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Herbert Niehr (Stellenbosch/Tübingen)

**THE ROYAL FUNERAL IN ANCIENT SYRIA.
A COMPARATIVE VIEW ON THE TOMBS IN THE
PALACES OF QATNA, KUMIDI AND UGARIT**

ABSTRACT

The recent discovery of an untouched royal tomb in the palace of Qatna (Syria) raises the question of a comparison between the new data obtained from Qatna with the research undertaken several years ago in the royal tombs of Kumidi (Lebanon) and Ugarit (Syria).

*Siegfried Mittmann (Universität Tübingen)**

**DIE HELLENISTISCHE MAUERINSCRIFT VON
GADARA (UMM QĒS) UND DIE SELEUKIDISCH
DYNASTISCHE TOPONYMIE PALÄSTINAS**

ABSTRACT

Vor der hellenistischen Südmauer der Dekapolisstadt Gadara kamen 1993 Fragmente einer griechisch beschrifteten Steintafel ans Licht. Die vierzeilige Inschrift nennt eine Jahreszahl der seleukidischen Ära (228 = 85/84 v. Chr.), eine Einzelperson namens Philotas und die Polis der Seleukeier, deren toponyme Näherbestimmung am Ende der 3. Zeile weggebrochen ist. Der erste Hauptteil des Beitrags ermittelt den historischen Hintergrund des Datums. Es markiert den Wiederaufbau der Befestigungsmauer, nachdem der Hasmonäer Alexander Jannaios 98 v. Chr. die Stadt, eine makedonische Militärkolonie, nach zehnmonatiger Belagerung erobert, aber um 93 v. Chr. wieder verloren hatte. Initiator der Restitution war zumindest der letzte seleukidische Herrscher über Coelesyrien, der in Damaskus residierende Antiochos XII., der wohl noch im Jahr der Inschrift auf einem Feldzug gegen die Nabatäer im Negeb fiel. Philotas vertrat ihn offenbar in Gadara als Kommandant der Festung und Administrator der Polis. Der zweite Teil rekonstruiert vor dem Hintergrund der antiken Toponymie Palästinas die 3. Zeile, die ergänzt „derer inmitten von Gadara“ lautet. Der traditionelle Name „Gadara“ fehlt niemals in den alten Quellen und war zur Identifizierung der genannten „Seleukeier“ unerlässlich. Diese werden durch die präpositionale Verbindung „inmitten,“ die in solchem Kontext ungewöhnlich ist, als stadtansässige und durch den Mauerring geschützte Bürger der Polis gekennzeichnet.

Douglas Lawrie (University of the Western Cape)

OF PROVERBS, METAPHORS AND PLATITUDES*

ABSTRACT

The point of departure of this paper is that proverbs are related to both metaphors (generally highly valued) and platitudes or stereotypes (generally despised and distrusted). Moreover, it is often said, especially in non-Western societies, that proverbs embody wisdom. Drawing on Kenneth Burke's "dramatistic" view of language and insights from developmental and cognitive psychology, the paper examines the complicated and paradoxical set of relationships between proverbs, metaphors, platitudes and wisdom. It looks at the various answers that scholars have proposed to the questions raised by proverbial wisdom. Finally, it suggests that the Western obsession with novelty may be excessive and may have led to a devaluation and misunderstanding of wisdom.

*Steven E Runge (University of Stellenbosch)**

PRAGMATIC EFFECTS OF SEMANTICALLY REDUNDANT ANCHORING EXPRESSIONS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW NARRATIVE

ABSTRACT

Referring expressions (e.g., proper names such as "Isaac," or epithets such as "his son") are prototypically used for semantic reasons to track participants, to know 'who is doing what to whom.' Epithets can also be used to (re-)establish a thematic relation of a participant to the discourse (e.g. Isaac, his son), anchoring them in a specific way. However, semantically redundant anchoring expressions occur regularly in BH narrative in contexts where a participant's thematic relation is already well established. What then is the function of these redundant anchoring expressions if it is semantically redundant? Though selected passages or terms have been studied, a systematic linguistic description of the default and marked uses of referring expressions has not been completed. This paper will first outline the default function of anchoring expressions. Next, it will propose that the redundant use of

anchoring expressions is pragmatically motivated, and represents a marked usage to accomplish various thematic effects. These effects will be illustrated through an exposition of Genesis 27. Specific functions of the marked use of anchoring expressions will be proposed (e.g., indicating center of attention, relative saliency of participants, or shifts in thematic role), and implications for further research will be presented.

*Erasmus Gass (University of Tübingen)**

SAMSON AND DELILAH IN A NEWLY FOUND INSCRIPTION?

ABSTRACT

In a lengthy discussion Shea has proposed many new readings of an ostrakon which was found in the late-seventh-century-B.C.E. destruction layer of Ashkelon. Contrary to the proposal of Cross, he tries to establish some new readings which could be of importance for biblical scholars inasmuch as he finds Samson and Delilah on this ostrakon. This critique of the new readings of Shea focuses on palaeographical, orthographical and syntactical problems which make it difficult to accept his transliteration, translation and historical conclusions. Shea's reconstruction of this ostrakon's original text is therefore rejected, and a new translation of this fragmentary text is given.

*Michael Avioz (Bar-Ilan University, Israel)**

THE ANALOGIES BETWEEN THE DAVID-BATHSHEBA AFFAIR AND THE NABOTH NARRATIVE

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I sought to highlight the contribution of the analogies between the David and Bathsheba affair and the Naboth narrative. The criteria for comparing these narratives include similarities in the number and function of the participating characters, style, structure, and language. The narrator's use of parallels allows the reader to re-examine his or her assumptions about the literary design of all the characters involved. David's character is compared with that of Jezebel, so that a more critical description is received. The comparison between David and Ahab shows Ahab in a more positive light, as he was not actively involved in obtaining the vineyard. This contrasts with David's great activity in the effort to attain Bathsheba and to conceal his sin. However, this does not affect the continuity of the Davidic House since it is secured by Nathan's oracle.

BOOK REVIEWS

Schroer, S & Keel, O 2005. *Die Ikonographie Palästinas/ Israels und der Alte Orient: Eine Religionsgeschichte in Bildern (Vom ausgehenden Mesolithikum bis zur Frühbronzezeit. Band 1)*. Fribourg: Academic Press. pp. 392. ISBN: 3-7278-1508-6.

Othmar Keel of Fribourg and his “Schule” have done much not only to relate Ancient Near Eastern iconography to the text of the Hebrew Bible, but also by collecting and analysing *primary* iconographical sources.¹ If we can call the seal *Corpus* (Keel 1995, 1997) a *magnum opus* and *GGG* (Keel & Uehlinger 2001) a “best-seller,” the new series *IPIAO* is the *summa iconographica* (p. 9). Another three (in a total of six books – 3 and 4 consist of two volumes each) are planned. Volume 1 deals with the Mesolithic to the Early Bronze period, ca. 12000-2000 B.C.E. and the other volumes will take this further.

The *Introduction* sets out the purpose, presuppositions and structure of the whole project. The Natufium, Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Early Bronze ages are then dealt with. Each chapter is well organized according to a fixed structure: dating, main sites (with maps), cultural-historical aspects (e.g. the dead), iconographic themes (e.g. animals), links with the Bible (e.g. “Chaoskampf”) and a catalogue. Iconographic sources in all media are dealt with in the *Catalogue*. There is a description and technical details: find spot and context; period and dating; medium, material and state; measurements; current collection and publications; and parallels. Each item in the catalogue (262 items) is given in the form of a line-drawing in the typically high-quality style of Keel and *OBO*, although one would have preferred photographs of the originals – it is just not the same to look at drawings of masterpieces such as the statue of Chephren (120) and the scribe of the Louvre (150)! It is impossible to comment on the detail of the catalogue items.

There is a very handy map (frontispiece). A comparative table (back inside cover) of the main motifs and their development through time, sorted according to four main motifs, summarizes the whole volume: from numinous wild animals to domesticated animals, from enthroned female to erotic woman, from ancestor cult to service of the deity, and from rulership to mythical *Chaoskampf*.

This series will replace the totally outdated *AOB* (Gressmann 1927) and especially *ANEP* (Pritchard 1974), and goes much further by making definite links with the

1 For a list cf. Keel & Uehlinger (1996: 184-187) and under www.unifr.ch/bif/Chapters/icon.html.

Bible and with its emphasis on a “Religionsgeschichte” which as shown (p. 15) was very much reduced in *ANEP*.

Because of the bibliography in the catalogue, references are very detailed. A publication which could be added is that of the South African scholars Lewis-Williams & Pearce (2005). Tubb (1985) cited on p. 96 is missing from the *Literaturverzeichnis* and Swan Hall (p. 380) should be given under “Hall.”

This book, which again emphasises *Das Recht Bilder gesehen zu werden*, (Keel 1992; cf. Lewis 2005), can be used by people interested in archaeology, culture, religion and the study of the Bible. Its greatest value lies in the original material which it presents. It is hoped that the first volume will come out in English soon and that we shall not wait long for the further volumes!

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Pritchard, J B 1974². *The Ancient Near East in Pictures. Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton: University Press.

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Yon, M 2006. *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. pp. viii + 188. ISBN: 1-57506-029-9.

This book is by Madame Marguerite Yon of Lyon, the chief archaeologist at the site of Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit) in Northern Syria from 1978-1998. It originally appeared in French (Yon 1997) and the English translation is long overdue. The English version contains updates which are mainly of a bibliographic nature up to 2005.

Overviews on the importance of the discoveries at Ugarit have already been published by Schaeffer (1939), and there is the monumental *Handbook* of Watson & Wyatt (1999). The *Zabern Bildband* (Cornelius & Niehr 2004) concentrates on Ugarit religion. What makes this volume different is that it gives an authoritative overview of the *excavations* which started in 1929 and are still continuing. The book is divided into three main parts: Geography and History, Description of the Tell, and Artifacts illustrating official and everyday life. But there is an error in the Contents: the *Foreword* is on page 3 and not 7, and it does not deal with “The Discovery,” which is part of the *Introduction*.

The description of the tell (Chapter 2) is a joy to read. The view that the second temple on the acropolis should be related to Dagan is retained (cf. for *Ilu* Cornelius & Niehr 2004: 63-65).

Chapter 3 contains a selection of 66 objects (which include the cuneiform tablets which made Ugarit so famous!) in the form of a technical catalogue with photographs and drawings. The limestone statue #13 need not be El, but could be a deified king (Cornelius & Niehr 2004: 44). The outdated term “Astarte” is still retained for a naked plaque figurine #43. [From October 2004 to January 2005 there was an exhibition in Lyon “Aux origines de l’alphabet” (Galliano 2004), which included 341 artefacts.] The new English edition has some new illustrations such as the reconstruction model of the Baal temple (Fig. 66bis). Some of the illustrations are not reproduced well –

e.g. Figure 53, which looks like a bad photocopy. Compare the blurry aerial view of the tell Fig. 3 with the photographs in Cornelius & Niehr (2004)!

Nevertheless, this is a very important book in the *Studia Ugaritica*!

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