

material on construction and consecration of temples along with the installation of images, largely because the texts have remained unedited and untranslated. This paper presents two chapters from the *Devyāmata*, an early Śaiva *pratiṣṭhāntra*. Within the same genre of literature, Libbie Mills discusses *bhūtasāmkhya*, the use of object words for number words in the texts, often for metrical reasons. For example ‘one’ (*eka*) can be rendered as ‘eye’ (*netra*) if two syllables are required or *nayana* if three. She proposes that these *bhūtasāmkhyas* can be used as additional evidence for dating: the greater the preponderance of such terms, the later the text. Finally Péter-Daniél Szántó presents Buddhist material, an edition from manuscript fragments of Abhayākaragupta’s *Śrīsamvarābhisamayopāyikā*, also using the text’s Tibetan translation, along with a synopsis. This text is located within a particularly rich bundle of manuscripts in the Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP). This is a *sādhana* (ritual/meditation) text describing in particular visualization of the deities of the *maṇḍala* of the deity Samvara. At the top of a mountain the practitioner should visualize everything dissolved into emptiness and then himself as Samvara with his constituents (*skandha*) identified with different Buddhas. The text describes various visualizations of letters and so on to be undertaken and Szántó situates this in relation to other works of the Vajrayāna in the late Pāla period.

This is an excellent collection of essays that present a range of recent work on the early tantric textual corpus. The book successfully combines the substantial opening essay on the broader contextualization of tantric practices with detailed presentations of particular texts from manuscript sources, mostly from the NGMPP. I only detected one typological error (Frits Staal’s name misspelled as Fritz [p. 1 n. 1]—he was sensitive to the confusion of the German with the Dutch rendering of his name) and the book is presented as a very high quality production with a good typescript and wonderful colored plates of manuscripts referred to and sculptures of deities. The book meets the exemplary high standard we have come to expect of this excellent series.

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*The Verb in Archaic Biblical Poetry: A Discursive, Typological, and Historical Investigation of the Tense System.* By TANIA NOTARIUS. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, vol. 68. Leiden: BRILL, 2013. Pp. xxiii + 351. \$162.

The verbal system of Biblical Hebrew (BH) is a hotly debated issue in scholarship. Some of the central questions in the debate concern whether the system is primarily based on tense, aspect, modality, or discourse conditions. Moreover, it is also debated how these categories might apply to each individual verb form. Even though a number of scholars have published linguistic treatments of the verbal system in recent years (e.g., Ohad Cohen, John Cook, Jan Joosten), their research is based primarily on prose texts. What differentiates Notarius’ approach is that the corpus of “archaic poetry” demands that she extract a verbal system from poetic texts—an endeavor many linguists would balk at. While Notarius is not the first to attempt a linguistic analysis of the verb in poetry (e.g., Alviero Niccacci), she is the first to do so with the corpus of “archaic poetry.” Further, the historical-linguistic aspects of her work bring the discussion beyond previous research. For example, although Niccacci deals with poetry, he does not place much weight on diachronic considerations for explaining the verbal system. Scholars who differ, however, generally limit the diachronic study of the verb to the transformational period between Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH) and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH). In this book, however, Notarius is able not only to identify the archaic verbal system of BH, but also to establish it as a legitimate stage in the history of BH (introduction, chapters 1–2).

The first part is comprised of three chapters (1–3). Notarius begins by describing different approaches to analyzing the verbal system in CBH prose, a prerequisite before addressing the verb in poetry. In chapter 2 she mentions some obstacles for interpreting verbal tenses in poetry. For example, the language used in different “poetic” texts is not uniform, but rather displays a “high level of linguistic

diversity” (p. 26). Also, she indicates that while others have commented on the verb in “archaic poetry,” their discussions have typically been limited to the use of the prefix conjugation for the past perfective (< \**yaqtul*). In the subsequent chapters Notarius’ work goes far beyond this single feature.

In chapter 3 Notarius explains her methodology. In order to handle the linguistic diversity, she approaches the data through discourse analysis. Within this framework she outlines five discursive criteria: communicative situation, intentions of the speaker, temporal patterns, aspectual entities, and principles of text-progression. Concerning the communicative situation, Notarius distinguishes between the *conversational framework* and *monologue-blocks*. The conversational framework is the direct address of a speaker to a listener, while monologue-blocks are longer chunks of discourse which flow out of the conversational framework. The three types of speeches within the conversational framework (hymnal, prophetic, proverbial) and the five types of monologue-blocks (narrative, report, description, information, argument) make up altogether nine discourse modes. On the basis of these, we can analyze each verb within the category of its discourse mode. This is especially helpful since “each verbal inflection gains specific semantic characteristics in a certain discourse mode” (p. 58).

In the second part (chapters 4–11) Notarius consistently applies this methodology to the eight texts regarded as “archaic poetry.” For each text, according to the discursive criteria, she outlines the various modes of discourse and how they shape the text. Subsequently, she describes the verbal forms used with respect to morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatic characteristics. This part of the book is well organized and systematic.

The final section (chapters 12–14) is devoted to her conclusions regarding the archaic verbal system. In chapter 12 Notarius concludes that there are certain phenomena for which discursive factors are not sufficient to explain the linguistic diversity. For these, she turns to historical-linguistic considerations for an explanation. Accordingly, she evaluates such phenomena within the context of the various stages of Hebrew, the other Semitic languages, and language typology in general. Last, Notarius differentiates between mere “archaisms” and a full-blown archaic language type. In other words, apparent archaic verbal features must not be found in isolated contexts but must be part of a cohesive system to be regarded as truly reflecting the archaic language type.

On the basis of these principles, she identifies eleven archaic phenomena represented in the corpus of “archaic poetry” (chapter 13). After describing each one in detail, Notarius indicates the degree to which the archaic verbal system is attested in each poetic text. This is one of the most interesting parts of the book as she concludes that the archaic language type is not equally represented throughout the corpus. It is reflected only in the Song of Moses, the Song of Deborah, the Song of the Sea, and the epic parts of the Song of David. The Oracles of Balaam, on the other hand, represent a sort of mixed language type (archaic and innovative features), which she describes as “the transitional stage from the archaic to classical verb system” (p. 296). Interestingly, the Blessing of Jacob, the Blessing of Moses, and the Song of Hannah do not meet the criteria to be considered texts which reflect the archaic verbal system.

In chapter 14 Notarius determines which verbal forms may be reconstructed for the archaic verbal system and summarizes their functions. In short, this includes three indicative forms: preterite *yiqtol* (< \**yaqtul*), imperfective *yiqtol* (< \**yaqtulu*), and perfect *qatal*. It is noteworthy that she does not reconstruct sequential verbal forms. Additionally, the volitive modal forms are comprised of the imperative and the jussive.

Finally, she uses narrative tenses as a case study for interpreting linguistic diversity. For instance, in storytelling passages (narrative and report) there is typically one verbal tense which marks the mainline of the story. Notarius finds that in narrative the mainline tense tends to be preterite *yiqtol* whereas in report it tends to be *qatal* or imperfective *yiqtol* used as a “historical present.” She concludes the chapter by finding parallels in other Northwest Semitic (NWS) languages and places her findings within their wider NWS context. In fact, she argues that “Archaic Hebrew seemingly reveals complex dialectal properties, at least as far as the use of the narrative tense is concerned” (p. 317).

All in all, this is a very fine piece of research. Notarius’ work goes well beyond any previous treatment of verbal forms in the “archaic poetry” corpus in that she does not merely identify archaic features but reconstructs the entire archaic verbal system of BH. One of the things that makes Notarius’ argument strong regarding features we may reconstruct to this system is that they seem to fit well within the

proto-NWS system. Also, she is able to point to parallel examples in other NWS languages. Further, the fact that she identifies mixed texts (i.e., those that contain both archaic and classical verbal features) distances the archaic verbal system from other stages of BH. This becomes a relevant piece of evidence for the diachronic study of Hebrew (pace Robyn Vern).

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions of her work is the conclusion that not all the texts typically regarded as “archaic poetry” represent the archaic verbal system. However, such a conclusion may be problematic since these texts do contain other archaic features (morphology, vocabulary, etc.). Although her research is limited to the verbal system, the reader can only wonder how she might resolve such a tension.

The innovativeness of her methodology is also worth mentioning. While different linguistic studies have been carried out regarding the verbal system of BH, the application of a discursive approach comprehensively to a poetic corpus is truly innovative. Hopefully, this work will pave the way for further research by setting an example for how to interpret poetry while maintaining a high linguistic standard.

It should be pointed out, however, that while Notarius does a great job of adhering to rigid linguistic criteria, this work is not totally free from subjective interpretation; this is a fact which Notarius herself acknowledges. In my opinion, this tension is most significant when determining the underlying value of a *yiqtol* form (as preterite *yaqtul* or imperfective *yaqtulu*). A number of Notarius’ determinations regarding the underlying value of a particular *yiqtol* form could be challenged. It should be kept in mind that these interpretive decisions could influence her conclusions. Nevertheless, Notarius has made a great contribution to the field and has laid a solid foundation for further research.

Unfortunately, there were a noticeable number of typos and some issues with formatting. For example, on p. 310 the book reads, “all prefix conjugation forms . . . are in bold, the non-initial among them are italicized, the perfect is in larger font.” However, this is inconsistent with the following block of Hebrew text. It is unfortunate that easily correctible issues like this sometimes made the reading of an otherwise excellent book more difficult.

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*A Prophet Like Moses: Prophecy, Law, and Israelite Religion.* By JEFFREY STACKERT. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2014. Pp. viii + 243. \$74.

Jeffrey Stackert’s *A Prophet Like Moses: Prophecy, Law, and Israelite Religion* takes on Wellhausen’s classic question of the relationship between prophecy and law in Israelite religion, a question whose answer is embodied in the character of Moses. Wellhausen asked the right question, but his characterization of Moses fit his understanding of the development of Israelite religion and the relationship between the two sections of the canon. Stackert makes essentially the same argument Wellhausen did—that law replaces prophecy—but based instead on an analysis of the literary sources and with much more subtlety and nuance: Legal religion is not the characteristic of a late P but something that exists in tension with prophecy through three of the four sources.

Wellhausen’s dichotomy between law and prophets on the canonical level is blurred by pentateuchal texts that present Moses as a prophet. Scholars have often downplayed these, but Stackert makes a firm case for the prophetic element of Moses’s character by showing that his portrayal in all four sources involves elements of prophecy typical throughout the ancient Near East. The Pentateuch is unique in two ways: it is a narrative construction of the past (not a typical prophetic genre), and it presents Moses as a prophetic mediator of *law*.

J depicts Moses as a prophet who is legitimated through the performance of signs and receives fully comprehensible divine messages but does not see God (e.g., Exodus 24 and the J portions of Exodus 4, 8–9, and 33). But J has no interest in law; about this, Wellhausen was right. But his inability to separate