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Alexander Andrason (University of Stellenbosch)

**THE BH WEQATAL.
A HOMOGENOUS FORM WITH NO HAPHAZARD
FUNCTIONS (PART ONE)**

ABSTRACT

*This article (divided in two separately published parts) demonstrates that by applying panchronic methodology, all temporal, aspectual, modal, textual and consecutive values offered by the BH weqatal (both by its discursive and narrative variants) may be explained as manifestations of a single, semantically and functionally coherent rational phenomenon – one consistent and typologically plausible diachronic path, i.e. a modal contamination which a Proto-Northwest Semitic consecutive and contingent input periphrasis (composed by the contingent coordinative-consecutive lexeme *wa and a resultative verbal adjective *qatal(a)) originally experienced in conditional apodoses. Furthermore, the panchronic definition of the BH weqatal will enable us to conclude that the gram is a distinct (even though genetically related) phenomenon to the BH qatal, because the two categories are products of different semantic-functional trajectories and distinct grammaticalisation scenarios.*

Jeremy M Hutton (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

**TOTAL OR PARTIAL ASSIMILATION OF
DERIVATIONAL-^{*}T (ת) IN THE BIBLICAL HEBREW
HITPA^ʕEL?**

ABSTRACT

This article responds to a recent proposal made by J S Baden (2010) concerning the morphological and phonetic overlap of hitpa^ʕel and nip^ʕal verbs. A developmental process is outlined whereby the derivational-^{}t of the hitpa^ʕel may have assimilated to a number of initial radicals. This process did not originally include total assimilation, but instead partial assimilations with respect to voice, emphatic quality, and possibly mode of articulation. In addition, reanalysis or misanalysis of the resultant consonant cluster and the analogical extension of the resulting anomalous morphology may have contributed to the phonological overlap.*

Perry Oakes (SIL International)

THE SOCIAL PRAGMATICS OF TWO FORMS OF DIRECTIVE SPEECH IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

ABSTRACT

This paper compares two common forms of directive speech in Biblical Hebrew: (1) the imperative-imperative chain and (2) the imperative-weqatal chain. The two chains differ significantly in terms of communicative focus and social pragmatic function. The pragmatic functions of the Imv-Imv chain strongly express the speaker's will, i.e., they give commands, encouragement, blessings, permission, requests, and invitations. The functions of the Imv-wQ chain, in contrast, focus communicative attention on the components, procedure, or details of the task that the speaker desires. Thus, the Imv-wQ chain functions to give instructions and propose plans. Social inferiors do not use the Imv-wQ chain with superiors. The interaction of these social parameters accounts for the data, while the factor of temporal sequentiality is irrelevant.

Mikhal Oren (University of Haifa)

ON PARTITIVE מִן AND בִּי IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

ABSTRACT

Taking the partitive use of מִן as its starting point, this article follows two lines of investigation: one is the distinction between the partitive value of מִן and other values of this preposition, the other is the distinction between partitive מִן and partitive בִּי. The בִּי / מִן interchange is considered both from a diachronic point of view, adducing evidence from other Northwest Semitic languages, and from a synchronic standpoint.

Aron Pinker (Silver Spring, Maryland, USA)

WHAT DOES MAKTÎR ALLUDE TO IN HABAKKUK 1:4?

ABSTRACT

Though we cannot with any certainty conclude whether Habakkuk intentionally used maktîr to evoke in the reader's mind an association with the Akkadian concept of kitru, Habakkuk's penchant for double entendres and the phonetic and conceptual similarities between maktîr and kitru would support such association. The link of the Akkadian term kitru/katāru to the West-Semitic root ktr (Hebrew, Aramaic), and the similarity of the situation in Hab 1:4 to the broader meaning of kitru/katāru in Assyrian texts, suggests that using maktîr Habakkuk might be alluding to the Akkadian concept. Within the framework of the kitru concept the terse Biblical text attains considerable theological depth and greater sharpness.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bénédicte Lemmelijn. 2009. *A Plague of Texts? A Text-critical Study of the So-Called 'Plagues Narrative' in Exodus 7:14-11:10*. Oudtestamentische Studiën Vol. 56. Leiden-Boston: Brill. pp. XXII + 384. ISBN: 978-90-04-17235-7.

The present monograph represents a thorough reworking of previous research, including, inter alia, a comprehensive doctoral dissertation that the author completed under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Marc Vervenne at the KULeuven. The monograph examines the so-called “Plague Narratives” in Exod 7:14-11:10. The nuanced perspective of the author on textual criticism is already evident from the innovative title *A Plague of Texts*.¹

I. CHAPTER ONE

The Prolegomena deals with methodological issues. The author puts her cards on the table and is sceptical about ascribing to the Masoretic text (MT) a special position in literary and text-critical research. She deems it “simply *one* textual form among many textual forms that have been passed down to us” (p. 1). She also suggests a novel aim for textual criticism, namely “rather to explore the history and development of the text of the Hebrew Bible in its various textual forms, paying particular attention to the period from the 4th to the 3rd centuries BCE” (p. 2), contrary to reconstructing the original (autographa) text (p. 1). It is immediately clear that she operates with a theory of a multiplicity of texts. She also accepts the position, strongly argued by Stipp, that one should not distinguish too strictly between textual criticism and literary criticism. In this regard she is sceptical of the research by Rabe (p. 13). This applies especially to his view on the relationship between synchronic textual criticism and literary criticism (p. 11). As to be expected, the author also deals with appropriate terminology. In this regard she makes a division between the collection of variants and the evaluation of these variants. Even though she does not distinguish dichotomically between textual and literary criticism, she deliberately chooses to begin with the former, or in her own words: “with the material form of the text, the text as ‘physical product’.” On the basis of such an analysis she has produced a synoptic survey, which is the subject matter of Chapter 2. The textual material used in this analysis is based upon the following text editions: for the MT and LXX the CATSS Data Base (Computer-Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies) (R A Kraft and E Tov); in addition, the LXX Göttingen edition by J W Wevers; Samaritan

¹ See also G D Martin, *Multiple Originals. New Approaches to Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism*. SBL Text-Critical Studies, Volume 7. Atlanta: SBL, 2010.

Pentateuch, the provisional edition by A Tal. For the Qumran material the discoveries in the Judaean Desert editions were used.

II. CHAPTER TWO

This chapter is devoted to the textual material of the Plague Narrative. At the same time it presents the fundamental basis upon which the comprehensive analysis is based. As correctly suggested by the author, it should be read together with the appendix from pp. 219-357. The synopsis in the appendix consists of nine columns: 1. MT; 2. LXX text of the Göttingen edition; 3. Sam pent (Tal); 4. 4QpaleoExod^m (DJD 9); 5. 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l (DJD 9); 6. 2QExod^a (DJD 3); 7. 4QExod^c (DJD 12); 8. 4QGen-Exod^a (DJD 12) and 9. 4QExod^j (DJD 12).

An exhaustive section presents a list that includes a description of the textual differences evident when comparing the various forms of the Plague Narrative (pp. 33-95). For each variant a biblical reference is followed by a typification of the relationship between the textual witnesses. The author includes all sorts of relevant data, such as an indication of when a variant represents a plus compared to one or more of the textual versions. Various conventions are followed, i.a. that the Hebrew texts are presented unpointed and the Greek without accents. This description is exhaustive and extremely helpful for analytical purposes.

III. CHAPTER THREE

The heart of the monograph is found in this chapter: The Text-Critical Evaluation of the Variants of the “Plagues Narrative.” Since the study of the translation character of versions is basic to all interpretation of variants, a large section is devoted to the issue of the translation technique followed by the translator(s) of LXX Exodus. This paragraph is an exercise in the sound use of methodology. The author takes the views of Aejmelaes, Tov, Barr *et al.* into account in her methodological deliberations. In the process she correctly demonstrates the multitude of reasons that could have given rise to variants, i.a. linguistic exegesis, contextual exegesis, translators not understanding their *Vorlagen*.

The difference between “literal” and “free” translations is discussed. The author opts for defining the translation technique in terms of “literalness” and “faithfulness” (p. 114). Moreover, she allows for both the “quantitative” and “qualitative” approaches to the study of translation technique. As a matter of fact the author and her colleague, Hans Ausloos, have developed a third methodological approach which focuses on content-oriented analyses (p. 124). She demonstrates this approach to some extent by determining the general characterisation of LXX Exodus. In this regard she concludes: “Indeed, it is possible to argue that the Septuagint translation of Exodus is an extremely faithful translation in relation to its *Vorlage*, while insisting at the same time that it is a particularly free translation, especially in its creation of a relatively good Greek text” (p. 127).

The implications of this methodological position are worked out by the author. This is done by dealing with consistency and non-consistency in the choice of translation equivalents; different sequence/word order; Greek linguistic idioms, as well as a number of supplementary linguistic data (p. 144). Forty-nine “text-relevant” variants are furthermore discussed in the light of the formulated theoretical model. The chapter ends with a discussion of the larger plusses or major expansions in the Hebrew textual witnesses to the “Plagues Narrative” of Exod 7:14-11:10. The conclusions concerning this aspect are significant, namely they should be characterised as additions or interpolations that came about on account of harmonisations.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the analyses, the author draws 10 conclusions. These need not be listed in detail here. Finally, I want to draw attention to Lemmelijn’s final remarks to indicate the value of this study: “We can conclude, therefore, that the primary result of the text-critical analysis of the ‘Plagues Narrative’ is the provision of a critically evaluated textual basis for the literary study of Exod 7:14-11:10, namely the Masoretic text. In addition thereto, the analysis of the text-critical variants in the various textual witnesses to Exod 7:14-11:10 has already drawn attention to a significant number of literary irregularities. Thus, the text-critical study of the ‘Plagues Narrative,’ preceding the literary basis and/or redaction-historical analysis thereof, has provided a sound basis for the further analysis and interpretation of this strange but highly fascinating narrative.”

It can be safely concluded that in this study Lemmelijn has finally rid us of one “Plague,” the overemphasis on *the* Masoretic text!

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Korchin, P. 2008. *Markedness in Canaanite and Hebrew Verbs*. (HSS 58). Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns. pp. 368. ISSN: 0083-5889. ISBN: 1575069288. USD 49.95.

Korchin begins his study with a detailed presentation of the history of the concept of markedness. He discusses the origins, development and application of the phenomenon in various theories during the 19th and 20th centuries. He familiarises the reader with ideas and theories elaborated by Bopp, the Neogrammarians, de Saussure and the generative school, but the main emphasis is on structuralism and neo-structuralism. After the literature review, Korchin meticulously analyses the structural nature of markedness, its properties and role in morphology. This study enables him

to propose his own model of markedness restricted to the morphological section of a language: a model which strongly echoes neo-structuralist views. In the following chapter Korchin further refines his theory, narrowing it down to Semitic morphology. Concretely, he distinguishes formal constituents (markers) and functional parameters (deixis, mood, *Zeitbezug*, tense and aspect) which underlie the verbal system (limited, nevertheless, to prefixed conjugations) in two Northwest Semitic languages, i.e. Canaano-Akkadian and Biblical Hebrew.

With all these theoretical distinctions established, the author proceeds to the analysis of the Canaano-Akkadian (Gubla, Gazru and Gimtu) and Biblical Hebrew (Gen 37, 39-50) corpus. He examines the prefixed verbal forms consistently and rigorously, discussing not only the deixis, mood, *Zeitbezug*, tense and aspect of each example, but also its syntax and structure. Finally, having evaluated the data, Korchin formulates his conclusion, constructing a tidy and logically argued model for the two idioms. In his view, the Canaano-Akkadian prefixed verbal system displays the following functional structure: the *yqtl* is an unmarked category opposed to the marked *yqtl-u* (characterised by the feature of non-anteriority) and *yqtl-a* (non-indicative). Subsequently, the *yqtl-u* contrasts with the doubly marked *yqtl-u-(n)a* (non-anterior and contrastivity), while the *yqtl-a* forms an opposition to *yqtl-a-(n)na* (non-anterior and contrastivity). The situation in Biblical Hebrew is similar. The *yqtl* is understood to be the unmarked form opposed to the marked *yaqtulu* (non-anterior) and *yaqtula* (non-indicative). On the subsequent level, the two marked forms contrast with a doubly marked *yqtl-e-n* (contrastivity).

Korchin's work must be praised for at least three important reasons. First, it presents in a very lucid and comprehensive way the issue of markedness, discussing in particular its relation to Semitic linguistics. Second, the book meticulously investigates various instances where prefixed verbal formations are used, deconstructing their semantic, functional and syntactic properties. This review of concrete cases could be of great value for any linguist interested in the Semitic verbal system. And third, within the neo-structuralist framework, it offers a transparent, logical and well-argued model for the understanding of markedness in Canaanite and Hebrew verbs. This being said, I will try to indicate some inadequacies of Korchin's model.

First, the absence of the suffix conjugation *qatal* in the model developed for the BH verbal system may constitute a weak point in Korchin's theory. The *qatal* is without doubt one of the central verbal categories and its meaning and function are crucial in determining relations underlying and controlling the entire verbal organisation. By ignoring the position of the *qatal*, and especially its impact on the prefixed forms, it could be argued that the author provides a simplified picture of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system.

Second, Korchin's treatment of the *yqtl* could be called into question. He includes in this category two traditionally distinct formations, i.e. the *wayyiqtol* and the short *yiqtol*. However, various studies have demonstrated that these constructions should be understood as independent, because they differ both morphologically and

semantically. Even more suspicious may be Korchin's claim concerning the unmarkedness of the *yiqtol*. While the *yqtl* as far as the short *yiqtol* seems to be unmarked, the unmarkedness of the *yqtl* as far as *wayyiqtol* can be called into question. This form, in fact, is almost invariably marked with a dependent and non-detachable element *wa*, which in turn triggers the germination of the personal prefix, for instance, *y*. Even though one is dealing with a historically periphrastic construction, in the time of Biblical Hebrew the category was unequivocally synthetic. This means that a certain type of the unmarked *yqtl* survived in Biblical Hebrew only with a secondary overt marker, a complex morpheme *wa* + gemination.

Third, in Korchin's model, the *yqtl* (i.e. the formation which incorporates both the *wayyiqtol* and the short *yiqtol*) does not seem to have any intrinsic value – it is just systemically unmarked. This view derives from the fact that the *yqtl* is not invariant in its aspectual, temporal, deictic, *Zeitbezug* or modal implications. Thus – if I understand Korchin correctly – the value of a verbal form, considered in its totality, corresponds to the meaning or function shared by all its concrete uses. It equals the operation of intersection within the Set Theory. However, when specifying the nature of the *yqtl-u* (i.e. the long *yiqtol*), the value of the construction corresponds to the set-theoretic union and not to the intersection. This confusion stems from the structuralist dogma of binary opposition and its misuse. I will explain this in more detail below.

Korchin establishes that an overtly specific form (a form with an overt marking) overtly indicates a specific function – it signals a property *A*. A non-overtly specific construction (a construction which is unmarked, i.e. with the marker \emptyset) fails to overtly signify a specific function – it does not signal a property *A*. The opposition between the two elements is privative: unmarked does not overtly indicate *A*, while marked does so. This – as Korchin correctly recognises – harmonises with the principle of iconicity which underlies the language and, especially, the creation of new expressions. Novel forms are shaped in order to express explicitly and overtly a particular meaning or function. These values may still be expressed by older forms – however, only in a non-overt and non-explicit manner. Simply speaking, old forms are neutral in respect to such an innovative meaning or function. As far as the BH system is concerned, Korchin makes a theoretical move whereby this contrast may be reworded: unmarked and neutral \emptyset versus marked $\sim A$. The neutral value of the unmarked form includes both *A* and $\sim A$. This step may in itself be viewed as questionable. In the light of the iconicity principle – which Korchin advocates – the following contrast would be by far more natural: unmarked *A* and $\sim A$ (i.e. \emptyset) vs. marked *A*. If we were dealing with mathematical or formal logical calculations, since *A* in union with $\sim A$ gives the entire set *U*, there is no problem in substituting the *A* by $\sim A$ and vice-versa, which means that Korchin's move would be fully acceptable. However, I doubt that the semantics of verbal systems could equate such a mathematical play. I see the definition of the marked *yqtl-u* as non-anterior in contrast to the unmarked *yqtl* as a structuralist “trick.” The problem is that non-anterior is a complex term which includes at least two more specific values: simultaneity and prospectivity. If we analyse concrete instances of the *yqtl-u*, some of them indicate

simultaneity, while others denote prospectivity. In fact, verbal grams do not originate as marked and overt expressions of non-anteriority, but as indicators either of simultaneity or prospectivity. Although they may subsequently incorporate new values and be found in contexts matching the two mentioned domains, the non-anteriority as such is a wide and comfortable conceptual “bag” where we group two more specific properties. In that way we can *make* the system look tidy and perfectly binary. What I mean here is that the *yqtol-u* provides two distinct contextually based readings, functioning either as a simultaneous or prospective category. Thus, its labelling as a non-anterior corresponds to the union of the two values and not to the intersection as in the case of the *yqtl*.

Indeed, the definition of the meaning or function of a verbal construction as a whole based on the shared value(s) – i.e. on the operation of intersection – may be strongly questioned. One can always partition meanings or functions into more precise and specific ones so that the supposedly common value would cease to be perceivable. Conversely, we can group microscopic meanings into wider conceptual units so that constructions with an apparently non-shared value would display certain common characteristics. This originates in the fact that the partition of grammatical formations into more elementary meanings or functions depends on our conceptualisation of reality. Thus the sense of the operation of intersection in determining the meaning of a category seems to me highly dubious. The only possibility is to consider the total value of a construction as a union of *all* values displayed in concrete uses in specific contexts. However, in such instances orthodox structuralism – with its dogma of binary privative contrast – ceases being operative, because the formation displays a *set* of different values, triggering a complex multidimensional network of oppositions.

Fourth, the view whereby language is principally a set of oppositions (and hence relations) and the organisation of the verbal system may be captured in a simple, tidy and static scheme cannot be accepted given the discoveries and advancements of modern science. Language is as a subtype of real-world thermodynamic systems. More precisely, modern physics and biology view our life with all its subcomponents and substructures (e.g. physical, biological and socio-cultural) as a complex, open, dynamic and meta-stable organisation. I cannot discuss the nature of such systems in details, but three aspects are primordial in respect to Korchin’s model. First, the number of constituents – and thus of relations among them – is infinite, or at least, uncontrollable. Everything is connected to everything and everything interacts with everything. The model of the verbal system cannot be explained with five forms and five relations. Scientific models are certainly approximations and simplifications, but they should not be excessively approximate or over-simplified. With this said, the model proposed by Korchin is (in my opinion) slightly too clean. Second, infinite relations surface as a coherent macroscopic behaviour and constrain the conduct and properties of constituents. Constituents, however, “manufacture” such a complex network of relations given their intrinsic inherited genetically marked values. The environment (system) makes individuals (constituents or particles) what they are, but

only from the material the individual has previously inherited. This is a basis of genetic and phenotypic distinctions as well as a core principle of all open thermodynamic systems, where both the macroscopic organisation and particular elements have their “memory.” All of this indicates that, while the network of the relations connecting the constituents of the language is certainly highly important for its structure, sole relations are not sufficient to elucidate the total behaviour of a language. Constituents themselves, with their inbuilt genetic load and evolutionary memory (inherited from the time when the form was shaped in accordance with the rule of iconicity), are also important. Third, the system is constantly fluctuating and changing – it only appears to be stable. Thus, a model which does not make any reference to the evolutionary potential of grammatical constructions may be viewed – at least from certain theoretical perspectives – as oversimplified.

As previously mentioned, this critique should not discourage scholars from reading Korchin’s book whether they adhere to the structuralist, generative, cognitive or any other school of thought. It is an admirable piece of work and a highly important grammatical description of Semitic languages, where erudition and eloquence meet in an highly meticulous study. I can only congratulate the author on this interesting book.

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Conklin, T 2011. *Oath Formulas in Biblical Hebrew* (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 5). Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, Indiana. pp. 106. ISBN 978-1-57506-203-7.

In a relatively “thin” book that comprises 6 chapters, an appendix, bibliography, index of authors and of index of Scripture, Conklin analyses the about 170 instances where oaths are made or referred to in the Hebrew Bible. Chapter 1 is the introduction. In Chapter 2, Conklin treats the features of the authenticating elements and in Chapters 3-5 those of the contents of oaths. In the Appendix he briefly treats oath formulas in other Semitic languages.

In the introduction, Conklin illustrates the typical problems exegetes and translators have with the interpretation of oath formulas. He uses Ruth 1:17 as an example of how major translations differ as far as their interpretation of the oath formulas is concerned. Consider the difference between the NRSV and NJPS (#1).

1	<p>כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִי וְכֹה יִסָּי כִּי הַמָּוֶת יִפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ:</p>	<p>NRSV: May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, <i>if even death</i> parts me from you.</p>
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NJPS: Thus more and more may the Lord
do to me *if anything but death* parts me

from you.

Before discussing how and why it can be argued that oaths have been explained inadequately up till now, he describes the theoretical foundations of his own study. With reference to speech act theory he posits the basic distinction between the speech act of making an oath and one in which an oath is “mentioned.” With reference to how oaths are used across languages, he argues convincingly why distinguishing between the authenticator and content of an oath is crucial for understanding the syntax and semantic of oaths. Equally important is “that oaths partake heavily of ellipses” (2011:4). This is due to the formulaic nature of oaths as well as the fact that “In some cultures, it is a risky business to mention explicitly the possible unsavory consequences of bad behavior” (2011:4).

He distinguishes five type of authenticating elements, viz. (1) the raising of the hand; (2) the invocation of witnesses, (3) swearing (i.e. the use of the lexeme שבע), (4) “Thus will X do to Y” and (5) “(By) the life of X.” In each case he distinguishes between instances where oaths are mentioned and where they are used. It is evident that oaths are much more frequently used than mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.

A feature of Conklin’s model for treating oath formulas is that he consistently uses his hypotheses concerning a part of the various formulas that were elided to illustrate that the “strange” wording of some oaths do “make sense.” In the case of “thus will X do to Y,” he argues that the formula is the apodosis of a conditional expression: “If this oath is false, thus will God do to me ...” He further argues what exactly will be done to the one who utters the oath, is not stated, but it could be gestures that accompany each of the deictics (“thus”).

Occurring 76 times, Conklin points out that “(By) the life of X,” is by far the most frequent authenticator in the Hebrew Bible. It is concentrated in the books of Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Conklin 2011:26). Most frequent are instances where הִי־יְהוָה is used as authenticator. הִי is used when x is not the Israelite god. The construction הִי־אֲנִי occurs 23 times, predominantly in the book of Ezekiel (16x), and 18 times as part of the sequence הִי־אֲנִי נֶאֱמַר־יְהוָה. The formula literally reads “(by) the life of x,” but is typically translated as “as surely as x lives.” Such a translation implies that the living existence of x is affirmed as the basis of the truthfulness of the oath. Conklin (2011:24), however, states “But this is not what the phrase literally means. It simply means ‘life of X.’ This most common formula authenticates by the most common means available in all cultures, by invoking a sacred entity to act as witness to and assistance in the utterance of an oath.” It may be argued that Conklin’s suggestion makes it hard to imagine how God authenticates his own oaths in this way. One may ask whether it is not much more plausible that a divinity would call on his own existence to authenticate the oath he makes.

When it comes to the contents of oaths, Conklin distinguishes between “conditionally formulated” oaths and oaths introduced by כִּי. The former he treats in Chapter 3.

amongst other things, that כִּי-אֵם introduces oaths as an asseverative. In this chapter he also sets out to establish the relationship between authenticators and the content of oath. He establishes that here is no direct correlation between the type of authenticating formula used and the way in which the content of the oath is introduced.

In his investigation of oaths in other Semitic languages, reported in the appendix, Conklin found that they share the same “fundamental bipartite structure” (2011:96) as that is to be found in Biblical Hebrew.

Although I found his use of Hebrew only in transcription frustrating, I enjoy reading Conklin’s work. I found most of his arguments convincing. I think that no one who is interested in the use of oath formulas in the Hebrew Bible can afford not to engage critically with the findings of this study.

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Bonnet, C & Niehr, H 2010. *Religionen in der Umwelt des Alten Testaments II. Phönizier, Punier, Aramäer* (Studienbücher Theologie 4,2). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer. pp. 339. ISBN: 978-3-17-013046-3. Price: € 39,80.

In der guten Tradition der Reihe *Studienbücher Theologie* haben wir wieder einen Band über die Religionen aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments. Dieser Band von Corinne Bonnet (Toulouse) und Herbert Niehr (Tübingen) informiert uns über die Religionen der Phönizier, Punier und Aramäer. Beide sind Experten für das Material und Autoren wichtiger Monographien, z.B. Bonnet über die phönizische Astarte (1996) und Niehr über den Ba‘al Šamem (2003). Niehr hat einen anderen Band über *Religionen in Israels Umwelt* (1998) veröffentlicht. Niehr hat den Beitrag von Bonnet über die Phönizier und Punier aus dem Französischen ins Deutsche übersetzt und den Teil über die Aramäer geschrieben.

Die Kapiteleinteilungen sind nicht identisch. Bonnet gliedert sie folgendermaßen: Einführung; schriftliche und ikonographische Grundlagen; die poliadische Struktur der Panthea; die Gottheiten: Kompetenzen und Wirkweisen; der Mensch, die Welt, die Götter: das religiöse Universum der Phönizier und Punier; Kultorte, Kulthandlungen und Kultakteure; die phönizische Religion in ihrer historischen Dimension.

Niehr macht es anders: nach einer Einführung und einer Geschichte der Aramäer, beschreibt er das Material, unter *Götter und Kulte*² in den Königreichen der Aramäer Syriens, mehr nach Regionen: Bit Ḥalupe und Bit Šabi, Bit Baḥiani, Balih, Bit Adini,

² Ein beliebter Titel von Niehr (2004 und mit Cornelius 2004).

Bit Agusi, Kitikka, Bit Gabbari, Unqi, Hamath und Luʿaš, Sobah/Beth Rehob, Geschur, Aram, die Damaszene. Er endet mit einem *Ausblick*.

Das Buch enthält viel Neues, z.B. Niehrs Übersetzung der Stele, die 2008 in Zincirli von der Chicago Expedition gefunden und 2009 veröffentlicht wurde (S. 282-284 mit Abb. 9).

Das Buch ist teilweise illustriert, obwohl es kein ikonographisches Buch sein möchte. Bonnet hat 13 Bilder und Niehr 10 Bilder. Zwei hiervon sind Karten (S. 14 und 207), informativ, aber die Namen sind meines Erachtens ein bisschen zu klein, um sie ohne Lupe gut lesen zu können. Zu jeder Abbildung gibt es eine Beschreibung und der Museumsort wird genannt. Abb. 6 ist eine *Plakette*, aber der Text auf S.79 spricht von einer *Stele* mit übersetzter Inschrift (wie in Bonnet 1996:Planche II).

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