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Bob Becking (Utrecht University and University of Pretoria)

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ABSTRACT

The parallelism in Zeph 1:9 is not prima facie *clear: how can the act of jumping over the threshold be connected to the bringing of violence and deceit into the realm of the Temple? The discovery of early west Semitic lines in the Egyptian Pyramid Texts revealed a scenario in which a guarding deity protected the inner realm of the tomb against infiltrating serpents. In assuming that Zeph 1:9 refers to the presence of a guarding deity at the threshold, the jumpers can be seen as people wanting to avoid this guardian and hence as persons who were unwelcome in the temple.*

Joshua Berman (Bar-Ilan University)

BOVINE SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HITTITE AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE

ABSTRACT

*The Late Bronze Age Šunaššura treaty (*CTH *41) employs an unusual political metaphor, "the cattle have chosen their stables", to refer to the leanings and loyalties of contested vassal kings. This study employs bovine ethology to understand the lived reality behind the metaphor. This background sheds light on similar political imagery concerning cattle behaviour in the ark narrative of 1 Sam 6 and the opening oracle of the Book of Isaiah (1:3).*

Hans Debel (KU Leuven)

TWO PERSPECTIVES ON TWO APOCRYPHA: REFLECTIONS ON THE *GENESIS APOCRYPHON* AND THE SO-CALLED *APOCRYPHON/-A OF JOSHUA*

ABSTRACT

Since the early days of Dead Scrolls research, a considerable number of theretofore unknown compositions have been labelled "apocryphon". Most of them still carry that name, despite important modifications in our understanding of "Scripture" within Second Temple Judaism. This paper seeks to explore some of the problems involved in the debate on so-called "rewritten Scripture" works on the basis of two "apocrypha" from Qumran, viz. the "Genesis Apocryphon" and the "Apocryphon/-a of Joshua".

More specifically, it argues that, whereas the label "apocryphon" may still be a valid hermeneutical device for modern readers of the Bible, an accurate historical perspective on the Second Temple Scriptural texts entails their reassessment as further developments of a living and vibrant tradition.

Janet Dyk, Oliver Glanz, Reinoud Oosting

ANALYSING VALENCE PATTERNS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW: THEORETICAL QUESTIONS AND ANALYTIC FRAMEWORKS

ABSTRACT

When not recognizing the peculiarities of a syntactic construction, translators and exegetes tend to resort to the most common meaning of the verb present in the structure, adjusting the sense of the passage by making explicit information assumed to be implied in the text or by making other adjustments. Verbs, however, can have different meanings in divergent syntactic structures. The relatively few elements which determine the significance of a verb have been made explicit in a flow chart of "yes"–"no" questions for Hebrew verbs. A researcher's choices as to the relation of an element to the verb, assuming information present elsewhere in the context, and the presence of an idiomatic expression should be annotated.

Bénédicte Lemmelijn (KU Leuven)

SINGING OF LOVE IN MANY WAYS: A SKETCH OF CANTICLES' TEXT MATERIAL DEMONSTRATING BIBLICAL TEXTUAL PLURIFORMITY

ABSTRACT

The present article presents the textual situation of the book of Canticles or Song of Songs in its multiplicity and pluriformity. After a survey, offering an evaluative description of the extant witnesses of the Hebrew text, the Septuaginta, the Latin and the Syriac texts and finally the Aramaic Targum, this contribution concludes by stating that studying the biblical texts text-critically fundamentally contributes to their hermeneutical understanding and interpretation today.

Michael A Lyons (Simpson University)

"A BARLEY CAKE" (EZEK 4:12a): SYNTAX AND REDACTION

ABSTRACT

Most commentators and translators have analysed Ezek 4:12a as a construction containing a pre-verbal noun phrase functioning as an adverbial: "And, as a barley cake, you shall eat it". Most commentators have then argued that vv. 12-15 are a redactional extension of v. 9 or v. 10 – even though these verses contain no feminine antecedent for the pronominal suffix in v. 12a. In this essay, I argue that Ezek 4:12a should be analysed as a front (left) dislocation construction. Ezek 4:12-15 represents an independent symbolic act that has been redactionally inserted into the present context, and the function of the dislocation construction is to make the referent "barley cake" more highly available for cognitive processing.

Max Rogland (Erskine Theological Seminary)

FLYING SCROLLS AND FLYING BASKETS IN ZECHARIAH 5: PHILOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AND LITERARY IMPLICATIONS

ABSTRACT

This article examines a number of grammatical and textual problems in the visions of the flying scroll and the flying basket in Zechariah 5. Preferring the Masoretic Text as the lectio difficilior, *it presents a new philological and exegetical analysis of various Hebrew expressions in vv. 3, 6 and 7. The study then explores some implications for the literary unity and coherence of the chapter. In contrast to a number of redaction-critical studies which view many textual elements as secondary additions, this article argues that the flying scroll and the flying basket are closely linked together and are best read as one unified vision instead of two.**Manie van den Heever (University of Stellenbosch)*

DEFINING "IDIOM" IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

ABSTRACT

In response to the bewildering variety of terms and definitions suggested in idiom research, this paper offers specific characteristics and a definition of idiom *as a tool for identifying and studying idioms in Biblical Hebrew. The attributes generally suggested as characteristic of idioms are discussed in terms of their suitability or lack thereof, with reference to examples from the Hebrew Bible. Finally, multi-word character, semantic non-compositionality, unit status, conventionalisation, a verbal nucleus, and a content message are identified as necessary conditions for idiomaticity. Based on these,* idiom *in Biblical Hebrew is defined as "a conventionalised multi-word symbolic unit with a verbal nucleus and a content message, whose global meaning is a semantic extension of the combined meanings of its constituent elements".*

BOOK REVIEWS

Cook J A 2012. *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb. The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew* (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7). Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, Indiana. pp. 384. ISBN 978-1-57506-256-3.

According to Cook, (p. ix) the roots of this publication can be traced back to his doctoral dissertation completed in 2002. However, only Chapters One: *A theory of tense, aspect, and modality* and Two: *Tense, aspect and modality in Biblical Hebrew* bear any resemblance to their origins. Chapters Three: *The semantics of the Biblical Hebrew Verbal System* and Four: *Semantics and discourse pragmatics of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system* have been completely revised. The fourth chapter "represents a framework not even conceived of at the beginning of my interest in the Biblical Hebrew verbal system" (p. ix). It is impossible to do full justice in a short review to a work on the age-old problem of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system (= BHVS), which has grown over a decade from a dissertation that pioneered a paradigm shift in the description of the BHVS. This review will focus on those aspects of Cook's work that opened new horizons for BH scholars, but also on some tensions that are observed in the methodological choices he has made.

In my view, Cook contributed to a paradigm shift in understanding the BHVS by not asking whether BH is a tense, aspect or a mode system, but rather what range of senses the verbal forms can express and how these various polysemous senses "should" be explained. Furthermore, for these explanations to be valid, Cook argues that one needs to draw on empirical cross-linguistic evidence, on "diachronic typology and grammaticalization". For these purposes he made use of the insights of the widely acclaimed study by Bybee et al. (1994). They surveyed a representative sample of the world's languages, 76 in total, and established, among other things, that changes in the meaning and forms of verbs occur across languages along the same paths, and in one direction only. In terms of the path theory, Cook identifies, for example, that "BH qatal as perfective/simple past with a persistent perfect meaning" (p. 207) originated from a resultative proper input.

Cook grounds the abovementioned innovations by means of two historical surveys. In Chapter One, starting with the early Greeks, he traces the conceptualisation and application of the notions "tense" and "aspect" up to the most recent debates in linguistic circles. As far as mood and modality are concerned, he starts with Jespersen (1924) and then critically engages with the most recent debates inaugurated by the foundational work of Palmer (2001). He eventually formulates what he calls "a mildly formalized model of TAM". He summarises (pp. 75-76) it as follows: "The model was based on the unifying factor of temporality in TAM: situation and phasal aspects were

defined in terms of event time and structure, while view point aspects were understood as presenting different views of event structure …; tense was defined in terms of precedence relationships between the speech time and event time, mediated by a transient deictic center …; finally, modality was defined in terms of alternative times and their relationship with actual time". Although Cook presents his model as a neat system unified by temporality, it is not so obvious what is temporal in Cook's "view point aspect".

In Chapter 2, Cook critically discusses the description of the Hebrew verbal system through the ages. He focuses, however, on the last century starting with the aspectual theories of Ewald and Driver. After providing a historical and comparative view of the BHVS, Cook turns to recent "aspect prominent", "tense prominent" and "discourse prominent" theories of the BHVS. At the end of this chapter he formulates his stance on the debate at the beginning of the 21st century. According to Cook (p. 173), the shift from a focus on the meaning of the conjugations (often grounded in etymology) to that of their function(s) at a synchronic level correlates with a general shift in linguistics to look for the function of constructions in their use in discourse. Cook's critique of the discourse-prominent approaches in Biblical Hebrew is justified, because most of these approaches operate without a well-justified model of semantics. However, his suggestion that linguistic constructions (e.g., a verbal conjunction) have a discernible meaning apart from their discourse context is debatable. Such a view of meaning may be accepted within a structuralist semantic and generative semantic model of meaning. This is not the case when meaning is approached from a cognitive linguistic perspective, where it is argued that linguistic constructions acquire their meaning (or rather meaning potential) through usage. Linguistic constructions do have a meaning, but it has been acquired and there is substantial empirical evidence that the meaning of a construction may change over time as people use language in different contexts and for different purposes. In this regard, Cook returned to a generative-oriented view of language change (p. 178), without providing substantial evidence, to a position that postulates that "a particular synchronic change of a language is, in part, a product of children's reanalysis of an earlier synchronic stage" (p. 178).

Cook is correct when he objects to extreme functionalist approaches that merely provide taxonomies of the functions which a verbal form may have "without taking the additional step of explaining which categories are associated with each verb form in which context". Cook is wrong, however, when he associates Andrason (2010; 2011a; 2011b and 2011c) with such an approach. Andrason does not argue that a verbal form has a long list of meanings "as long as the many meanings for a form can be related to each other in some typologically coherent way", as Cook claims (p. 174). What Andrason does say is that it is theoretically possible that a form has many meanings. This is attested by Cook himself (pp. 78-83). However, according to

Andrason, only those meanings that could be justified from a linguistic typological perspective are allowed in such a "qualitative" list – something Cook also calls for.

With regard to the problem of induction, Cook correctly points out the "difficulty in verifying meaning or function based simply on an inductive examination of the text". He argues that an objective means is needed to verify the model in terms of which a researcher claims that the Biblical Hebrew data under investigation could be explained. Cook is of the opinion that the raw data could easily be interpreted in terms of the researcher's own theoretical frame of reference. An external yardstick is needed in the form of a model of the BHVS that is typologically real – which he believes his own model provides. One cannot help but wonder why Cook would "eschew" statistical, responsibly interpreted, data if it too can give credibility to a "suitable" typological model – including, perhaps, even his own.

When Cook formulates his own semantic theory in the first half of Chapter Three (pp. 176-191), he is eclectic in his choice of instruments to describe the ancient language. He states (p. 190) "First, I am adopting neither an extreme formalist/structuralist position nor a thoroughgoing functionalist/substantialist stance. Rather, I draw freely on insights from both camps". Cook considers the grams such as "perfective, past, subjunctive, and so on as the real building blocks of TAM systems, not the supercategories of tense, aspect, and modality". Cook acknowledges the insights from scholars who point out that each gram "is made up of an amalgam of meanings associated with its diachronic path of development". In other words, each gram has a semantic potential that reflects previous stages of a diachronic cline. However, it is important "to discern between more dominant and less dominant functions/meanings for a form in order to place it accurately along its diachrony" (p. 182).

In what way Cook's notion of "dominant" and "less dominant" functions differs from the notions "prototypical" and "less prototypical" is not clear. Although Cook himself use the notion "prototypical" a number of times in his book, he later (p. 190) explicitly states "I eschew the in-vogue prototype approach to categories". Elsewhere (p. 181), he sides with what Wierzbicka (2004) has said: "the new ideas have been treated as an excuse for intellectual laziness and sloppiness". Cook (p. 181) then states: "In my view, the notion of prototype has to prove its usefulness through semantic description, not through semantic theorizing". If one considers the empirical research as well as the healthy debate around so-called "prototype theory" (e.g., Cruse and Croft 2004), one could argue that the notions of "prototypical" and "less prototypical" are based on much firmer ground than Cook's "dominant" and "less dominant" functions. So why would Cook regard prototypes theory as not useful?

Cook clearly has strong feelings that categories have to be discreet and that their meanings are invariable (p. 180). The idea that a linguistic construction may have an

invariable meaning, however, flies in the face of widely accepted empirically based arguments such as that of Bybee (2010:183-187). It appears as if Cook associates the idea that a construction's meaning may change with his misinterpretation of Andrason as an extreme functionalist approach, which favours "an amalgam of meaning, the distribution or ranking of which is unknown nor of interest" (pp.184-185).

I highly appreciated many of aspects of Cook's book. I think it is not possible to embark on any study new study of the BHVS systems without engaging with the breadth of Cook's scholarship. However, Cook's attempt to strive for extreme academic rigor is perhaps his weakness. In my reading of Chapters Three and Four, I got the impression that his dedication to discreet and invariable categories puts him on a track that made it difficult for him to fully exploit the new horizons opened by the empirical work of Bybee et al. (1994), as well as the wealth of insights provided by cognitive linguists. Linguistic typologists are also typically functionalists and the realities of the empirical data make it impossible for them to operate with a view of categorisation that allows only for discreet unvarying categories.

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