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NO ABSTRACTS

REVIEWS

E. TALSTRA – F. POSTMA – H. A. VAN ZWET, *Deuterocesaja. Proeve van automatische tekstverwerking ten dienste van de exegese*, 1981, 153, vu Boekhandel-Uitgeverij, Amsterdam. Price: DG 22,50

Theologians are mostly conservative in their conceptions and also in the use of modern aids to assist them with their research. It took quite a time for Biblical scholars to realise how useful the computer can be as an aid. In stead of hunting around for particulars in the Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament and with the risk that some small detail might have escaped your attention, a computer programme can be worked out to produce in a very short time all the detail you want which could have taken you years of painstaking hunting to collect. For quite a number of years this is now realised by certain Biblical scholars, especially those studying grammatical constructions and others interested in bibliographical material. At the Free University of Amsterdam the value of the computer is fully realised and a Working Group Informatika is formed to take up this new challenge. In the foreword the authors point out how inadequate the Concordances of Mandelkern and Lisowsky are for a study of the literary structure of a literary unit. The usefulness of the computer is, however, closely linked to the method applied. The computer can only do what the scholars want him to do. The kind of programme written and the feasibility of it is thus very important. The Group Informatika gives us in this book the results of their approach on Deutero-Isaiah. It is most interesting. It is still a test-case, e.g. it gives two imperatives in a sentence, the combination of *nhm* and *'m* in a verse etc.

But by far the greatest part of the book is taken up by a very useful concordance of Is. 40-55. This is not an ordinary concordance, but makes finer distinctions than usually present in concordances.

We are looking forward to further results of this project. It can be heartily recommended.

F. C. FENSHAM

ZIONY ZEVIT, *Matres lectionis in ancient Hebrew epigraphs*, 1980, 43, American Schools of Oriental Research, Monograph Series, No. 2, Cambridge, MA, n.p.

The author has devoted for many years his attention to the study of the *matres lectionis*. In chapter I he gives a survey of the study of this subject. The modern approach is generated by W. F. Albright and fully worked out by his students F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman in *Early Hebrew Orthography*, 1952. They accepted that orthographic patterns followed rigid laws and can be classified historically. At an early stage Northwest Semitic orthography was pure consonantal. In the 11th and 10th centuries B.C. the Aramaeans started to use certain consonants as final vowels. The Hebrews and Moabites borrowed it from the Aramaeans about the 9th century. The Aramaeans started to use the *matres lectionis* as vowels in medial position in the 8th and 7th centuries and it may have been taken over by the Hebrews in the 6th century. The author now studies these assumptions in light of the epigraphical material discovered since 1952 and also in light of various studies made in the meantime. Especially of interest is the discovery of a sporadic use of consonants as vowels (and the same as in Hebrew) in Ugaritic fully discussed by J. Blau and S. E. Loewenstamm, *Ugarit Forschungen* 2 (1970), 19-33 (and not *Ugaritische Forschungen* as indicated by the author p. 38). And then there is still other epigraphical material from Northwest Semitic languages bearing on this subject. This kind of evidence somehow dented the hypothesis of Cross and Freedman.

In the second chapter the author investigated epigraphical material from the 8th century in Israel. In this period the *matres lectionis* were used in a final position, but also in a medial position in the northern dialect in personal names. Chapter 3 is concerned with epigraphical material from Judah in the 8th-7th centuries. From a wide variety of material it is clear that *he* and *waw* were used in a final position and *waw*, *yod* and *aleph* in a medial position. I am not convinced by the example from three seals from Arad, because on seal no. 107 the personal name is written *'lšb* while on no. 105 and 106 *'lyšb* that we have here a name *'elšab*. The name on seal no. 107 might be mistakenly written, cf. e.g. Letter 24 line 2 *'elyāšib* (Y. Aharoni, *ktwbwt 'rd*, 1975, 48) and the wellknown personal name in Ezra-Nehemiah. Chapter 4

discusses material from the 6th century and chapter 5 material after the 6th century. A very complete bibliography is added.

This up-to-date study can be warmly recommended for further study.

F. C. FENSHAM

L. H. VILSKER, *Manuel d'Araméen samaritain*, 1981, 122 (Translated from Russian by J. Margain), Éditions du CNRS, Paris, Price FR 120

This is not only a translation, but the translator received the right to modify the original and to add to the bibliography (cf. the foreword of the translator). Before this grammar the last attempt at a grammar on Samaritan Aramaic was made by J. Rosenberg in 1901. In the meantime many new inscriptions were discovered and it was thus necessary that a new grammar should be published. It is a pity, however, that the papyri of Wadi Dāliyah are not available for this study.

The grammar-itself is a solid piece of research, starting with a useful introduction in which, however, the rôle of Samaria as a province in the Persian satrapy of the Trans-Euphrates is somehow neglected. Next the Samaritan script is described, followed by the phonology, morphology, syntax and a few good remarks on the lexical uses of certain terms. In the first appendix the author supplies us with specimens of Samaritan script, a transliteration and even a translation. This is very useful indeed. The grammar is concluded with a full bibliography of 153 items and a notation of Samaritan mss. in Russian libraries. To the bibliography we may add now R. T. Anderson, *Studies in Samaritan Manuscripts and Artifacts. The Chamberlain-Warren Collection*, 1978.

This work is to be welcomed by all who are interested in Samaritan Aramaic.

F. C. FENSHAM

VERMONDO BRUGNATELLI, *Question di morfologia e sintassi dei numerali cardinali semitici* 1982, 167, Pubblicazioni della facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell' università di Milano, XCII, sezione a cura dell' istituto di glottologia, la nuova italia editrice, Firenze, Price IL 20 000

The author tackles the difficult problems in connection with the Semitic cardinal numerals, but there is much more to it: He also gives a discussion of numerals in the Hamitic languages, viz. Egyptian, Lybian-Berber and Cushitic. The study covers, thus, a wide field, even modern Arabic dialects are included (cf. pp. 41 ff.) and also some of the material of Ebla thusfar published (pp. 14 ff.). The material is presented in a fair way with good and balanced discussions. One of the vexing problems of the numerals is its syntax, especially the correspondence of the feminine forms with the masculine nouns from three to nine and vice versa. The author discusses all the more important solutions presented to this problem with also a discussion of the polarity (cf. especially pp. 101 ff.). The author's research brings him to a new hypothesis which we may call a hypothesis built upon a hypothesis. Building on an assumption of Aspesi and other scholars he accepts that at an early stage there developed in the Semitic languages a distinction between masculine and feminine in which the phoneme *-t* was added to the feminine. There also developed a plural form to which the phoneme *-t* was added. It is to be expected that the numerals connected to the plural form should also be formed with this plural form. In this manner a kind of "pseudo-feminine" form came into use which remained (cf. p. 120). For a full discussion, however, please read pp. 128-130.

We are glad to have this study with its new insights and it could be recommended for further study.

F. C. FENSHAM

MICHAEL L. KLEIN, *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch according to their extant Sources*, I-II, 1980, 260, 199 + 8 plates, Biblical Institute Press, Analecta Biblica 76, Rome, Price IL 25 000

For many years scholars had at their disposal the work of M. Ginsburger, *Das Fragmententargum*, 1899, but at the same time they were well aware of the fact that it should not be trusted. Then came the dissertation of M. C. Doubles in 1962 which is not published, but can also be criticized for its inaccuracies. But now we have this careful study of M. L. Klein, one of

the leading scholars in the field of Targumic studies. And one is not for a moment disappointed. It is written with scholarly acumen, with years of experience in this mine field of scholarly activity. These two volumes consist of introductory essays where the value of the different mss., viz., the Paris ms., the Vatican ms., the Nürnberg ms., the Leipzig University ms., the Jewish Theological Seminary ms. and the British Museum ms., are assessed and the relation between the mss. fixed. Very useful is also the discussion on previous editions. Incidentally Klein writes about Ginsburger's edition: "In short, Ginsburger's edition is entirely unreliable", even if it has seen recently two fresh editions. The rest of the first volume is dedicated to a careful publication of the texts of the Fragment-Targums (the plural of Targums should be noted). The second volume gives an introduction in which the author describes his problems in translating the Fragment-Targums. A very useful translation is then given.

We are deep in debt to the author for his detective work in bringing all the evidence together so that we have now a reliable edition of the Fragment-Targums. It can heartily be recommended.

F. C. FENSHAM

Atti del sodalizio glottologico milanese, XXI (1979-80), 126, Milan (Published in memory of prof. Enzo Evangelisti) N.P.

The greatest part of this publication is dedicated to the study of Hamito-Semitic and Indo-European. In the contribution of G. Garbini we have a short summary of certain approaches to this field of study and then clear indications of the pitfalls of such a study. It is not possible to compare Hamito-Semitic with Indo-European, but cf. especially the contributions of U. Rapallo (pp. 73 ff.), of F. Aspesi (pp. 81 ff.) and to a certain extent that of V. Brugnatelli (pp. 88 ff.; cf. also our discussion of his book on the Semitic numerals). Two short contributions are of special interest to Northwest Semitic, viz. the seven notes of F. Israel on Phoenician and the description of P. Xella of the Ugaritic Project in Rome. The workers in this project are A. M. Gloria Capomacchia, Serena M. Cecchini, Maria Giulia Guzzo Amadasi, Sergio Ribichini and Paolo Xella. We are looking forward to the results of this work. We also have noticed that some of these names have turned up in the preface to Paolo Xella's important book *I testi rituali di Ugarit*, I, 1981, 8 which might show the important work they are doing.

For scholars interested in a wide scope of scholarship this issue of the *Atti* can be recommended.

F. C. FENSHAM

G. DEL OLMO LETE, *Mitos y leyendas de Canaan, segun la tradicion de Ugarit*, 1981, 699, Institucion san Jeronimo, ediciones Christianidad, Price P 3000

This is the Ugaritic *magnum opus* of the author. In various contributions of the author to periodicals we have already noticed his balanced views. It is thus a welcome addition to the already growing literature to the myths and legends of Ugarit. The study is introduced with an important contribution to literary types in the stories, e.g. on descriptive language, dialogue and a mixture of descriptive language and dialogue. A useful discussion is also given on the mythological background of the myths and legends. This part is concluded with a cautious discussion on Ugarit and the Old Testament. Here one would have expected a more penetrating discussion, especially on the methods used, e.g. an evaluation of the work of Dahood and his students.

The bulk of this book is dedicated to a discussion of the Mythological Baal-Anat Cycle, the Epics of Keret and Aqhat, the saga of Rapauma, various mythological poems and mythological fragments. One wonders why certain material of *Ugaritica V* is not discussed. That would have added to the usefulness of this publication. The study is concluded with a good glossary in which the author makes his choice for the meaning of a term. One cannot always agree with his specific choice, but in Ugaritic you have to accept that difference of opinion will prevail on the meaning of certain terms.

The impression created by this book is that the author gives a balanced view on the latest debate on the texts and also in various instances makes fresh contributions to the better understanding of the texts. This book should have a larger audience than only those that can

read Spanish and one hopes that an English translation would soon be published. This study is so important that it should not go unnoticed. It takes the latest views into consideration without neglecting older proposals. But the literature on the Ugaritic texts is steadily growing and one is not surprised that the author has missed something here and there, but at the same time one is more surprised at what he has discovered and presented in a fair way.

It can be recommended without reservation for further study.

F. C. FENSHAM

GORDON D. YOUNG (ED.), *Ugarit in retrospect*, 1981, 238, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Price \$12.50

Twelve lectures given at a symposium held at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, are published in this book. The book is concluded with remarks by Cyrus Gordon on the lectures and further remarks and questions. The contents is divided into three parts, viz. Part One on history and archaeology; Part Two on language and literature and Part Three on Ugarit in retrospect and prospect. Able scholars like M. C. Astour, E. Linder, P. Bordreuil, D. I. Owen, R. Givone, R. H. Dornemann, J. Margueron, J. M. Sasson, P. C. Craigie, D. Pardee, B. Margalit, M. Pope and C. H. Gordon took part.

It is impossible to give here an outline of all the lectures. Some interesting new material is discussed, e.g. by Pierre Bordreuil and David Owen. The latter writes about the cuneiform tablet discovered at Tel-Aphek in Israel. His remark on the possibility of a local scribal school at Aphek (cf. p. 53) can be compared with the study of Lemaire discussed in this issue. Two important lectures are given on the latest archaeological work at Ugarit and vicinity, notably Ras Ibn Hani, possibly a provincial outpost of the kingdom of Ugarit. Most interesting is the study of Elisha Linder on the sea activities of the Ugaritians. P. C. Craigie writes about the principles of comparative study between Ugarit and the Bible. This sober approach is to be welcomed, although I think, negative results can be as important as positive results. With trial and error we are making progress. Dennis Pardee asks some important questions on Ugaritic and Hebrew metrics. We are still feeling our way and no one can with certainty claim that he has the golden key to unlock this mystery. Very interesting is Baruch Margalit's remarks on the geographical setting of the Aqhat story. His views are to be contrasted to those of Marvin Pope and Michael Astour in this same issue (cf. also Margalit, *UF* 8 (1976), 179-181, 186-188). As I have written in connection with certain remarks of Michael Heltzer on the Rabeans a tribe of the Suteans, the equation of the Rabeans with the Biblical Raphaim merits further study. One becomes more and more convinced that some connection must have existed. The book is concluded with certain remarks by "the old master", Prof. Cyrus H. Gordon. It is clear that the study of the Ugaritic world and its bearing on the Old Testament world has just begun. What an amazing challenge for young scholars!

This book with its amazing low price is a valuable contribution to the study of Ugarit in all its facets.

F. C. FENSHAM

HARALD SCHWEIZER, *Metaphorische Grammatik*, 1981, 346, Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament, 15. Band, Eos Verlag St Ottilien, DM 38

The author working from modern linguistics as base studies the grammar of Biblical Hebrew. It is a methodological study, breaking new ground all the way. The aim of the developing of this new approach is for a better interpretation of the Biblical text. According to the author the old methods of grammatical research are not satisfactory for a meticulous analysis of the text. Finer distinctions must be made. Although we have quite a lot of new grammatical approaches lately, one has to welcome every new effort to understand the text better. Schweizer's approach is closely linked to that of Wolfgang Richter, although in certain instances he moves in another direction than Richter (e.g. pp. 44 ff.).

The main concern of the author is to apply a method which could lead to a better understanding of the text. To attain this he borrows from modern linguistics an analysis in three progressive steps, viz. syntax, semantics and pragmatics. The old approach to syntax is abandoned for a new method which work with the narrow as well as broad context of a term. Syntax is for the author a more restricted field in which meaning as such plays no rôle, but only

the composition of the sign-forms (cf. pp. 40 ff.). The next step is the investigation of semantics. Semantics works with the same material as syntax, but with another method from another base, viz. to understand what is said by the expressions (cf. pp. 80 ff.) and to give expression to this. The next step is pragmatics. Semantics works with the meaning of the expressions, but pragmatics works with the situation in which an expression is used (cf. pp. 211 ff.). It is thus possible that from this angle the already fixed meaning of semantics can be improved.

It is impossible to give here a full survey of all the richness of the author's study. It is to be welcomed that his study is occasionally illustrated by examples from Scripture. By applying his method on certain passages in the Hebrew Bible the author demonstrates the value of his new approach. The rôle that the computer can play in this kind of research, is fully recognized (cf. e.g. p. 69).

While studying the work of Richter and his students one becomes aware of the fact that a new more rigid approach to the text is by far better than the old methods. It does not cancel out, e.g. philology, because in the semantic stage one still has to fix the meaning of an expression, but this is only one small step and not to be regarded as the only step in understanding the text. On the other hand, one wonders whether the intuitive approach with the third step, pragmatics, could not lead to subjectivity, but the author tries his best to work with built in controls. I am also not convinced that the title of his book *Metaphorische Grammatik* is as clear as it should be. It could easily be confused with the stylistic device which is discussed by the author on p. 243.

This interesting new approach to Hebrew grammar can be heartily recommended for further study.

F. C. FENSHAM

E. TOV, *The Text-Critical use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 1981, 343, Simor Ltd, Jerusalem, Jerusalem Biblical Studies 3. Price \$17

The evaluation of the use of the Septuagint for textual criticism has fluctuated in the past between overemphasis and almost total neglect. With the discovery of the Qumran manuscripts new light has been thrown on the whole question and the value of the Septuagint as a witness to the Old Testament text is again realised. The author of this monograph, one of the foremost scholars in this field, gives us the results of his research over many years. This is a balanced account of the latest research on the relationship between the Massoretic Text and the Septuagint. At the same time the author investigates all the principles of textual criticism and evaluates their basic value for modern research. In this process quite a few wellknown principles uncritically accepted by scholars for a long time, has been rejected, e.g. the rule of the *lectio difficilior* (pp. 290 ff.) and the rule of the *lectio brevior* (pp. 293 ff.). Although some value may be ascribed to these rules, they must always be weighed against the real textual evidence.

This book starts off with some basic notions, e.g. the aims of OT textual criticism, a very good discussion on the nature of old translations, viz. literal and free, a correct understanding of the Septuagint and the evaluation of the Septuagint for Biblical research. It goes on to discuss the reconstruction of the Hebrew Text underlying the Septuagint. The author considers e.g. the Biblical fragments discovered at Qumran which agree with the Septuagint overagainst the Massoretic Text. He holds: "While these details are often significant, no published scroll – with the exception of 4 Q Jer^b – agrees with the LXX in the majority of its details" (p. 261). So we must be cautious not to overestimate some of the similarities between the scrolls and the Septuagint while in a number of cases there are disagreements. The author is also not convinced of the Egyptian provenance of a text type as Hebrew Vorlage of the Septuagint initiated by Albright and since advocated by Cross. Another important observation is that some "early" variants of the text can be ascribed to a stage before a Biblical book has reached its final form (pp. 307 ff.). These "early" readings should not be preferred to another, because they formed part of the literary growth of Biblical books.

One fact stands out in the author's discussion and that is that textual criticism has moved into a very important phase of its development, with intriguing new perspectives. It shows that the text critical apparatus of BH and even the improved apparatus of BHS can no longer be trusted. The evaluation of textual criticism becomes more and more the work of specialists.

One wonders whether a student with only BHS before him can make any significant decision on textual criticism without knowledge of all the intricate problems involved. And Bible translators, as the author demonstrates, should make a thorough study of textual criticism before embarking on their important task.

From this is clear how important this book is and how necessary it is to make a further study of the issues involved.

F. C. FENSHAM

LEMAIRE, ANDRÉ, *Les Écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l'Ancien Israël*, 1981, 140, Editions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, No price given.

The author describes in the first chapter the latest discoveries in connection with schools. This is indeed an interesting part of his study. He discusses epigraphical material discovered at 'Izbet Sartah, Gezer (the wellknown calendar), Lakhish, Khirbet el-Qom, Arad, Aroër, Qadesh-Barnea and Kuntilat-Ajrud. The author holds that the presence of alphabetic texts points inter alia to a school situation. This part of his study is a thorough investigation and forms the basis of what follows.

In the second chapter the author moves to the Old Testament. This is indeed an intriguing investigation. He is of opinion that the Israelites when they settled in the Holy Land took over, or better assimilated the existing schools of the Canaanites. During the monarchy and later three types of schools existed, viz. in the first place the school of the capital, Jerusalem and later also that of Samaria where youngsters were trained for administrative duties. In the second place regional schools in larger provincial cities for the administration of the city and its environment. In the third place schools for local cities which were fortresses with magazines. All of these schools were under the jurisdiction of the king. In addition to this there also existed priestly schools in cities with sanctuaries and prophetic schools. The author is of opinion that the prophetic schools functioned more or less like the Greek philosophical schools. The author's arguments are convincing and much more acceptable than the tendency of late to regard formal education as a late development in Israelite history (Whybray).

In the third chapter the author tries to assess the influence of schools on the formation of the Bible and the canonisation of Old Testament Scripture. It abounds with fresh insights which merit further study. The author is aware of the paucity of the material at our disposal and that later discoveries might alter the situation (pp. 84-85). I want to add another perspective: It seems as if the Deuteronomist, but also the earlier Yahwist, regarded the desert-wandering and the settlement in Canaan as a kind of apprenticeship in faith of Israel. It developed from the stage of a child (Hos. 11:1) to that of a grown-up. The priests might have thought of a school-situation when they composed this history.

This study of the author is a brilliant piece of work and can be recommended without reservation.

F. C. FENSHAM

ALEXANDER ROFÉ, *The Book of Balaam* (Numbers 22:2-24:25), 1979, 77, Simor Ltd, Jerusalem, Jerusalem Biblical Studies No. 1, Price \$3 (written in Ivrit with an English summary)

This study is mainly concerned with the history of interpretation of the story of Balaam, e.g. the solution of the problems by Wellhausen with the Documentary Hypothesis, the view of Abraham Kuenen and that of Kalisch. The author describes how inadequate these views are. E.g. he demonstrates that the divine Names in the story could not form the starting point of literary criticism, because only in the ass episode we have a clear variance of divine Names (cf. pp. 37-40). The author also shows that the understanding of the ass episode is impeded by e.g. the dogmatism of form criticism, because it is not a primitive folktale, but a late sophisticated narrative. This approach is to be welcomed, because the tendency to use folkloristic material from other civilizations for comparison with Semitic stories, is usually so subjective that it should be abandoned. The author also discusses the usage of Balaam in Biblical and Post-Biblical traditions, e.g. from the Deuteronomist onwards Balaam becomes a wicked sorcerer. The study is concluded with a discussion of the Deir 'Alla Inscription published by J. Hoftijzer

and G. van der Kooij. The text is given on pp. 61-63 and a valuable discussion is added. According to the author it is a *hieros logos* for a house of sacred prostitution.

All in all we have here some fresh ideas about the Balaam story which will not be met with general approval, but is definitely worthwhile studying.

F. C. FENSHAM

J. WEINGREEN, *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible*, 1982, 103, Clarendon Press, Oxford, R16-35

The author has supplied us with various excellent tools for the study of the Hebrew Bible, notably his *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, 1963. With this study aimed at students working with the Hebrew Bible, another useful tool is added. The author starts his study with various remarks on the nature of textual criticism. He then moves to Rabbinic antecedents of textual criticism. This chapter, although not news to scholars, is very interesting to read. In the third chapter the author discusses the scope and limitations of textual criticism and goes on to recurring types of error, unspecified types of error, glosses and editorial notes and the philological approach. It is interesting to compare this work with an earlier attempt by Friedrich Delitzsch, *Die Lese- und Schreibfehler im Alten Testament*, 1920 to discover how much more cautious we are nowadays. In the chapter on glosses and editorial notes the author has to my opinion, too narrow a view of editorial notes, because in certain books, e.g. Kings, we have quite extensive remarks of an editor, sometimes so thoroughly worked in that it is difficult to pinpoint what is editorial and what not.

This book should be an important aid to students studying the Old Testament in Hebrew. But cf. also our discussion of the important book Prof. Tov in this issue.

F. C. FENSHAM

INNOCENZO CARDELLINI, *Die Biblischen "Sklaven"-Gesetze im Lichte des keilschriftlichen Sklavenrechts*, Bonner Biblische Beiträge, Band 55, Hanstein, 1981, GEB. DM 121

This study is a doctor's dissertation written under the guidance of Prof. G. Johannes Botterweck of the University of Bonn and Dr. Heinz-Josef Fabry. It is divided in two parts. The first part is concerned with legislation on slaves in the cuneiform tablets. It is an exhaustive study of primary sources from the time of Urukagina up to the Late Babylonian period. The author gives us with the discussion of every period a short introduction into its history, thus supplying the *Sitz im Leben* of the legal material. This is followed by a structural analysis of the legal material and a discussion of its meaning and interpretation. It is a meticulous study of all the problems in connection with these texts. Two remarks on this part will be sufficient: One wonders whether it would not be better for a clear understanding of the discussion to separate the discussion on male slaves and female slaves. On pp. 44 and 60 we have an attempt to do this, but is not carried through. Although legal material in Egyptian texts is very scanty, it should have further enriched this study if reference could have been made to the usage of slave in the Egyptian texts.

The second part is a thorough discussion of Biblical legal material on slaves. This is concluded with a discussion on two historical references to debt slavery, viz. Jer. 34 and Neh. 5. The author is well aware of all the problems in connection with the Biblical material. At the conclusion of his study he gives his views on the possible chronological sequence of the material, the problems in connection with a comparison of the cuneiform and Biblical material and the theological problem of the Biblical material. One can to a great extent endorse his remarks on chronology, but has always to keep in mind that some of these laws had a long history of transmission before they were written down.

This study is built on primary sources and is thus a very important contribution to our understanding of these laws, although on some points there will remain difference of opinion. The author has also selected the important secondary material, the studies of various modern scholars, to elucidate his study. In this connection he has overlooked to my opinion two studies which could have enriched his book, viz. B. S. Jackson, *Theft in Early Jewish Law*, 1972 and W. H. Gilmer, *The If-You Form in Israelite Law*, 1975. The latter work is especially applicable to the discussion on pp. 241 ff.

We have thus in this book all the cuneiform and Biblical legal material discussed in an exemplary fashion. This work is now standard on this subject and can be recommended without reservation.

F. C. FENSHAM

GEORG GIESSEN, *Die Wurzel šbʿ "Schwören"*, 1981, 445, Verlag Peter Hanstein, Königstein/TS, Bonn, Bonner Biblische Beiträge, Band 56, DM 98

This study was done under the guidance of Prof. J. Botterweck and after his death under Prof. E. Nellesen. It is a careful study of the function of the root *šbʿ* in Biblical Hebrew. All the latest views on the usage of this root and of the literary environment in which it is used, are thoroughly investigated. The author starts his investigation with certain philological observations. One wonders, however, whether it is worthwhile to discuss the etymology of this root, especially in light of the latest linguistic research. It remains a game, although sometimes an interesting game.

The real strength of the author's research lies in the second part, the exegetical investigation. He discusses the oath in its profane usage, in its juridical-religious usage and in its theological usage. A discussion is also given of certain difficult passages (Nu. 5:21b; Is. 65:15 and Ps. 102:9) which defy any classification. The study is concluded with a very useful summary. From this is clear that the oath was used from the tenth century BC to post-exilic times, but with heavy emphasis in the exilic period. It is also of interest that the oath only functioned in the profane and juridical-religious spheres in the tenth century B.C.

A few further remarks will be sufficient: The author has the modern tendency to date certain material very late with which many scholars will disagree, e.g. to regard Ps. 110 as late (cf. pp. 239 ff.). His study concentrates solely on Old Testament material with the exception of the Hittite military oaths which are brought in for comparative reasons (pp. 128-129). If we accept that the Israelites formed part of the Ancient Near Eastern civilization, one would expect that a comparative study of the oath in Akkadian and Ugaritic could throw some new light on the Old Testament usage.

But with this study of the author we have the most extensive study of *šbʿ* done up to now – and the scholarly world is indebted to him.

F. C. FENSHAM

MICHAEL HELTZER, *The Suteans* (with a contribution by Shoshana Arbeli), 1981, 139, Istituto Universitario Orientale. Seminario di studi Asiatici, Series Minor, XIII, Naples

One of the enigmatic Semitic nomadic tribes, the Suteans turns occasionally up in texts of the Ancient Near East from the second millennium BC up the first millennium BC. No study is made up to now of the history of this tribe and its influence on the Ancient Near East. But now we have this very useful study of Michael Heltzer in which all the available material is brought together to give us a view of their history and influence.

The discussion begins with a few observations on the origin of the Sutean tribes; then the tribal structure is discussed; the Mari material is investigated with emphasis on their occupations and social stratification; slavery in connection with this tribe is taken up; the Raba'um in Mari and Ugarit is discussed and also the Suteans in Southern Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian Period. In Part II the Suteans in the outgoing second millennium and the term *Sutû* in the first millennium is investigated. The study is concluded with 4 Excursus of which the one on the possible link between the Biblical Rephaim and the Raba'um tribe of the Suteans is the most interesting. (cf. already Heltzer, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 9 (1978), 5-20). This possible link merits further study and should throw new light on an old problem.

We have here a meticulous study of primary sources and now for the first time do we have the full picture of available material on the Suteans. We can recommend this book without reservation for further study.

F. C. FENSHAM

F. C. FENSHAM and D. N. PIENAAR, *Geskiedenis van Ou Israel (History of Ancient Israel)*, Academica, Pretoria/Cape Town, Johannesburg, 1982. pp. 222

This comprehensive and well integrated publication approaches the very difficult subject of the History of Israel with a clear statement about the reliability of the Old Testament as its primary source. It does, however, take into account the results not only of modern literary and traditio-historical research but also of the latest approaches to the subject matter by means of the anthropological or socio-economical models. As a former student of Albright, Fensham shows his adherence to the method of utilizing archaeological data – both literary and artifactual – as an external source to the History of Israel. This also holds true to Fensham's student, Pienaar, especially in regard to his masterly description of the Omrides.

A remarkable feature of this book is the persistent attempt to relate on a syn- and diachronic level all (relevant) local and/or international events that shaped Israel's History. This is augmented by a thorough reassessment of primary source material. Ideas contained in this book will stimulate future research, e.g. Fensham's views of the patriarchs and of the gradual evolution of Israelite sedentary society (contra Mendenhall and Gottwald).

A few points of criticism must however be raised: The book tends to over-estimate the personal involvement of individual kings as determinant factor in history. Secondly nomadism would seem to be the key word for understanding all political and social problems, even during the time of the monarchy, pertaining alike to pastoralism, transhumant culture, rural tribalism, peasantry religious conservative groups, etc. Its lack of full bibliographical notes is a major deficit and is only partly compensated for by useful indexes, a register of biblical passages and a few maps. Apart from a few printing errors (e.g. pp. 26, 81, 87) and a rare instance of ambiguous formulation (e.g. p. 140), the book comprises of all necessary and relevant requirements as are set out in the foreword.

J. P. J. OLIVIER