the usual patterns and then the special patterns in his corpus. In each case he addresses the problem of (a) translating the usual patterns into a target language in which these conventions differ, and (b) representing rhetorical effects of the special patterns in a target language.

Although he allows for a degree of stylistic variation on the basis of a comparison of parallel passages, de Regt identifies a number of regular patterns in BH. First, references to major participants tend to be pronominal. Secondly, in a single paragraph even alternating participants in a dialogue are mostly referred to pronominally. Third, the explicit proper name reference to a major participant often marks the start or end of a paragraph. Fourth, unnamed characters who are referred to only by means of nouns tend to be minor characters. Fifth, in poetry the same referent can be referred to by more than one grammatical person. Such a change in grammatical person often marks the start of a new paragraph. In general, major participants are referred to differently from other participants. This does not apply only to the difference between pronominal and fully lexicalised references. This principle, for example, also comes into play when different participants are referred to by means of a word chain that is the subject or object of a sentence, e.g. a character's central role in a story will override the social rank of the other participants referred to

in that word chain. For example, a soldier will be mentioned before a king, if that soldier is central to the narrative concerned.

Overspecification and the repetition of participant references represent most of the special patterns de Regt identifies. According to de Regt, repetition often "may show a crucial and climactic moment in the text" (p. 96). It may also show distance rather than empathy between characters or in the narrator towards a character. Overspecification may as a usual pattern signal a new paragraph. It may, however, also reflect "that the participant is given a negative assessment" either by another character or the narrator (p. 96). The assignment of the pragmatic function(s) of a "marked" construction can easily be made by a perceptive scholar. However, de Regt provides good grounds for most of the cases where he assigns a pragmatic function to the special cases he has identified. In several cases he scrutinises the earlier hypotheses of Robert Longacre. Most of these he refutes on the basis of solid empirical evidence.

This study by de Regt is a real gem. It not only provides the most exhaustive treatment to date of a neglected area of Biblical Hebrew linguistics. It also has the hallmarks of a scholar who utilises the methodological apparatus and findings of modern linguistics to the full for investigating this problematic aspect of Biblical Hebrew. It will be of great value to scholars, teachers and translators.

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Bietenhard, S K 1998. *Des Königs General. Die Heerführertraditionen in der vorstaatlichen und frühen staatlichen Zeit und die Joabgestalt in 2 Sam 2-20; 1 Kön 1-2* (Orbis Biblicus Orientalis 163). Freiburg Schweiz & Göttingen: Universitätsverlag & Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. pp. XIV-364. ISBN 3-7278-1193-5. SFr. 108, DM 130.

This well-prepared number in the *OBO* series contains a reworked and shortened version of the author's dissertation, which was accepted at the Ev.-theol. Fakultät der Universität Bern in 1996/7. Her *Doktorvater* was Prof. Dr. W. Dietrich.

The author states the problem in an introductory paragraph that so much scholarly attention has been given to the figure of King David in Old Testament studies that other contemporary figures do not receive proper treatment. Joab, the commander of David's army, is a typical example. Although it is widely accepted that Joab played a major role during the reign of David, not much scholarly attention has been devoted to him. The author wants to rectify this imbalance.

The author's short introduction also explains the methodological presuppositions which underlie this study. "Eine Untersuchung der Joabgestalt könnte sich nun tatsächlich mit einer Nacherzählung begnügen, die den historischen Kontext berücksichtigt. Die nähere Auseinandersetzung mit dem Joaberzählung und den Texten zum Kriegs- und Heerwesen führt jedoch bald in deren literarische und entstehungsgeschichtliche Vielfalt und die dazugehörige unerschöpfliche Forschungsdiskussion sowie in die methodischen Probleme, die sich der alttestamentlichen Exegese zur Zeit stellen" (p. 1). She therefore opts for (what I would call) a multidimensional approach towards the exegesis of the Joab tradition and explains this methodological option by referring to the multidimensional nature of the Biblical texts: "Die Quellen unserer Glaubenstradition sind dem Anspruch nach

zugleich Geschichtsschreibung, literarische Kunstwerke und Teil unserer Geschichte. Die Arbeit an ihnen führt zur Auseinandersetzung mit ihrem Wahrheitsanspruch. Sie stellt die Exegese auch vor die Forderung einer Dialektik des geschichtlichen Verstehens und des gegenwärtigen Erklärens. Im Grunde sehen wir uns vor dieselbe Aufgabe gestellt, der sich die alten Schriftsteller gegenüber sahen: abbildend beschreiben, um die eigene Lebenswelt sinnstiftend zu deuten" (p. 2). Bietenhard neither enters into a theoretical discussion on the numerous historiographical problems that the Biblical exegete encounters, nor does she get involved in the exegetical-methodological debate. She wants to explore the possibilities presented by the modern plurality of exegetical methods on the basis of a concrete example from the Biblical text. "Unterschiedliche Methoden erlauben es, biblische Texte auf unterschiedliche Weise wahrzunehmen" (p. 2).

The author then continues her investigation into the Joab tradition by adopting a tripartite approach. In Chapter I she describes Joab against the background of an historical investigation into the military institutions of ancient Israel. The position of commander of the army is then defined within the context of these military institutions. It is concluded from this section that, according to the historical narratives, Joab represented the party that was critical of David: "Joab is Königsmacher, Königsbewahrer und Königskritiker zugleich, als Heerführer und עַבְדּוֹ des Königs führt er oft auch dessen Machtpolitik aus. Die Joabgeschichten legen Zeugnis ab vom Loyalitätskonflikt, in welchem sich der Heereskommandant zwischen persönlicher Gefolgschaft zum König und den kritischen Kreisen des Staatswesens befindet. Die innenpolitischen Krisen weisen auf die Spannungen zwischen den Parteien hin. Alles deutet darauf hin, dass die Erzählung Joab zunehmend als Repräsentanten der davidkritischen Partei zeigt" (p. 82).

In Chapter II Bietenhard investigates the figure of Joab as a literary character in the Succession Narrative. This investigation takes as point of departure the final form of the text as literary work of art. It discusses the different functions of the character of Joab, and the role that this character plays in the greater Succession Narrative (ThFE). This analysis also concludes that Joab played a critical role over and against the Davidic dynasty: "(Joab) ist Teil der gedeuteten Geschichtsdarstellung ('sacred history') der ThFE und als solcher weit mehr als ein kriegführender Armeeführer. Die erzählerische Funktion Joabs als *Gegenüber zu* führt im Verlauf der ThFE immer mehr auch inhaltlich zu einer Verschärfung des Gegensatzes zwischen dem Willen des Königs und den Reaktionen und Taten seines Generals. Was nach der Ermordung Abners in einer ersten Klage Davids nur anklingt, seine Schwäche und Unschuld gegenüber der List und Schuld der Zerujasöhne, wird im Verlauf der Geschichte zu einem ihrer Grundkonflikte ausgebaut: Joab ist der eigentliche Antipode und Feind der davidisch-salomonischen Dynastie" (pp. 207-8).

Chapter III features the historical background again – but now the historical background of the text itself. According to the historical-critical strategy of *Literarkritik* the compositeness of the biblical texts under discussion is investigated, and the different pre-stages of the text are determined. Bietenhard distinguishes four textual layers (cf. Table on pp 362-3): (i) The original story about a military commander (Stufe 1); (ii) The Succession Narrative (Stufe 2); (iii) The prosalmonic redaction (Stufe 3); and (iv) Later and *dtr.* additions. The author indicates how the original intention of the story was changed during its redaction history: "Beindruckend ist, dass der Prozess des literarischen Wachstums eine alte Tradition in ihr Gegenteil verwandelt. Aus einer radikalen Königskritik wird eine Apologie des

Königtums und seiner Repräsentanten und schliesslich eine prodynastische Legitimationsschrift. Der Aussagetendenz der jeweiligen literarischen Stufe entsprechend sind Inhalte und Personen der Wandlung unterworfen. Die Bearbeiter - besser: die weiteren Historiografen — machen sich geschickt die Anlagen und Mehrdeutigkeiten ihrer Vorlagen zunutze. Die Joabgestalt gibt ein eindrückliches Beispiel für die Gestaltungskraft und für die Wandlungsfähigkeit althebräischer Geschichtsschreibung" (pp. 330-1).

Although each of the three approaches towards the Joab tradition could be read in isolation, they are presented here in order to provide a "Gesamtbild" (p 2). This study assumes that different perspectives on biblical texts are necessary for a more adequate understanding of them. Bietenhard's work thus provides three perspectives on the Joab tradition that can interact in the exegete's mind in order to shed some light on this neglected biblical figure.

The methodological approach of this study is to be highly commended. Bearing in mind that Bietenhard writes from and for the German-speaking scholarly world, her openness to a variety of methodological approaches is like a breath of fresh air. She does not claim exclusivity for any of the methodological approaches that she uses. She acknowledges the appropriate role and position of these methods, namely as tools with which the exegete can explore the different perspectives on the multidimensional world of the biblical text.

Her thorough analysis of the Joab tradition presents the exegete with a nuanced view of the military commander, Joab, as well as of the historiographical dynamics and the tradition- and redaction-historical processes. This nuanced account highlights the dynamic process of interpretation and reinterpretation that is reflected in the Biblical texts. By highlighting these dynamics, the modern reader/interpreter is drawn into the process of ongoing appropriation. To quote the author's introductory remark again: "Im Grunde sehen wir uns vor dieselbe Aufgabe gestellt, der sich die alten Schriftsteller gegenüber sahen: abbildend beschreiben, um die eigene Lebenswelt sinnstiftend zu deuten" (p. 2).

This book can be highly recommended, not only for those interested in the figure of Joab, but also for those who are interested in methodological issues.

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Török, L 1997. *The kingdom of Kush. Handbook of the Napatan-Meroitic civilization* (Handbuch der Orientalistik. Erste Abteilung, Der Nahe und der Mittlere Osten; 31). Leiden: Brill. pp. 589 illus. ISBN 9004104488. US\$ 189.00.

The motivation for compiling this comprehensive study of the Middle Nile (Nubian) Kingdom of Kush was to provide a survey of the textual, archaeological and art historical information that mainly came to the fore thanks to the efforts of the UNESCO rescue campaign undertaken in this region from about 1961-1980. This campaign created an awareness of the "distinctive features of the cultural developments in the Kingdom of Kush" (p. 4). As the author states, however, "archaeological strategy has remained almost exclusively subordinate to rescue work" (p. 5). He makes it clear that "the Egyptianisation of Kushite culture was determined by the inner-directed processes of an indigenous political, ideological and social structure" (p. 5). He furthermore points out that an appreciation and objective

presentation of the "evidence" (?) can only be aspired to once the role of the indigenous population has been acknowledged. The study aims to set forth a Middle Nile or a Nubian perspective, as opposed to the more Egyptian perspective that was prevalent in studies of this region not too long ago (cf. pp. 26-27).

The term Kush in this book refers to the political entity that existed in the Middle Nile Region (Nubia) from the 10th century BC to the 5th century AD. The focus was placed primarily on the emergence of the native state of Kush (after the Egyptian domination in the 11th century BC); the Kushite rule over Egypt (the 25th Dynasty); and the intellectual foundations and political history of the Kingdom in the Napatan (7th – 3rd centuries) and Meroitic (3rd century BC – 4th century AD) periods.

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter discusses the history of research, the land and the people. The second chapter is devoted to the historical and archaeological evidence. The third chapter studies the end of Egyptian domination and the rise of the Kingdom of Kush. The fourth chapter covers the 25th Dynasty. The fifth chapter considers the intellectual and political foundation of the kingdom of Kush and the sixth chapter views the kingdom of Kush between the withdrawal from Egypt and the end of the Napatan dynasty. The last chapter discusses the Meroitic dynasty and the disintegration of the kingdom. A very thorough bibliography is provided, as is an appendix providing a useful genealogy of the kings from Alara to Nastasefi. Indexes of the names, places, peoples, topics, as well as Egyptian and Meroitic words are given. The maps, figures and plates can be found at the back of the book.

The title of this book claims to be a handbook of the Napatan-Meroitic civilisation. In both the variety of topics addressed and the thoroughness of the research conducted, this claim holds true. The treatment of the sources – textual, archaeological and art historical – was conducted in a responsible and scientific manner (cf., for example, the list of the rulers of Kush and the discussion of their titularies, pp. 200ff.). Although attempting to provide a Nubian perspective, Török still has succeeded in evaluating the information at his disposal in a balanced and critical manner. This is evident in his conclusion that the kingdom of Kush did not play a pivotal role in Africa's iron industry (pp. 34-35). He also states that the Kushite concept of "queenship" was based largely on the Theban model of the God's Wife to Amen (p. 289) – the role of the Nubian queen (*kandake*) is often misinterpreted and exaggerated.

His discussion in the introduction on the history of the research is particularly useful, as this is a subject not often covered in studies of the Middle Nile Region. Among some of the other interesting topics the author analyses in detail are: the royal succession, the sources of royal power and the royal duties (Chapter five), including discussions on the Nubian Amen-Re and the "election" of the king. Török largely succeeded in his aim to present "Middle Nile studies as an increasingly independent and special branch of Ancient History" (cf. pp. 26-27). Following from this, perhaps it would have been useful if he could have explored further some aspects from the perspective of the "inner-directed processes" he mentions. In this regard one tends to think about his discussion of Meroitic religion – why, for example, so little mention of Apedemak's role in the kingship ideology and his theological and iconographical development from obscure deity to state god? And why no mention of his connection with the Egyptian lion god Mahes and his motifs, especially through the temples at Philae? While he acknowledges the talents of the Napatan and Meroitic craftsmen and

artists, a consideration of the Nilotic formalism (the tendency to reduce the bodily form to its essentials) present in Meroitic *ba*-statues would have been welcome. A limited selection of plates appears at the back.

The author effectively demonstrated that the Napatan-Meroitic civilisation did emerge out of thin air, or that it was merely a reproduction of an Egyptian model. It possessed a solid intellectual foundation and a unique political history. As a reference work for students of the Napatan-Meroitic civilisation, this book is highly recommended.

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