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 fur 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 (*yaqtul/iprus* → *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).

The other ancient versions are seen in this Book as generally dependent on the Greek, with the Targum actually being dependent on the Peshitto for Proverbs. The Vulgate mostly follows the Hebrew, and other possible versions are adduced sparingly. Ethiopic, Coptic, and Saadiah Gaon in Arabic are brought in occasionally with the assumption that they rely on more ancient versions.

If you are interested in Proverbs, you definitely need this volume, but do read the introduction carefully, which is dutifully modest in its claims. And that is quite reasonable. There are some incomprehensible bits in Proverbs, but they were already incomprehensible to the ancient translators. And Qumran does not help very much.

The forty-two pages at the end give the whole eclectic edition in Hebrew with Fox's changes indicated.

I have reviewed Fox's treatment of three verses on which I have worked, Prov. 11:30, 20:26, and 26:10, all with one kind of problem or another, some text-critical (*Vetus Testamentum* 33, 39, and 41). Prov. 11:30 does not involve textual variants, and Fox's conclusion in his Textual Notes to the Commentary, p. 992, is retained in the current volume, p. 196.

For Prov. 20:26 Fox rejects my suggestion of a wheel used for torture (Commentary p. 676), and he has no textual notes on the verse either in the Commentary or the current volume.

Prov. 26:10 I labelled "the most obscure verse," and it definitely has a checkered text history, noted in the Commentary, p. 1047 and here with more detail (pp. 343–45). Fox considers the possibilities, again rejecting mine (pp. 795–96), and admits that the text is "clearly corrupt," arising "from a series of graphic errors." And it is perhaps not possible nowadays to reconstruct it.

I wonder if other versions might not shed some light on the admittedly difficult textual problems. In particular the Coptic and the Ethiopic are more or less accessible, if not in modern editions. And yet I understand that there must be a limit at some point, an end to study and agglomerating. I am sure that in the near future we shall all be able to turn easily to websites that will bring many versions together. But we will still need the wisdom that Fox brings to try to make sense of the variants, the prejudices, the goals, of the various authors who handed down the texts, along with their hopes that we would understand them, as Fox says, in the ways they wanted us to understand them.

Probably in logic the textual edition should have been published before the Commentary, and this volume has additions and improvements over the textual notes in the Commentary. And yet the attraction of this book will inevitably be narrower than that of the Commentary, since you need Greek and Syriac and occasionally Latin as well as Hebrew to follow along. I paid special attention to the Syriac and found, amazingly, no errors there; I paid less attention to the Greek and Latin, but I am hopeful that Fox and his team's careful proofreading has also minimized mistakes in those languages. And with all these scripts jumbling on the page, that is indeed an achievement to celebrate.

I must say that I have come away from Fox's work with considerable respect for his perspicuity but with a growing distaste for the Greek translators' take on almost everything. The Hebrew of Proverbs is witty and contradictory and not afraid of scandal, earthy and sensible, and very much, it seems to me, a product of practical women and men who delighted in paradox. This sort of thing appeals to our age, but perhaps the Greek appealed to the earlier ages and to this fact we owe its preservation.

Some notes on the Textual Commentary:

In reference to Syriac Fox uses the term *obelus*, meaning an ancient sign that something is corrupted or spurious.

P. 107 under 4:3: the *sebir* is not explained, but it refers to the *sebīrim* "people think" below. Also p. 271.

P. 126 to 6:5 and elsewhere: The paleo type used is not very clear.

P. 149: G versions 23, 147, 156, 1089 not explained.

P. 182: An interesting idea: "G also has a tendency to remove or temper warnings against overwork or haste," implying that those might be preferred values in the translators' minds!

P. 189 to 12:1: Many verses lack comments because they are not problematic in their text.

Pp. 214f.: It is clear that the Massoretic text foresees a lack of justice in the world, but Greek translators prefer to deny it.

Pp. 237–38 to 15:22 and elsewhere: The Greek is interested in emphasizing the importance of the assemblies, usually *sunhedria*, even where the text just says "many counsellors," and this may derive from the hope, at least, of Hellenistic cities, for significant self-government. This also crops up even when the husband of the "woman of valor" sits in the gate, but in Greek he is in the assembly in Prov. 31: 23.

P. 296, e.g., 21:29: When Fox corrects, he does not always say from what, and this means that you really need to use the book along with a Hebrew Bible edition and his Commentary.

Pp. 302–4 to 22:17: Fox emends to make a title for the Amenhotep section: "The words of wise ones. Incline your ear and hear my words . . ."

P. 374 to 29:13: Fox assumes that giving light to the eyes means God looks at them. It seems more likely that this expression is about God giving sight to their eyes. Compare the Greek idea that we can see because light comes from our eyes. (See A. Mark Smith, "Optics and Catroptrics," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall et al. Vol. 9: 4908–11 [Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013].)

P. 399 to 31:31: The Greek states that the husband is to be praised, doubtless because of the wife, but the wife herself does not get credit!

We are all in Fox's debt for his labors, and his work will be consulted with profit for years to come.

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Distant Views of the Holy Land. By FELICITY COBBING and DAVID M. JACOBSON. Bristol, CT: EQUINOX, 2015. Pp. vi + 321, illus. $200. [Distributed by ISD, Bristol, CT]

In recent years, the Palestine Exploration Fund has catalogued and digitized its extensive archive of visual materials that document PEF-sponsored archeological activities and, less extensively, renderings of the Holy Land by visitors and artists unaffiliated with the PEF. Two volumes of photographs resulting from these preservation efforts have been published (Gibson 2003; Abujaber and Cobbing 2005). *Distant Views of the Holy Land* is a welcome addition. More than its predecessors, this new selection of images emphasizes the history and archaeology of biblical sites, which are in turn illustrated by photographs, drawings, original watercolors, maps, and a few engravings from rare travel books.

In their introduction, Felicity Cobbing, PEF Executive Secretary and curator, and David Jacobson, editor of the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, summarize the scope of the selected images. The earliest date from the 1850s, but the strength of the collection resides in photographs taken during expeditions conducted by the PEF, beginning with James MacDonald's ordinance surveys of Jerusalem (1864–65) and continuing into the early twentieth century with other PEF researchers. In addition, Cobbing and Jacobson discuss the pictorial archive in relation to the history of the PEF, and further, in the context of pilgrimage, tourism, and commercial photography. The authors are clearly aware that the PEF's scientifically minded researchers were embedded in a remarkable cultural phenomenon, the seemingly insatiable thirst to visit the land of the Bible, or if not visit, to at least visualize it, capture it in imagination, and thereby render it holy.

Although the majority of photographs are black and white and stem from PEF activities, some come from private individuals. A good number derive from commercial artists, such as Bonfils, Robertson and Beato, and Krikorian and Raad. The authors also include paintings, notably watercolors by Claude Conder, leader of the PEF's survey of western Palestine; William Simpson, a Scottish artist; and his fellow Scotsman, David Roberts. Whatever their source, most of the images in *Distant Views* depict sites and landscapes mentioned in the Bible.

Cobbing and Jacobson group images by geographic regions: Galilee, Samaria, Judea and Philistia, and Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Save for the last, the authors present in each section a relief map keyed to the images that follow; an historical and geographical outline of the region; and a survey of biblical sites, especially those explored by archeologists. Each image carries a caption that sketches biblical history relevant to the depicted site. The final section of the book, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, differs somewhat. First, it comprises about one-third of the book. Second, the authors' selections (or the distribution of images in the PEF archives) emphasize Christian, Jewish, and Muslim inhabitants, and locations such as the Temple Mount and Church of the Holy Sepulcher that continue to awaken devotional fervor even in today's fraught political climate.