activity. No doubt this newly published text contributes to a better understanding of this word.

Texts in the groups of II Letters, III Medical texts and V Stamps have all been previously published. Some of the the texts in IV Religious texts, are said to be newly collated, e.g. RIH 77/02B + 77/06 + 77/19 + 77/26A + 78/31 (KTU 1.164), and in others an alternative reading is advocated (cf. RIH 78/14 = KTU 1.163). In addition, RIH 98/02 (song to ʿAṯtartu) is published fully here for the first time. It is true that five lines have appeared already, e.g. in KTU 1.180, but the text is altogether forty-one lines long, unfortunately heavily fragmentary, but still providing many important lexical and poetic phenomena. This tablet, as well as several others in the corpus, are attributed to the scribe Ṯabilu, based on the epigraphic characteristics. Some other fragmentary texts of religious content are also published for the first time in the volume under review.

Almost all the largely-fragmentary texts belonging to category VI Texts of unidentified literary genre are published here for the first time. Sixteen Sumerian-Akkadian texts which include economic, epistolary and school texts, appeared in previous editions. All tablets are accompanied by excellent photographs and drawings. The indexes of Ugaritic words (in Ugaritic alphabetic order), Ugaritic geographical, personal and divine names, and Akkadian personal and geographic names provide a necessary technical apparatus. Notably, it is the first time that all the epigraphic corpus from Ras Hani has been collected together under one cover and represented as part of a larger archaeological context.

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DAVID J. FULLER, *A Discourse Analysis of Habakkuk* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 72). Brill, Leiden 2020. Pp. xviii + 381. Price: €127.00/$153.00 hardback. ISBN: 978-90-04-40888-3. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004408890.

The purpose of this book is to apply discourse analysis within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a tool to unravel the meaning of biblical texts. For this purpose, the Book of Habakkuk was selected as a case study. This meticulously written monograph is logically structured, offering helpful summaries, tables and charts at regular intervals, as well as in the appendices, which make the complex discussion easier to follow for a reader uninitiated in the particularities of the applied linguistic technique. Beyond a concise introduction into previous approaches to Habakkuk and brief introductory remarks regarding its structural divisions, the book contains nine chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the specific methodology adopted by the author. Chapters 2–8 describe the application of the method to the different pericopes of the Book of Habakkuk as delimited in the introduction, closing the discussion with a conclusion (Chapter 9). Three appendices disclose the Hebrew base text and its translation in conformity with the adopted linguistic categories. A concise bibliography, an index of ancient sources and an index of modern authors round off this monograph.

The survey of previous Habakkuk-scholarship groups these studies in three main categories: (a) literary/rhetorical/synchronic approaches, (b) form-critical approaches and (c) redaction-critical approaches. Fuller wishes to profit from previous research insofar as he deems it to be advocated within the framework of his own approach. Unsurprisingly, the literary reading, especially due to its presupposition of a coherent

base text, is argued to be the most natural conversation partner, whereas the redaction-critical approach is the farthest removed (p. 11). While the author is convinced that SFL facilitates a better understanding of the nature of relationship between the various actors and the purposes of the speeches within the prophecy (p. 2), this new approach to the text of Habakkuk does not materialize in radical departures with regard to textual connotations. Rather, in contrast to previous methodologies which extract meaning from the text mostly *intuitively*, Fuller aims to show that a 'multidimensional approach to clausal meaning' will result in better grounded and more objective conclusions (pp. 11, 298). Accordingly, this book is not so much about new insights into the problematic text of Habakkuk as it is about a consequent application of a particular form of linguistic analysis. The lavishly-offered values of linguistic data which are calculated to the decimal level are supposed to lend a visual confirmation of the objectiveness behind the SFL-methodology.

Systemic Functional Linguistics, adapted to biblical texts in the trace of M.A.K. Halliday, considers elements of a discourse systemically, i.e. as interdependent parts of a network, and functionally, i.e. 'how different meanings are expressed through certain lexical and grammatical choices, focusing on the level of the whole message rather than individual words' (p. 22). Data derives from 'evidence at hand rather than relying on alleged linguistic universals' (p. 23). Fuller is seemingly aware of the differences between English literature, for which Halliday's theory was developed, and prophecy, which in some ways 'requires a different approach' (p. 27). Unfortunately, what this difference exactly consists of, is not sufficiently detailed, leaving some doubts with respect to the reliability of the derived results. For instance, Fuller decides to ignore the aspect of 'context of culture', because, in his view, there is a 'lack of first-hand experience of the "culture" of prophetic discourse in ancient Israel' (p. 28). He assumes that the 'context of situation' (i.e. the environment in which the text is functioning on the textual level—to be differentiated from the actual physical-historical setting), which can be derived from the text, is directly relevant and apparently sufficient to construct meaning. The context of situation is reflected through the variables of mode, field and tenor. The mode variable exposes the structuring role of language in a discourse, through identity/similarity chains, looking essentially at the grammatical relations. The field variable discloses what is happening, the participants and their actions, including verbal processes and clausal relations (parataxis, hypotaxis). The tenor variable reveals the social roles of speaker and audience, the way they interact with each other (statement, interrogation, imperative) (pp. 16, 29, 32–42). A sophisticated analysis of Habakuk 1–3 in the following chapters along these criteria highlights the presence, percentage and macro-level interaction of these variables with admirable erudition.

While the factual results of the presented linguistic method may appear intimidatingly objective, at a closer look they leave several questions unanswered for the present reader. Any type of textual analysis starts with a base text. Fuller makes a deliberate choice in this regard already at the start: he follows Codex Leningradensis (p. 1 n. 3) and generally avoids *appropriate* discussion of text-critical issues. On occasions, however, considering a different textual basis may have nuanced (or, more likely, altered) his reconstruction of 'identity chains' (e.g. בגוים in Hab. 1:5, or לֹא נָמוּת in 1:12), and accordingly meanings (p. 116).

In a study striving for objective results, the reader would expect clearer statements on the adopted conventions of reading, or more precisely how Fuller regards the text of Habakkuk as a whole, as a *composition*. His view on this aspect remains concealed behind some brief, scattered and unclear preconceptions. For example,

Habakkuk would consist of a 'purposeful arrangement of the materials (written and not oral prophecy)' (p. 306). On another occasion he notes, 'the compiler [!] of Habakkuk could have deliberately transgressed expected literary conventions for dramatic effect' (p. 85 n. 57). The lack of any clear explanation on how then this 'purposeful arrangement' should be imagined in terms of literary composition, and what 'compiler' exactly means makes following the linguistic argumentation exceedingly difficult. While the validity of the redaction critical approach to Habakkuk is apparently questioned by the author, and a unified reading is apparently endorsed, it is hard to grasp the author's simultaneous contention that different pericopes presuppose different situations. In spite of the close similarities between 1:12–17 and 1:2–4 on a lexical level (cf. 'just' (צַדִּיק) / 'wicked' (רָשָׁע) / 'trouble' (עָמָל) / 'violence' (חָמָס), etc.), as well as on a formal level (both include prophetic complaint), Fuller appears to adopt Brownlee's argumentation: 'None of this common vocabulary between the two laments… proves the identity of situations in the two laments… The circumstances which gave rise to the two laments appear to be quite different.' (p. 119 n. 30). While Brownlee appears to presuppose different 'circumstances' behind the text, it is unclear how this would coincide with the hypothesis of a unified text assumed by Fuller. At any rate, in case of an anthology of prophetic texts that Brownlee's proposal would logically imply (different texts for different occasions), the proposed SFL-type linguistic analysis would have little relevance.

Clarification of the authors standpoint regarding compositional issues renders his discussion on the relationship between 1:2–4 and 1:5–11, one of the most important topics for Habakkuk, problematic. The problem of the obviously abrupt (presupposed) ending in v. 4 of a pericope and the unusual beginning of another subsection, vv. 5–11 are not seriously dealt with, even though a clarification of this delimitation would have had major ramifications for subsequent conclusions. The interpretation adopted by Fuller, namely that Hab. 1:2–4 is a prophetic complaint and 1:5–11 is the divine response to this complaint, is not the result of linguistic analysis, it is a presupposition preceding his linguistic analysis (cf. 'this section [1:5–11] presumably functions as a response to Habakkuk's words in Hab 1:2–4', p. 75). In the end, Fuller concludes that 'when the answering function of 1:5–11 is considered (…) the chains relating to the Chaldean and his associated parties and victims are completely unprecedented by 1:2–4' (p. 84). Could that also be interpreted in the sense that 1:5–11 does not have the expected answering function with respect to 1:2–4?

The author's adoption of the traditional hypothesis of a dialogical structure in Hab. 1:2–2:6—1:2–4 (prophetic complaint), 5–11 (divine response), 12–17 (prophetic complaint), 2:2b–6b (! divine response) (pp. 75, 93)—is indeed a cardinal problem. Roaming in the area of data and empirical evidence, it is perhaps not insignificant to mention that the single *explicit* transitional element appears at 2:1–2a, i.e. neither in 1:5, nor in 1:12. Strangely, Fuller considers 2:1–2b as 'a transition device and a meta-commentary on it' (p. 127), a text of an 'outside' nature (p. 131). Yet why should that be viewed as a meta-text in what he considers a 'purposefully *written* document'? The problems noted above would have required a more in-depth reflection on the 'context of culture' linguistic category (the culture of composition of biblical literature) that Fuller explicitly avoided discussing, but implicitly assumed without reflection, with direct relevance to the results of the linguistic analysis.

The character of the text as Hebrew poetry finds little resonance in the linguistic analysis. For instance, the importance of the variation of the *qatal/yiqtol* forms is

detailed in every pericope, even though he seems to be aware that the traditional approach to the Hebrew verb might have its limitations within a poetic context (p. 35; cf. שׁוַּעְתִּי *qatal* / אֶזְעַק *yiqtol* in Hab. 1:2). The analysis of other predicative elements is dismissed due to space concerns, and the parallelistic structure of poetry is likewise not taken into account in verbal analysis (e.g. the fact that this type of poetry may necessarily imply reduplication of predicative forms). Some conclusions with respect to the verbal significance are unwarranted. For example, with respect to Hab. 1:2–4, the single use of a *qatal* and the multiple uses of *yiqtol* forms lead him to conclude that 'the prophet has complete confidence that he has cried out but the other processes are depicted with a degree of projection', and that 'the prophet does seem to be unsure about exactly what YHWH is doing' (p. 55). Furthermore, one may wonder whether the appropriate consideration of metaphors (for instance רָשָׁע in Hab. 1:4) would not have significantly altered the reconstructed identity and similarity chains. Finally, taking the poetic nature of the text (genre) more seriously would have nuanced conclusions in other respects as well. Note, for instance, a statement like: 'Habakkuk 1:2–4 is nearly half questions and half statements, while Hab. 1:5–11 has a small number of commands followed by large number of statements.' (p. 88). The two pericopes clearly belong to different poetic forms, which is directly relevant to the verbal forms used, or the types of sentences implied.

One may also find the evaluation of the relevant data somewhat arbitrary, occasionally even biased. With respect to the connections between 1:3 and 1:13, where traditional exegesis would obviously connect (1:3) לָמָּה תַרְאֵנִי אָוֶן וְעָמָל תַּבִּיט with וְהַבִּיט אֶל־עָמָל לֹא תוּכָל לָמָּה תַבִּיט (1:13), Fuller finds it more important to note the 'significantly different description of YHWH' (p. 121; cf. again, p. 123: this second speech of the prophet is 'significantly different than his first speech'), as if that sufficiently accounts for a different purport of the two pericopes. Lexical repetition between 1:13 and 2:4 (cf. צַדִּיק, p. 150) is seen as a token of relationship, and a similar conclusion is reached with respect to the idea of the wicked surrounding the righteous in 1:15 and 2:5. However, a comparable relationship is not favoured with respect to the 'surrounding' imageries in 1:15 and 1:4.

To conclude, the erudition, precision and commitment guiding this study is admirable. Nonetheless, while linguistic analysis may entice the reader with the promise of a higher degree of objectivity, preconceptions regarding the base text, its structuring, the construction of reading, and the *interpretation* of linguistic data involve a fair amount of subjective and debatable factors that confine SFL within the methods to be tamed by responsible scholarship.

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SONJA NOLL, *The Semantics of Silence in the Hebrew Bible* (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 100). Brill, Leiden 2020. Pp. xvi + 346. Price: €105.00 hardback. ISBN: 978-90-04-41417-4.

Silence, according to Noll, represents 'much more than lack of sound' (p. 1). It conveys a broad range of seemingly opposite metaphors and juxtaposing meanings—peace and subjugation, presence and absence, rest and death. The task of unravelling 'the semantic field of biblical Hebrew silence' motivates Noll's meticulous researched yet methodologically uneven study.

The Semantics of Silence in the Hebrew Bible may be considered a kind of *Eigenbegrifflichkeit* (*à la* Benno Landsberger) wherein the author attempts 'to understand