

appears as the very different Turkish *ğ* (e.g., p. 297 s.v. *gml* II; p. 349 s.v. *hdg*). In some cognates, *h* appears as *ḥ*, for example Eblaite /ḥablum/ (p. 347, vs. the correct /ḥablum/ of p. 352 of the second edition) and “Syr. *ḥbq*, ‘to surround’, [but] *ḥbaqā*?, ‘embracing’” (also on p. 347). Other inconsistencies are the citations of Syriac forms sometimes as roots, as in *ḥbq*, just mentioned, and sometimes as 3ms perfects, as in *ḥbaš* on the following page (and *ḥbaq* in the second edition, p. 352).

I have noted also these typos:

*P. x*: For “allophon” read either “allophone” or “allophonic.” (The abbreviations “allom.” and “alloph.” seem to be used interchangeably; for example, on p. 986 *z̄bm* is said to be “allom. of *ḥbm*,” but on p. 601 *m̄zr* is “alloph. of *m̄tr*.”)

*P. 83* s.v. *ánz*: The root that is cross-referenced, /n-z(-y)/, is not in the dictionary.

*P. 129*: For *iwrḥ* read *iwrḥt*.

*P. 135* s.v. *ázhn*: For “second” read “first.”

*P. 182* s.v. *ḥrz*: For “presure” read “pressure.”

*P. 238* s.r. /b-š-š/: For “einschneiden” read “abschneiden.”

*P. 283* s.r. /d-m-r/: For “Syr. *dmr*” read “OSA *dmr*.”

*P. 963*: The order of the entries *yr̄gmbšl* and *yr̄gmil* should be inverted.

*P. 987 last line*: For “*dmn*” read “*dmn*.”

These are minor issues, however, that do not detract from the overall reliability and usefulness of the new edition. We remain very much in the editors’ debt.

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*The Verb and the Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew: A Cognitive-Linguistic Approach*. By ELIZABETH ROBAR. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, vol. 78. Leiden: BRILL, 2014. Pp. xii + 220. \$142.

Biblical Hebrew (BH) is one of the most studied languages in the world and the BH verbal system is one of the most studied topics of BH grammar. Almost every year a monograph or two and a few articles about different aspects of BH verbal syntax are published. In view of such intensive production, the publication of new research seems to be justified on the basis of two interrelated factors: 1) newly introduced linguistic data; 2) heuristically innovative promising analytical framework(s). As for novel linguistic material, it can include different genres or corpus parts of the Hebrew Bible, other Hebrew extra-biblical corpora, comparative Semitic data, various contact materials, general cross-linguistic data, etc. As for methodology, the recent development of BH studies demonstrates that strict linguistic frameworks, as well as cross-linguistic studies and discourse analysis, greatly contribute to BH linguistic research and improve our understanding of the grammatical system.

The monograph of Elizabeth Robar suggests novel explications for some problems of the BH verbal system. The corpus under analysis remains undefined, which, in my view, is a considerable methodological deficiency. The linguistics of ancient written languages such as BH cannot be based on a scholar’s innate linguistic competence, but is essentially corpus-driven. Therefore the corpus delimitation is a crucial condition for properly conducted research. The literary diversity of examples in this monograph (both prose and poetry, classical and late texts) may mean that the Hebrew Bible as a whole provided the database, but there is no explicit confirmation of this. (However, the index of biblical quotations suggests quite a narrow scope.) The risk in such an approach is that the examples that could potentially challenge a theory are simply left out. Nevertheless, the author enlarges the linguistic data by adducing typological parallels with Neo-Semitic, particularly with Neo-Aramaic (pp. 89–92), as well as Bantu (p. 96) and some other languages.

The research is mainly theory-oriented: chapter 1 discusses in general “how language reflects and embodies human cognition” (pp. 1–60). As commonly in linguistic analysis aimed at a particular

language or phenomenon, the framework is integral and eclectic. The main theoretical standpoint has its roots in cognitive theory and concentrates on expressions of coherence and prominence in texts. The mapping of consciousness onto discourse operates on two levels: linguistic (syntax) and conceptual (cognition); conceptual units are mirrored in discourse units, discourse units are grouped around a certain theme (pp. 40–41). Continuity is a central notion for the author's text typology and methodology in general. While topic shifts mark discontinuity, the continuity remains unmarked (pp. 42–43; it seems that the author does not always strictly differentiate between theme and topic). The author likewise operates with the theories of markedness and grammaticalization (pp. 47–59). In her view, markedness shift is a trigger of grammaticalization: "the markedness shift, when it modifies the grammatical meaning of a term, thus prompts grammatical shift. When a word (or part of a word) shifts its meaning from more lexical (content-based) to less lexical (relational, functional, or grammatical), or from less grammatical to more grammatical, this is called grammaticalization" (pp. 51–52). The following analysis however does not illuminate how concretely the markedness shift imposes the move of a unit from the sphere of lexicon to that of grammar. The discussion of prominence ("one item differs from another and, for whatever reason, demands more of our attention") closes the theoretical lay-out (pp. 59–60). Sporadically the author refers to comparative historical-linguistic method (pp. 78–79; 87–88), formal Reichenbachian semantics (p. 81), and other approaches.

The opposition of schematic continuity and discontinuity constitutes the core of the two main chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the notion of the "Schematic Continuity" that provides paragraphs with delimitation and coherence (pp. 68–147). The primary attentiveness of the author to the paragraph level of linguistic structure locates her approach within the "discourse-linguistic," rather than the "morphosyntactic," school of BH studies (cf. p. 61). As an alternative to existing "discourse-linguistic" debates, the author aims at representing "the formal evidence of paragraph organization insofar as this may be revealed by verbal forms and sequences" (p. 73): "schematic continuity is an expression of continuity of a cognitive unit . . . schematic continuity thus also points to *thematic* continuity." Under the author's proposal, *wayyiqtol* marks schematic continuity (p. 77–78).

In order to substantiate this claim she turns to the traditional question about the morphosyntactic status of this category and its historical-linguistic implications. Sometimes *wayyiqtol* forms are morphologically long and have other than past-tense functions (pp. 79–86). The conclusion is that *wayyiqtol* cannot be considered preterit. Drawing a parallel with Neo-Aramaic short and long *qatəl* forms of the present tense that function as irrealis/narrative past and habitual present, respectively, the author concludes that short "*yiqtol* (e.g., *wayyiqtol*) might be a virtually unmarked term that could be irrealis (e.g., jussive) or a narrative present" (p. 91). As a result the author revives the traditional view of *wayyiqtol* as part of the prefix present/future paradigm—in the function of narrative present.

In BH the forms of narrative present became consecutive, due to the "conceptual discourse structure" of "the current discourse unit"—its *schema*. In Robar's words, *wayyiqtol* "indicates the further development of a theme, and *not* a thematic break" (pp. 104–10). The very fact that *wayyiqtol* commonly has an initiating syntactic and discursive function—for example, starts a new narrative unit or even a new lengthy narrative—is underestimated in the investigation; cf. Amos 7:10, and see A. Niccacci, "An Integrated Verb System for Biblical Hebrew Prose and Poetry," in *Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007*, ed. A. Lemaire (Leiden: Brill: 2010), 99–127; cf. also the review of the book by J. Cook, "Cognitive-Linguistic Confusion," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 73 (2015): 298.

*Weqatal* is characterized in terms of partly continuing (pp. 116–20), but mainly initiating verbal semantics (pp. 121–28), with special emphasis on the syntactic category of the purpose/result clause (cf. pp. 129–30). It is concluded that "its semantics are thus the same as *qatal*, but its pragmatic use is the indication of discourse hierarchy and structure, as might be expected from a word prefixed with a conjunction" (pp. 130–31). However, the semantics of the *qatal* category are completely left out of the investigation. In view of its debated nature, the claim about "the same semantics" remains very vague. *Wayyiqtol* is also described in terms of schematic continuity (pp. 131–41; these forms, like the forms of *wayyiqtol*, are treated as representatives of the same prefix conjugation without morphosyntactic distinctions between different paradigms).

It is concluded that *wəyiqtol* and *wayyiqtol* "appear functionally identical: they were initially one and the same form. The distinction between them is in their semantic range, each expressing a sub-

set of *yiqtol*" (p. 141). But some pages later it is written concerning the distribution among the three *w*-prefixed forms all described in terms of "schematic continuity" (they "may coordinate," p. 146) that "[i]t has been argued that the alternation of forms is used, not necessarily for semantic differences, but in order to distinguish different schematic levels. One form will coordinate, another will incorporate (or coordinate at an embedded level)" (p. 147). The reader is free to decide whether the forms are functionally identical, but distinct semantically, or whether their semantic differences are irrelevant but that they have different functions within the scheme.

Chapter 3 is about "Schematic Discontinuity" (pp. 148–88). The author is particularly interested in the intended discontinuities within the sequences of verbal forms that "may thrust an unexpected point of prominence into the text, thereby suggesting a deviation from default patterns" (p. 148). The discontinuous *wə+qatal* introduces additional thematic shifts (pp. 152–59). Special emphasis is laid on forms with paragogic endings *-n* and *-āh* (pp. 160–80) that are represented as "one suppletive paradigm" (the forms regularly excluded from this suppletion, such as the 2mpl imperative or the 2ms and 3mfs *wayyiqtol*, remain beyond the scope of the discussion) and can fulfill a very wide range of functions: ventive, andative, imperfective aspect, volitive mood, topic shift, and discourse marker (pp. 164–65). The conclusion is that these "long forms" "are not to be explained away with reference to semantics or syntax, but that they have a distinct discourse-pragmatic function: to signal that a discourse theme, a theme of intrinsic interest and not just instrumental interest, is present or changing"—in other words, prominence (pp. 180–81).

An examination of the grammaticalization path of the paragogic ending closes the discussion. The ending is derived from the Akkadian ventive (but the most recent research, for example, R. Hasselbach, "The Ventive/Energic in Semitic—A Morphological Study," *ZDMG* 156 [2006]: 309–28, and H. Dallaire, *The Syntax of Volitives in Biblical Hebrew and Amarna Canaanite Prose* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2014], is not mentioned). The ending is ostensibly a derivative of a motion verb (p. 187), but this latter point remains completely unsubstantiated. The main argument is once more drawn from cross-linguistic data on Neo-Aramaic dialects. In Jewish Arbel the particle *lā* in the present progressive tense *lā-qatil* can equally mark prominence and have historical present functions.

The main contribution of this research is limited to two spheres: the framework of cognitive text-processing and the re-uniting interpretation of all the prefixed forms (cf. p. 189). In my view, the first goal is achieved: the cognitive-linguistic notions of continuity / discontinuity and prominence are consistently formulated. Their representation in discourse, at least as far as the functioning of verbal forms is concerned, is effectively illustrated. One might ask, however, to what extent this approach is an improvement over other discourse-oriented approaches to the BH verbal system, but this review is not the place for this debate.

However the claim that all parts of the prefix conjugation are variants within the same present-future paradigm is fraught with considerable methodological problems, including

1) The author's method does not presuppose formal morphosyntactic and semantic analysis (with some rare inconsistent exceptions). The cognitive approach based on the Gestalt principle (reduced in practice to the continuity / discontinuity dichotomy) remains too broad for properly formulated distinctions between different formal paradigms and their semantic distribution. The very fact that some forms or paradigmatic sets have similar functions on a very large-scale, paragraph-sorted cognitive level does not necessarily imply that they are the same morphological categories.

2) The manner of the typological and historical linguistic analysis employed here causes bewilderment. One observes a certain confusion of synchronic and diachronic levels of discussion. The author concludes that synchronically *wayyiqtol* functions as a narrative present (historical present) in the sense that it is part of the imperfective present / future paradigm and denotes a punctual perfective event (see p. 90), and that diachronically it is derived from the West Semitic (WS) imperfective *\*yaqtulu*. On the synchronic level, one would expect a painstaking formal and semantic analysis of the forms of *wayyiqtol* in comparison with BH *yiqtol* to make the category of historical present sound. Diachronically one would expect a detailed discussion of the linguistic change that led to the shift of WS *\*yaqtulu* → BH *wayyiqtol*.

All these steps are omitted: even if *wayyiqtol* is indeed diachronically derived from the present tense *\*yaqtulu* (which I believe is not the case), it is not necessarily a historical present from the synchronic viewpoint or vice versa. The ultimate argument is the cross-linguistic parallel with the historical

present in Neo-Aramaic. The problem is that the results of cross-linguistic analysis by no means have a prescriptive character. The very fact that in Barwar and Arbel the present progressive tense in its lengthened variants is used as a historical present or to “denote prominence” does not presuppose that this is the case in BH (not to mention the explicit differences between the compared materials, e.g., that *yiqtol* is not a present progressive in BH, while the active participle is; cf. J. Joosten, “The Predicative Participle in Biblical Hebrew,” *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 2 [1989]: 128–59).

In general the statement about the historical source of the BH prefix conjugations is not supported by proper historical linguistic analysis, but is just imaginatively outlined. Note, for example, the scheme for “the generally accepted semantic evolution of the Semitic verbal system” (p. 199): *yaqattal* (e.g., Ethiopic) → *yaqtulu* (e.g., El-Amarna) → *yiqtol* (e.g., Biblical Hebrew). Needless to say, no reference is given to any scholar who would uphold this “generally accepted evolution.” (The idea that the WS imperfective *yaqtulu* is somehow derived from the East Semitic durative *yaqattal* [traced also in Ethio-Semitic] seems outrageous; cf. N. J. Kouwenberg, *The Akkadian Verb and Its Semitic Background* [Winona Lake, 2010], 97–100.) In order to balance this statement, the author makes an idiosyncratic distinction between morphological (*yaqtulliprus* → *yaqtulu*) and semantic (*yaqattal* → *yaqtulu*) derivation, once more with no details, but furthermore postulates that “Akkadian *iprus*, also belongs to that present / imperfective evolutionary path. Though this would be counter to all standard assumptions, it may be possible that a closer look is in order.” All of the extensive comparative Semitic scholarship is reduced to “standard assumptions” (again without any references, of course), but the author recommends that colleagues take “a closer look.” The author herself should have followed this pertinent recommendation.

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*Proverbs. An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary.* By MICHAEL V. FOX. The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition, vol. 1. Atlanta: SBL PRESS, 2015. Pp. xxii + 431, 42\*. \$69.95.

How can we edit the Book of Proverbs when there are few modern edited versions and none really of the Hebrew text itself? We do what we have done for hundreds of years; we wing it with what we have got. Inevitably that will have to be done with a large dose of sometimes arbitrary judgment.

Michael V. Fox, the author of the authoritative Anchor Bible Commentary on the Book in two volumes (2000 and 2009), has now published his “eclectic edition” of the Book with his extensive discussions of how he got to the text he used. But in many ways this volume stands apart from the Commentary, and Fox has rightly felt free to change and nuance his views in light of his careful consideration of the evidence. There is no one now alive who knows as much about the Book and its versions, and Fox’s achievement shows how right the judgment just expressed actually is. His judgments when arbitrary are flagged as such, and his decisions seem on the whole thoroughly defensible and eminently sensible.

People who worry about the Book will not be surprised that to a large extent Fox is discussing not so much the Hebrew text, of which there are precious few variants in the manuscript tradition. Rather, he is steeping himself and his reader in the history of the Greek text, certainly the earliest rendition of the Hebrew and one which over the years has been evaluated as uncommonly free in its translation technique and also prone to sometimes lengthy additions. These additions and translations frequently try to make the Book even more moralistic than it was in Hebrew, lest the reader miss the clear point of what we are supposed to be doing with our lives. Frequently such expansions are in the spirit of the Hebrew text, but that does not mean that they are necessarily as elegant or as polyvalent as the source tradition was. And so in some ways it seems as if the school-marmishness of the text is expanded upon and its ambivalence consciously reduced. But Fox does not want to characterize the whole of the Greek translation since he believes it probably stems from several hands and may span several decades of reworking. Free, yes, sometimes, but usually with the moralistic points sticking clearly out. Don’t think it is permitted to steal, even if opinion might condone it in a starving man (6:30–31, and the discussion p. 139).