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CONTENTS

Meir Malul (University of Haifa)

"OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS YOU HAVE FOUNDED STRENGTH ..." (PS 8:3) DID CHILDREN SERVE AS PROPHETIC MEDIUMS IN BIBLICAL TIMES?

ABSTRACT

The present article puts to the test an hypothesis which has never been considered before in biblical and ANE scholarly literature: did the ancient cultures of the ANE (Ancient Near East), especially the one reflected in the Hebrew Bible, resort, probably on a popular level, to the custom of using small children as mediums for receiving messages from the deities? This custom is well attested in later periods, especially in Greek magical papyri from Egypt of Late Antiquity, and is also reflected in various rabbinical sources, especially in the famous adage of R. Yohanan: "Ever since the day the Temple had been destroyed, prophecy had been taken from prophets and given to fools and infants" (b. Baba Batra 12:2). Other folk literatures from all over the world also reflect the magic power accorded at times to small children. Yet the ANE sources, particularly the Hebrew Bible, seem almost altogether silent with regard to such a widely attested custom in Late Antiquity. The following discussion analyses a few passages and episodes, both from the general ANE milieu and especially from the Hebrew Bible, in the light of this hypothesis and suggests that this custom is indeed reflected there, albeit quite obliquely. These include the story of Samuel in 1 Sam 3; the custom of "passing" children through the fire to the Molech, frequently mentioned in close juxtaposition with forms of divination; the enigmatic verse in Isa 2:6; the Immanuel prophecy in Isa 7:14-17; the case of belomancy reported in 1 Sam 20:18-23, 35-42; the intriguing verse serving as part of the title of this article Ps 8:3; the story of young Joseph as a dream interpreter in Gen 37:5-10; and others. Since the use of children as mediums in Late Antiquity seems to have been an extra-mainstream practice, and perhaps was not condoned by the carriers of the official religion, it may have been silenced, or at least ignored by the writers of this official biblical tradition.

Talia Sutskover (Tel Aviv University)

THE SEMANTIC FIELDS OF SEEING AND ORAL COMMUNICATION IN THE JOSEPH NARRATIVE

ABSTRACT

Lexemes from the semantic fields of seeing and oral communication occur in a unique manner in the Joseph narrative, i.e. they consistently appear at critical turning points in the different scenes, and are often accompanied by special semantic and sound phenomena. Therefore, it is proposed that these semantic fields have a close connection to the theme of this narrative. Words from these fields point to the central problem of the narrative which is concerned with the acts of vision and speech and the characters' own insight. The story begins with the symbolic dreams of Joseph, which are constituents in the field of seeing, and lead to negative communication between Joseph and his brothers. Subsequently the dreams lead to years of cessation of any communication between them. The story ends with the reunion between Joseph and his brothers in which they finally **see** *him after a long period of separation and* **talk** *to him peacefully. Joseph recognises God's hidden presence through the symbolic dreams. As to the brothers, there is no explicit reference in the story to a development in their relationship with God.*

Adina Moshavi (Hebrew University)

SYNTACTIC EVIDENCE FOR A CLAUSAL ADVERB הלא IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

ABSTRACT

Biblical הלא *is conventionally understood as the combination of interrogative* ה *and negative* לא*, i.e. "is it not?" It has been posited that in addition to the combination of* ה *and* לא*, there is a separate particle* הלא *that is neither interrogative nor negative, and is similar in its use to* הנה*. Although non-interrogative* הלא *has received some attention in the scholarly literature, the case for its existence has not yet gained widespread acceptance. This article presents syntactic evidence for the existence of a non-interrogative, non-negative clausal adverb* הלא *in Biblical Hebrew. It is shown that, although the interrogative-negative combination and the non-interrogative*

clausal adverb are syntactically indistinguishable in many contexts, other syntactic contexts disambiguate between the two.

W. Randall Garr (University of California, Santa Barbara)

אָכֵן

ABSTRACT

אָכֵן *is a nonobligatory, exclamatory, sentence-level adverb that marks its sentence as a strong affirmative.*

Harry van Rooy (North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus)

A NEW PROPOSAL FOR AN OLD CRUX IN EZEK 2:6

ABSTRACT

The well-known text-critical problem in Ezek 2:6 with regard to the phrase כִּי סָרָבִים וְסַלּוֹנִים אוֹתָךְ has given rise to various interpretations. The one currently most widely accepted was made by Zimmerli in his commentary on Ezekiel, but this does not solve all the problems related to this phrase. Some scholars accept the reading of the Masoretic Text, albeit with a different interpretation of the words in the phrase. Others propose emendations, but the proposals do not solve all the problems. The versions demonstrate that they had a problem with the reading as well. In the proposed solution to the problem, it is accepted that the Septuagint and the Masoretic text contain two different editions of the book of Ezekiel, and that different proposals are needed for the two editions. Proposals are made for solving this problem in each of the two editions. The problems with the reading of the Masoretic text are discussed first, followed by a discussion of the renderings of this phrase in the versions. It is proposed that the text underlying the Masoretic text should have been כִּי סַלּוֹנִים וְסָרָבִים סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ, while the Septuagint is based on the following reading: כִּי סַלּוֹנִים וְסָרָבִים סֹבְבִים אוֹתָךְ.

Eep Talstra (Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam)

"I AND YOUR PEOPLE:" SYNTAX AND DIALOGUE IN EXOD 33

ABSTRACT

The theme of this article is the tension between linguistic system and literary design in biblical texts. In the course of textual interpretation it is important to search for what is probably standard usage of language and what linguistic units could be regarded as an intentional contribution to a text's literary structure. A related theme addressed here is the help of computer-assisted textual analysis. In using a syntactically analysed text database of the Hebrew Bible, queries searching for sets of particular linguistic constructions can do both: find sets of cases representing linguistic system, and register the variations, the special cases.

To demonstrate this possibility the article presents the first version of the research instrument Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible (2006). A few samples of linguistic constructions are taken from the text of Exod 33 and SESB queries are used to search for sets of related material in the Hebrew Bible. V. 12: The ordinary clause of the type "x said to y," appears to be exceptional in terms of frequency when Moses is the subject and YHWH is the addressee: "Moses said to YHWH." The case of Moses taking the initiative appears to be related to the grammatically special section on the tent and the intense dialogue of Moses and God on Israel's future. V. 16: The phrase "I and your people" also appears to be exceptional. It only can be found in Exod 33 and this phrase too is related to the debate between God and Moses: to whom belongs this people?

Tamar Zewi (University of Haifa)

THE SYNTACTIC FUNCTION OF NEGATIVE PARTICLES IN BIBLICAL HEBREW AND ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

ABSTRACT

This article examines cases in which the Biblical Hebrew particles לֹא and אַל exhibit an independent syntactic status by expressing only negation. This type of negation is not accompanied by any supplementary existential meaning, and it conveys the

negation as the main focus of a clause. An independent syntactic status of the negative particles is mostly revealed in one-member and elliptical clauses. The elliptical or one-member clauses that contain only a negative particle should be considered predicates in a functional sense. Like Biblical Hebrew, English usually employs for these constructions elliptical or one-member clauses that present only the negative particle "no," and in older stages of English also "nay." Other infrequent constructions in which sole negation is put in a predicative status in Biblical Hebrew are לֹא־הוּא *(Jer 5:12), and* לֹא־כֵן *(Gen 48:18, Exod 10:11).*

BOOK REVIEWS

Lunn, N P 2006. *Word-order Variation in Biblical Poetry. Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics* (Paternoster Biblical Monographs). Milton Keynes, United Kingdom: Paternoster. pp. 373. ISBN: 10 1-84227-423-6.

In recent years the interpretation of word order (or to be more precise, constituent order) in Biblical Hebrew (=BH) has received much attention in scholarly circles. Huge strides have been made from labelling as "emphasis" any variation from what has been regarded as the normal or "unmarked" linear order of sentence constituents. In developing a more nuanced notional framework for describing the functions of various word order configurations, the information structure oriented model of Lambrecht (1994) has played a pivotal role. (For a summary of other models, cf. Floor 2004 and Moshavi forthcoming.) However, most of the studies focused on the interpretation of word-order patterns in BH narrative texts.

In his doctoral dissertation completed under the supervision of Jean-Marc Heimerdinger at the London School of Theology, Lunn sets out to develop a model for the interpretation of the word order in BH poetry. And according to a comment by his supervisor in the **Foreword** of Lunn's book, this study provides "The starting point for future scholarly discussions on the subject."

The main thrust of Lunn's basic hypotheses is the following: firstly, the word order in poetry in general follows the same rules as those in narrative. Therefore, many variations from the so-called canonical order in poetry can be explained with the help of the same pragmatic model that is used to describe these variations in narrative. Secondly, variations that cannot be explained pragmatically represent patterns of defamiliarisation, a phenomenon that is attested in poetry across languages. And thirdly, these patterns of defamiliarisation in BH poetical texts are not random.

After describing in **Chapter 1** (1) the extent of the problem he wants to investigates, (2) these basic hypotheses, and (3) his corpus (Pss, Isa 40-66; Job 3-14, Prov 1-9, Song and Num 23-24, representing 4000 verses of poetry), Lunn spells out his understanding of the basic units of BH poetry in **Chapter 2**. Following Watson, he uses the term "colon." He accepts Wendland's views (p. 13) that 75% of BH verse is structured as bicola. 20% are tricola, and only 5% are monocola or bigger units. Cola combine to form sections or units (p. 12). Although he maintains that the relationship between most bi-cola is that of a parallelism at one or more levels (e.g. syntactic,

semantic, etc.), he does leave room for bicola that do not display any type of parallelism. The structure they may display he describes on p. 23.

In **Chapter 3** Lunn describes the pragmatic factors that influence BH word order. His point of departure is the same as Lambrecht's (1994). In this regard Lunn follows Heimerdinger (1999) and Shimashaki (2001) in their interpretation of Lambrechts, in particular, on the one hand, the distinctions made between predicate, argument and sentence focus, and, on the other hand, that of topics in different states of activation. Following the latter authors, and using distinctions introduced by Dik (1989), but deviating from Lambrechts, Lunn distinguishes between different types of focus, viz. contrasting, parallel, replacing, restricting, expanding, selecting and specifying focus. Although fronting is the typical construction to mark instances of argument or sentence focus, Lunn points to the necessity of distinguish instances where temporal and spatial constituents are fronted in "unmarked sentence-initial phrases of setting" (p. 55). According to him, any taxonomy of topic and focus structures also needs to take into account the "syntactic construction known *as extraposition*" (p. 54) – traditionally referred to as the *casus pendens*. The model Lunn formulates to explain the pragmatic factors that may influence word order in BH certainly has its merits. However, it does have a number of rough edges; for example, the term "extraposition" is used in linguistic circles to refer to elements that are moved to the end of a clause (Bussmann 1996:160); the term "argument focus" may be misleading, since it can refer to an adjunct that is the focus of an utterance (the term "constituent focus" would have been more appropriate); and his remark on p. 53 that "extraposition may be employed simply to indicate the same type of focus as marked word order" can be called into question. The primary function of this construction is rather to reactivate identifiable topics in order to comment on them. Instances where it is used to mark focus are limited, and limited to focus articulations what Lunn would call "contrastive focus." Furthermore, although Lunn tries to refine the categories of focus he uses, he does not pay much attention to how, and which, different "types" of topics are marked. For example, one gets the impression from his discussion in this chapter that topics are mainly introduced in event reporting and presentational clauses marked for sentence focus. Little is said of the focus structure of clauses which compare or list different topics, and which cannot be regarded as having sentence focus (e.g. Isa 62:9. See also his own unconvincing explanation of this verse on pp. 132-133).

In **Chapter 4** Lunn illustrates that the same type of focus constructions that have been identified and explain in terms of pragmatic considerations in narrative texts of the Hebrew Bible also occur in non-parallel lines of poetic texts. He aptly observes, "It would be unreasonable to suppose that pragmatically marked order should vanish

entirely from the poetic genre" (p. 94). Although one may question the value and empirical status of the various argument focus types he distinguishes (cf. e.g. Moshavi forthcoming) and some of his interpretations of the syntax and semantics of the focus particles (cf. Van der Merwe forthcoming a and b), the fact that many marked constructions in non-parallel poetic texts can be explained pragmatically cannot be denied. Later in his work (i.e. Chapter 11, pp. 276-278) he points out that, while in narrative texts 14.5% of the clauses have a marked word order, in his poetic corpus 25.6% of the clauses have a marked word order that could be explained pragmatically. The reason for this difference he correctly attributed to the fact that in poetry "marked clauses presenting new topics may be expected to occur more frequently" (p. 277).

Defamiliarised word order in parallel lines is the topic of **Chapter 5**. It is widely acknowledged that poetic texts may display word-order patterns, and in particular chiastic patterns, that cannot be explained in terms of pragmatic considerations. Lunn provides evidence from his corpus that these patterns are not limited to chiasms. Significant, though, is the evidence that he provides to illustrate that these patterns do not occur randomly. They occur predominantly in the second line of a parallelism. According to Lunn, they act as defamiliarising devices (DEF). The pattern CAN (= canonical order) + DEF is frequently attested, viz. 330x in his corpus. This compares well with the 360x that the pattern CAN+CAN occurs. In contrast, the pattern DEF + CAN is rare (40 from 1300 verbal clause parallelisms). According to Lunn, unusual word-order patterns in the second line of a parallelism are attested across languages in poetry. He (p. 118) hypothesises that in BH the unusual use (shift) of tense in the second line of a parallelism may also be interpreted as a defamiliarising device (e.g. the shift from qatal to yiqtol in Ps 3:13). Unfortunately, he does not back up this claim with textual evidence beyond that of Ps 3:13.

Since pragmatic considerations may sometimes yield a chiastic pattern between two clauses as far as their constituents are concerned, Lunn provides some criteria in **Chapter 6** for distinguishing between such pragmatically motivated instances and those where defamiliarising is involved.

In **Chapter 7** Lunn considers instances where the first line of a parallel pair is marked for pragmatic reasons. He finds that the second line of the pair typically also displays the same pragmatically motivated marked word order. This applies even to extended parallelisms. If in the extended parallelisms a colon with a non-marked order is used (e.g. a verb initial clause), that colon is either medial of final (pp. 144-150). Another significant observation Lunn makes is that a marked constituent in the A-line cannot be gapped in the B-line (p. 144). Some of Lunn's explanations of the pragmatic considerations that motivate the markedness of two or more marked parallel lines are

not convincing. For example, he refers to the topics listed in Ps 145:11 as "focal elements." This vague pragmatic notion is not according to his own model and is due to the fact that his pragmatic model is underdeveloped with respect to the way to handle topics that are compared or listed. Nevertheless, the weakness in Lunn's pragmatic model does not mean that the marked constructions in both lines are not due to pragmatic considerations. I think that Lunn is correct that they can be accounted for in these terms; I just disagree with him as to how they should be explained pragmatically.

Lunn cannot explain 1.4 % of his corpus of verbal clauses, which make up 16.1% of all the DEF clauses, in terms of the pattern identified in Chapter 5, i.e. CAN+DEF. The distribution of these unusual colon arrangements (e.g 40 DEF//CAN and 19 DEF//DEF, as well as that of 25 DEF cola in non-parallelism) is the topic of **Chapter 8**. On the basis of an analysis of the context of each of these DEF clauses, Lunn comes to the conclusion that most of them (about 75%) occur at the opening or closure of a textual unit. The rest tend to occur at a pivotal point (peak) in a unit. Also significant is his finding that this type of use of DEF clauses tends to be popular with some poets and not with other (p. 182).

In **Chapter 9** Lunn illustrates the value of his model for analysing a number of longer texts, some which may be regarded as standard (Ps 1; 103; Job 12; Song 1 and Num 23:7-10) and others that may be considered as difficult (e.g. Ps 44:2-9, Isa 42:1-4; 60:1-3). Before rapping up his work in concluding **Chapter 11**, he critically assesses the works of Rosenbaum (1997) and Gross (2001) in **Chapter 10**.

I do think that Lunn's model for interpreting motivated instances of marked word order from a pragmatic perspective needs some refinement. I also do not agree with some of his analyses and interpretations of the texts he treats. However, I do think he has made an important contribution towards better understanding the linear order of constituents in verbal clauses in BH poetry. This work represents innovative and challenging hypotheses that are backed-up by substantial textual evidence. I therefore fully agree with Heimerdinger's remark in the **Foreword** that this study should be "The starting point for future scholarly discussions on the subject."

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