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*Brady A Beard (Emory University)*

**SNATCHED FROM THE HAND OF A BEAR:  
A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE BEAR IN  
DAVID'S SPEECH IN 1 SAM 17:34-37**

*ABSTRACT*

*In 1 Samuel 17, David offers to defend Israel's army against the Philistine champion, Goliath. In response, King Saul questions whether or not David is prepared to fight the Philistine's man of war. David responds by claiming, "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be as one of them because he has reproached the armies of the living God". Commentators have puzzled over this response and offered explanations from textual emendations to theological solutions. At the root of many of these suggestions lies the presence of the bear in this passage. What does it add to the speech that the lion does not? This paper attempts to answer this question by examining bears in ancient Near Eastern iconography to discern the possible socio-cultural place of bears throughout the Near East. It ends by offering interpretive suggestions for David's speech that consider the bear as an integral part of his speech.*

*Samuel Boyd (University of Colorado)*

**RITUAL SHADE: THE TRANSLATION OF KIRTA'S  
*ḥmt***

***ABSTRACT***

*The lexeme ḥmt appears in the Kirta text in KTU 1.14 iii 55 and as a reconstruction in the parallel passage in KTU 1.14 ii 12. The word has been translated in two ways: either as a cultic tent or as a coop in which animals for sacrifice were kept. In this article, I explore both options, the latter initially proposed by Gray and defended by Caquot, Sznycer and Herdner. I argue that, based on related words in Ugaritic as well as comparative evidence from Arabic and Ge'ez, it is much more likely that ḥmt refers to a dwelling place for humans in the divine presence and not a pen for sacrificial animals.*

*Ohad Cohen (Haifa University)*

**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE  
LINGUISTIC MILIEU IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL  
PALESTINE DURING THE PERSIAN PERIOD  
(538-332 BCE)**

**ABSTRACT**

*This contribution examines an interdisciplinary approach to the historical characterization of the Hebrew language during the Persian period – a pivotal stage in the Bible’s development. We rely on a variety of sources to outline the historical context of the linguistic milieu in this era, and bring linguistic evidence from epigraphy for the multiglotic situation in the southern and central parts of Palestine during this period. Furthermore, building on Marc Bloch’s historical method, we describe the ancient reality through the comparative perspective of modern Arabic Palestinian dialects from the same geographical expanse. These observations lead us to conceptualized LBH as literary embodiment of a multi-lingual historical reality.*

*Johan de Joode (KU Leuven)*

## **THE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTS OF SPEECH IN THE HEBREW BIBLE: A DIGITAL STYLISTIC APPROACH**

### *ABSTRACT*

*The classification of the literary genres of the Hebrew Bible is a controversial issue because definitions tend to be elusive or circular. This contribution extends the observations of both Radday and Shore as well as Andersen and Forbes who find that the frequency of particles negatively correlates with the poeticity of texts. I present a promising method that extracts meaningful correlations between a large number of parts of speech and the text type in which they occur. This method provides new insights in the linguistic features that are characteristic of the text types of the Hebrew Bible.*

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*Ernst Wendland (Stellenbosch University)*

## **REVIEW ARTICLE: *THE ART OF BIBLE TRANSLATION***

### *ABSTRACT*

*In this article, I present a somewhat extended review of *The Art of Bible Translation* by Robert Alter (2019) from the specific perspective of a former Bible translator and consultant in Africa (Zambia). This is a longer study since I wanted to include many of the perceptive and instructive thoughts of the author with respect to the artistry of the Biblical Hebrew text on the one hand, and his particular approach to translating that same text on the other, as exemplified in his recent celebrated publication, *The Hebrew Bible* (2018). In the course of this overview, I occasionally offer an indirect critique of Alter's literal "foreignising" approach by presenting an alternative way of looking at the problem in the original text and/or how to render it meaningfully in English.*



## BOOK REVIEWS

Dušek, J (ed.) 2018. *The Samaritans in Historical, Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives* (Studia Judaica 110 / Studia Samaritana 11). Berlin: De Gruyter. xiv + 341 pages. ISBN 978-3-11-061610-1 (Hardcover), e-ISBN 978-3-11-061730-6 (PDF), e-ISBN 978-3-11-061627-9 (EPUB). €86.95.

This volume follows in the footsteps of previous volumes on the Samaritans, published in the well-known series *Studia Samaritana*. These volumes stem from the international congresses of the *Société d'études samaritaines* that are held in different locations every four years. This volume, like its predecessors, cover the wide spectrum of Samaritan studies. It starts with some contributions on the Hebrew Bible and the Samaritan Pentateuch (three essays). Thereafter, follow sections on Roman-Byzantine and Rabbinic studies (three essays), Arabic studies (four essays), studies on the Samaritans in Modern and Contemporary times (four essays), and some linguistic studies (two essays). The scope of this book is motivated by the editor, Jan Dušek, in the preface: "The Samaritans and their culture witnessed history over more than two millennia and we can be spectators of the development of their community in modern times. The Samaritans, their Pentateuch and Mount Gerizim represent a kind of historical constant in the southern Levant during numerous historic events and overthrows, perhaps even despite many of them" (p. v). Right from the outset one could say that such a wide scope will necessarily lead to a somewhat patchy treatment of the very long historical period. One should therefore not expect deep and exhaustive studies in each of the subsections; rather, the contributions represent the state of the field as expressed at the Prague conference of 2016 where these papers were delivered.

Many of the contributors are well-known names in Samaritan studies, but the list also includes some younger/new persons who are starting to contribute to this field of specialization. Samaritan studies have boomed in the past fifteen years, and some of the names included in this volume have to be credited for bringing new energy and dedication to the field.

Scholars of the Hebrew and Samaritan scriptures will find some interesting studies in the first part. Magnar Kartveit (pp. 3-18) addresses the possible anti-Samaritan polemics in 2 Kings 17:24-41 of the Hebrew Bible. He concludes that two lines of criticism against the Samaritans can be observed in this text: "The first stage of this criticism is constituted by vv. 24-34a, 41, and the second stage is found in vv. 34b-40. The first stage

depicts the population as deportees from Syria and Mesopotamia, with their earlier god and Yahweh, practicing syncretism like the former inhabitants, the Israelites who lived in Samaria. The second stage criticizes them for not adhering to the law and the covenant, which they were supposed to do if they were the sons of Jacob whose name became Israel, v. 34b. From a Deuteronomistic viewpoint, the northern population, if they thought of themselves as Israel, they had failed fundamentally. We now know that the worshippers attached to Mount Gerizim in fact called themselves Israelites, they focused on one place of worship only, and had one god only, Yahweh. 2 Kgs 17:24-41 attacks them with two arguments, first their alleged foreign origin and syncretism, and then for breaching the covenant laid upon Israel” (p. 17). In the next essay, Ingrid Hjelm (pp. 19-34) examines the variants in the Samaritan Pentateuch texts of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. She investigates the so-called deuteronomic addenda in SP Numbers 10-14 and 20-27 to establish where they belong. She concludes: “Two basic features appear from my examination of the SP’s major variants in Exodus and Numbers: (1) most of these regard Yahweh’s or Moses’ direct speech in Deuteronomy; and (2) SP’s major variants have a higher degree of verbatim correspondence between Deuteronomy and their Tetrateuch parallels than we see in parallel passages, which we find in both SP and MT. The latter speaks for a conscious redaction, with insertions of texts from one scroll to another. It is, however, not clear which scroll is the source text as the variants are fully integrated in the narrative composition of both SP Deuteronomy and Numbers” (p. 32). In the last contribution of this section, Benedikt Hensel (pp. 35-47) presents “a fresh approach” to the Chronicler’s polemics toward the Samaritan YHWH-worshippers. The “freshness” of his approach (as also expressed in his 2016 volume published in FAT 1/110 at Mohr Siebeck) is captured in the following: “[I]t appears to me that two aspects of the Chronicles have been insufficiently clarified, namely the conception of a greater ‘Israel’ put forward in the Chronicles with the express inclusion of the ‘Samaritans,’ and their critical view of the North. Archaeological excavations in the region of Samaria have now shown that the ‘Samaritans’ were indeed not a *peripheral phenomenon* in religious history in the time after exile (sic!), who might have been included without further thought into the conception of ‘Israel’ which was dominated by Judah. In the case of the ‘Samaritans,’ or better – to avoid this term which has its roots in the polemic tradition – in the case of the YHWH worshippers, the issue here is one of post-exilic Yahwism, which was at least the equal of its Judean counterpart and, in its cultural and

theological impact, was probably even *superior* to it, or at least highly *influential*” (p. 37 – Hensel’s emphasis). Hensel concludes his investigation as follows: “The polemic in the Chronicles, which is directed at the Gerizim community, suggests that the two groups of YHWH worshippers were experiencing turbulent relations at the time the Chronicles were being written. Whilst the struggle for cultic legitimacy as well as their mutual accusations of deficient worship are constitutive factors in each group’s specific narrative, there is no historical evidence before the Hasmonean period, and they are unlikely to have existed in religious and cultural history before the Ptolemaic period. The depiction of the North in the Chronicles is now therefore hard to imagine under Persian rule (but not inconceivable) and is more likely to have been a product of the Hellenistic period” (p. 45).

The second main section on Roman-Byzantine and Rabbinic studies opens with Reinhard Pummer’s (pp. 51-74) investigation into what characteristics differentiate Samaritan and Jewish synagogues. He cautions in his conclusion: “[T]he ambivalence – or rather multivalence – of the concept of ‘orientation’; the various possible influences on the location; the probable depiction of *lulav* and *etrog* in one Samaritan synagogue mosaic; and, in general, the relatively small numbers of Samaritan synagogues unearthed so far, point up the need to apply with caution the traditional criteria for the identification of a synagogue as Samaritan. Future findings may well further modify our assumptions of what characterized antique Samaritan synagogues” (p. 64). The second contribution in this section, that of Andreas Lehnardt (pp. 75-90), identifies some anti-Samaritan polemics in the homiletic midrash *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, Ha-Hodesh, pisqa 5*, while the third, of Abraham Tal (pp. 91-102) studies the occurrence of Nimrod in Genesis 10 in interaction with the Samaritan version and rabbinic texts. He concludes: “[I]n the Samaritan perception of the mighty king Nimrod, one may discern a progressive homiletic approach to the hero, which led to a morphological effect in later sources: it transformed a proper name into a common noun, denoting wicked rebels” (p. 102).

In the third main section on Arabic studies, Daniel Boušek’s (pp. 105-130) essay opens with a discussion of Abū al-Fath’s version of the story of the prophet Mohammad’s encounter with a Samaritan, a Jew, and a Christian. He concludes: “Abū al-Fath’s version of Muhammad’s encounter with a Samaritan, a Jew, and a Christian may be perceived as a Samaritan attempt to rewrite the history of rival communities that the intellectual historian Amos Funkenstein calls a *counterhistory*. ... The Samaritan story of the encounter with Muhammad and the charter of protection given by

him and by ‘Alī confirms that counterhistory is often employed by marginal groups who try to challenge the view of history of the majority. The Christian and Jewish accounts of the encounter with Muhammad also constitute counterhistories of the origins of Islam. But whilst they are apparently the reflection of a vague notion current in Christian and Jewish circles concerning the Christian and Jewish share in the evolution of the new religion and the personal contacts of some of their Arabian brethren with its founder, the Samaritan account is mere fiction. In fact, the Muslim sources do not contain any information about Muhammad’s encounter with Samaritans. ... The difference is that unlike the Christian and Jewish accounts, the Samaritan version is not so unambiguously and scathingly polemical, definitely not in regard to Islam. Its appropriation of the historical accounts mainly aims at securing for the Samaritans, in their own eyes and the eyes of the Muslims, a presence at the dawn of Islam and their legal protections were so challenged at the time when Abū al-Fath wrote *Kitāb al-Tārīkh*” (pp. 126-127). Stefan Schorch (pp. 131-162) discusses an unknown and unique Samaritan Arabic introductory prayer from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, while Gerhard Wedel (pp. 163-199) also investigates the polemics in some 11<sup>th</sup> century literature. The fourth essay in this main section, that by Haseeb Shehadeh (pp. 200-213) discusses the tragic event of the epidemic of 1786 in which one fifth of the Samaritan community in Nablus died.

The fourth main section is dedicated to modern and contemporary issues involving the Samaritan communities and customs. Four contributions attend to a variety of issues: Ruth Bardenstein (pp. 217-234) looks at the historical bindings of the Chamberlain-Warren Samaritan collection; Golda Akhiezer (pp. 235-244) features Abraham Firkovich’s perception of Samaritanism; Julia Droeber (pp. 245-266) attends to Samaritanism amidst religious diversity in Nablus today; and Monika Schreiber (pp. 267-297) looks at marriage customs in the Samaritan community.

The last main section features two essays on linguistic aspects. Moshe Florentin (pp. 301-313) investigates some linguistic phenomena in SP Genesis 49:26 and Deuteronomy 33:16, while Alina Tarshin (pp. 314-322) discusses hyperheavy syllables created in Samaritan Aramaic.

The volume includes the abstracts and keywords of all papers, as well as an author index and an index of sources.

This volume is typical of congress proceedings; it provides an overview of a diversity of topics, and in-depth discussions of all these topics, without necessarily presenting an overarching argument or theme. Readers will find

many valuable insights in the various essays – depending of course on the readers' own specialization. The scope of the volume is too wide that any reader would be interested in all contributions. It would therefore be natural that eclectic use will be made of this volume in scholarly discussions. This is, however, normal, and it does not distract from the quality scholarship contained in the volume.

As a last critical comment, one could point out that the volume was most probably not proofread by a mother-tongue speaker of English. Various of the essays contain fairly clumsy expressions and sentence constructions – something typical of authors writing in a second, or even third, language.

Louis C Jonker  
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D'Andrea, M, Micale, M G, Nadali, D, Pizzimenti, S & Vacca, A (eds) 2019. *Pearls of the Past: Studies on Near Eastern Art and Archaeology in Honour of Frances Pinnock* (Marru 8). Münster: Zaphon. 916 pages. ISBN 978-3-96327-058-1 (Book), 978-96327-059-8 (E-book). €160.00 (Book), €180.00 (Book & E-book).

This collection of papers is in honour of Frances Pinnock, professor of archaeology and art history at La Sapienza Università di Roma, perhaps best known for her excavations at Tell Mardikh-Ebla. There are 46 papers; the majority written in English. Seven papers are in French, and one in Spanish. It is noteworthy that none of the papers are in Italian when this is the native language of Pinnock herself, as well as the editors and the majority of contributors.

As the title of the book indicates, the contributions deal mainly with the art and archaeology of the ancient Near East. These deal especially, but not exclusively with the art and archaeology of the Levant (for example, Mesopotamia and Urartu are also covered), and, as is fitting for a tribute to Pinnock, there are a number of papers dedicated to Ebla and sites closely related to it. Gender studies, particularly in relation to ancient Near Eastern archaeology, are also present. The book is extremely well illustrated, which is important and much appreciated in a work on art and archaeology.

The contributions reflect works of established as well as emerging scholars, and in general are of a high standard of research. There are, however, many problems with the editing, and this unfortunately detracts

from the quality of the book. These editing problems manifest in a number of ways. Authors are spelled incorrectly within contributions. For example, in Forza's *Generated Change and Spontaneous Change: Parallels between the Development of Cremation and the Diffusion of Groovy Pottery in the Upper Tigris Valley during the Iron Ages I and II* (pp. 321-347), Lipínski is spelled "Lipinsky" (p. 325 n. 14 and 15), and in Kelly-Buccellati's *Images of Work in Urukesh* (pp. 413-427), her own surname is spelled incorrectly as "Kelly-Buccellaty" (p. 414 n. 5). There are also problems with the layout of some of the contributions. Al-Magdissi's *Notes d'Archéologie Levantine XLIX: Matériel funéraire de la region de Tell Afis dans un document des archives de R. du Mesnil du Buisson* (pp. 25-35) and Baffi's *The Impact of the Great Empires on Inner Syria* (pp. 37-51) both contain pages where each sentence forms a new paragraph, which makes these papers difficult to read and the arguments difficult to follow.

There are many English-language errors throughout the collection of works and this seriously mars its quality, and at times makes reading difficult. For example, this clause from Di Paolo's *Bodily Violence in Early Old Babylonian Glyptics: A Performative Act?* (pp. 299-319) is unfortunately not an isolated case, "this iconic message could refer to a some founding heroic events". There are also repeated examples of incorrect English terminology, as for example "state-of-the-art" being used in both D'Andrea's *The EB-MB Transition at Ebla: A State-of-the-Art Overview in the Light of the 2004-2008 Discoveries at Tell Mardikh* (pp. 263-297) and in Garcia-Ventura's *The Archaeology of Women and Women in Archaeology in the Ancient Near East* (pp. 350-366) (p. 350), although "state of research" or "state of affairs" should have been used. Similarly, "motive" is used instead of "motif" in multiple papers, including Kühne's *Mittani and Middle Assyrian Stamp Seals* (pp. 449-459), Micale's *Framing the Space: On the Use of Crenellation from Architecture to the Definition of Pictorial Spaces* (pp. 601-631), Otto's *Ritual Drinking in Syria: New Insights from the Decorated Terracotta Basin from Tall Bazi and the Funerary Talisman from Ebla* (pp. 709-721) and Polcaro's *On Pots and Serpents: An Iconographic and Contextual Analysis of the Cultic Vessels with Serpent Figurines in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC Transjordan* (pp. 775-793). "Passage ritual" is used instead of "rite of passage" in Haider's *Empty Vessels or Laden Signifiers? Imported Greek Pottery in Levantine Social Practice* (pp. 367-377) (p. 368). This latter contribution also includes seven figures, but none of these are referenced within the text.

Words which do not fit in a line and need to be broken up over two lines are divided in incorrect and illogical places, which makes their reading difficult. Examples of this are in Forza's *Generated Change and Spontaneous Change: Parallels between the Development of Cremation and the Diffusion of Groovy Pottery in the Upper Tigris Valley during the Iron Ages I and II* (pp. 321-347), "wi-tnessed", throu-gh" and "subsistence" (p. 331), and in Tumolo's *A Bull's Heads from Ĥirbet ez-Zeraqōn* (pp. 847-867), "whi-ch", "fo-rehead", "appea-rances", "hi-gher" and "volumes" (p. 853). Breaks also occur in the middle of lines, such as "repre-sent" also in Tumolo's paper (p. 853), and "ob-served" in Hausleiter's *Cultural Contacts, Transfer of Images and Ideas: On 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BC Funerary Stelae from Tamyā* (pp. 379-404) (p. 386). Hausleiter's contribution also includes a direct quote with no reference (p. 387 n. 47).

With regard to the content of the papers, there are also some inaccuracies, omissions or oversights, although none of these seriously impact the overarching argument. In his paper *Cultural Contacts, Transfer of Images and Ideas: On 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BC Funerary Stelae from Tamyā* (pp. 379-404), Hausleiter mentions Ašurbanipal's wife in the famous "Garden Scene" relief as Šammu-ramat (p. 388), but this was Šamši-Adad V's wife, Ašurbanipal's wife was Libbāli-šarrat. Tumolo's discussion on ivory bulls' heads in *A Bull's Heads from Ĥirbet ez-Zeraqōn* (pp. 847-867) is fascinating and quite thorough, but includes the hypothesis that these bulls' heads "might represent elements of standards" (p. 857), and references the so-called Standard of Mari as support for this argument (p. 857 n. 62). Calmeyer (1967:166, Abb. 6) has quite convincingly argued that the original reconstruction of the so-called Standard of Mari by Parrot (1956:140, 145, Pl. LVII.C) in which the bull surmounts a standard is inaccurate, and that the bull forms part of a reign ring. In Polcaro's *On Pots and Serpents: An Iconographic and Contextual Analysis of the Cultic Vessels with Serpent Figurines in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC Transjordan* (pp. 775-793) there is a section "Comparisons with Mesopotamia" (pp. 783-784) which states that Dumuzi and Ningišzida were the two deities with whom the serpent was particularly associated. While the link Polcaro makes between these gods, the netherworld and the serpent are valid, the section would have benefitted greatly from Wiggermann's *Transtigridian Snake Gods* (1997). In Haider's *Empty Vessels or Laden Signifiers? Imported Greek Pottery in Levantine Social Practice* (pp. 367-377) it is stated that "holding the cup by both hands is a habit widely spread in the Near East as attested by the various iconography." There are no references to

substantiate this claim, and Near Eastern iconography more commonly depicts cups or vessels being held in one hand; see for example Romano (2015) and Winter (1986) for more on this matter, including further reading. Pucci's *Representation of Military Attack on Neo-Assyrian Glyptic: A Seal from Chatal Höyük in the Amuq*, (pp. 795-808) includes a discussion and table on towns or structures depicted in the Balawat Gates, but only references Curtis & Tallis (2008), which is a study specifically on the gates of the Temple of Mamu and the Palace of Ašurnasirpal II at Balawat. The gates associated with Šalmaneser III as discussed in King (1915) (whom Pucci references) and Schachner (2015) are not included. It is unclear from the paper if Pucci is aware of the different gates or not. In Di Paolo's *Bodily Violence in Early Old Babylonian Glyptics: A Performative Act?* (pp. 299-319) the catalogue is not consistent in the information it provides, and excludes a considerable proportion of museum numbers. For example, her catalogue number 9 is BM 26180, which is not included. However, the publications in which Di Paolo found the entries for which she excludes the museum numbers are included.

These examples are only a selection of the issues relating to content, and editing in particular. Despite these and similar problems, this collection of works has much to offer. Several papers include previously unpublished material. For example, D'Andrea's *The EB-MB Transition at Ebla: A State-of-the-Art Overview in the Light of the 2004-2008 Discoveries at Tell Mardikh* (pp. 263-297) discusses the previously unpublished ceramic assemblages from Area HH at Tell Mardikh-Ebla, and Oselini's analysis in *The Ceramic Horizon of the Middle Bronze I-II in the Lower Middle Diyala Basin* (pp. 691-708) includes some previously unpublished potsherds from Tell Yelkhi. Micale's *Framing the Space: On the Use of Crenellation from Architecture to the Definition of Pictorial Spaces* (pp. 601-631) discusses and provides a figure of a previously unpublished plaque from Ashur, while Tumolo's *A Bull's Heads from Ḥirbet ez-Zeraqōn* (pp. 847-867) studies a previously unpublished artefact, placing it within the context of Early Bronze Age material culture.

There are also papers which offer interesting insights or great information. For example, Pedrazzi's *Syrian One-Handled Fusiform Jars: An Offshoot of the Canaanite Tradition or of Late Bronze Age Connection with Anatolia* (pp. 723-739) provides a good discussion of the state of research and the historical and cultural context of one-handed fusiform jars, and Richard's *Miniatures and Miniaturization in the EV IV at Khirbat Iskandar, Jordan* (pp. 813-838) is a well written and meticulous study on



the types of miniatures found at the site. Garcia-Ventura's *The Archaeology of Women and Women in Archaeology in the Ancient Near East* (pp. 350-366) and Laneri's *What a Woman! Gender Identity in the Clay Votive Plaques of Hirbemerdon Tepe during the Early Second Millennium BC* (pp. 473-486) have invaluable (and somewhat complementary) information on the history of gender studies, particularly related to gender archaeology, in the ANE. In *The Doubling of the Image of the King: A Note on Slabs B-13 and B-23 in the Throne Room of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud* (pp. 661-675), Nadali argues that Ašurnasirpal's throne would have been situated in front of the "sacred tree" on Slab B-23. The throne therefore would have "covered" the sacred tree. This means that the enthroned king would have been flanked in relief by previous kings and genies (p. 665). This is a thought-provoking argument and it might suggest that scholars, in the past, have overanalyzed the possible meaning of the sacred tree-motif. Despite the use of somewhat outdated sources, Pizzimenti's *Fertility from the Sky: The Role of the Scorpion in the Ploughing Scenes on Akkadian Glyptic* (pp. 761-774) provides an interesting hypothesis that the scorpion in ploughing scenes on Akkadian seals represents a constellation and therefore references a time of year. It would be interesting to study objects found in the field in other scenes of human activity to ascertain whether other constellations could be similarly identified.

This book also highlights new or further avenues of research. For example, Kennedy, in *A New EB IV Cultural Province in Central and Southern Syria: The View from Tell Nebi Mend* (pp. 429-447), identifies a "new and hitherto unknown cultural province in western inland Syria during the final centuries of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC" (p. 438), and this offers great potential for further research. In *Titles and Activities of Hittite Women: The Evidence of the Seals* (pp. 633-639), Mora suggests that further investigation should be made into the phenomenon of two different names, one male and one female on either side of biconvex seals, "perhaps connected with economic or social conjuncture" (p. 637). Similarly, Kühne in his *Mittani and Middle Assyrian Stamp Seals* (pp. 449-459) states that more research needs to be done to see if stamp seals which were not recognized as such or denominated properly were produced at other Mittani sites (p. 545). In *Some Reflections about the Chora of Ebla during the EB III and IVA1 Periods* (pp. 869-898) Vacca highlights the sheer number of sites uncovered by the *Ebla Chora Project* (ECP) which still need to be excavated and investigated (p. 871).

Notwithstanding the problems in language and editing, the articles in this collection exhibit high quality research and add much to the study of ancient Near Eastern art, and archaeology in particular. It is a fitting tribute to an excellent scholar.

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