

and order charts are understood as somehow defining a given verb, then these charts can be converted into a map of verbal similarities and even a hierarchical lexicon that visually represents the relationship between all the verbs compared. Along with the phrase markers, this is the heart of ‘Biblical Hebrew Grammar *Visualized*.’

The final chapters, on Quasiverbals, Verbless Clauses, Non-Tree Phrase Markers, and Discourse Analysis and Supra-Clausal Structures are all initial forays into the separate fields based on preliminary computations. Are quasiverbals indeed verbals or not? What are verbless clauses actually made of? Traditional grammars define them as a two-part subject and (nominal) predicate with the main interest being their relative ordering. Instead, the database reveals many one-part verbless clauses, two-part, three-part, all the way to ten-part clauses!

To return once again to the parallels with an excavation report, *BHGV* not only documents its finds in great detail, but it demonstrates where these finds invalidate many current understandings and it points in the direction of new paradigms that might indeed account for *all* the data. But whereas the archaeologist can always hope for a future excavation to disclose new material that may provide answers, the Biblical Hebrew grammarian has little hope of new material and can only look forward to new *methods* for analysing the material we already have. Corpus linguistics, as represented in this volume, is a method that holds much promise indeed.

Elizabeth Robar  
Tyndale House, Cambridge

**Kenneth A. Kitchen and Paul J. N. Lawrence, *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*, 3 volumes, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012, 1641 pp. + lxxxiv, 1641, 7 charts, ISBN: 978-3-447-06726-3, €289.00.**

Reviewed by Luis R. Siddall

This three volume *Meisterwerk*, totalling more than 1700 pages and weighing 5.6 kilos, is the long awaited production from Kenneth A. Kitchen with his colleague Paul J. N. Lawrence on the treaties, law codes and covenants from the cultures of the Ancient Near East and Egypt. The research for *Treaty, Law and Covenant* began over 60 years ago when Kitchen was inspired by George Mendenhall’s 1954 study of the connections between Hittite Treaties of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and the Sinai Covenant. Kitchen set out to collect, examine and present all known treaties, law codes and covenants from the Ancient Near East and Egypt, in order to determine the precise interrelationships between treaty, law and covenant forms across the cultures of the region. The result is an exhaustive form-critical analysis of 106 texts, which appear in transliteration and translation with accompanying notes and an historical survey.

In the introduction to the first volume, Kitchen states that he was unable to work on the project consistently over the decades (I xviii and xxi). It was not until Lawrence received a two-year grant (2003–2005) to help Kitchen complete the study that the work was able to be completed in April 2011 (I xviii). The labour was divided between the two scholars so that in Volume I, Kitchen edited and examined the non-Semitic, Elbaite and Ugaritic corpora, Lawrence did the same for the Akkadian language texts and both worked on the West Semitic texts. In Volume II, Lawrence was responsible for the linguistic comments and Kitchen the historical notes. Both scholars worked on the overall historical survey presented in Volume III (I, xxi).

The organisation of the material in this study is first-rate. The work is divided into three volumes and the authors and publisher are to be thanked for keeping their audience in mind. Indeed, the reviewer found the best way to work through this study was with all three volumes open on the desk allowing for easy cross reference between text editions, notes and historical discussions. However, since these volumes are printed in A4 format, readers will need plenty of desk space!

The first volume is the largest (1114 pages) and contains an introduction, aspects of which are summarised and repeated in the preliminary pages in the other two volumes, and transliterations and translations of all 106 texts. The texts are arranged chronologically from the Lagash-Umma treaties of the later third millennium to the Babylonian Laws in the mid-first millennium. Within the chronological eras, texts are grouped according to culture and genre. Kitchen and Lawrence define the respective genres as follows,

*Namely, (i) laws (agreed or imposed) were a device for regulating conduct within a given society or social group. (ii) That treaties were used to govern relations (parity or vassals) between separate groups, or group(s) and/or significant individual. (iii) That covenants could be used to define relations between individuals on the purely human level, or between individual(s) and deity (I xxii).*

For Kitchen and Lawrence, these genres are a part of a ‘single triptych of organised and organic governance in antiquity and show clear features of interrelation and cross-fertilisation’ (I xxii). While the reviewer agrees with this broad view of the interrelationship between law, treaty and covenants, it would have been interesting if the authors had included royal edicts, grants and decrees. While every study has its limits, there is no clear reason, other than some rather terse comments ruling them out, as to why they have not been considered. To the reviewer’s mind there is merit in comparing edicts, grants and decrees with treaties and law collections (particularly Neo-Assyrian examples) that govern vassal-like relationships (or relationships of dependence) within a society.

Each text is introduced with a brief description and bibliographical information. The transliterations and

translations appear on facing pages in the 'Loeb' style. However, the editions are littered with headings and numbers that function as markers for Kitchen's and Lawrence's form-critical analysis. In this way, the texts are not merely presented in typical scholarly editions, but indicate the various components which help the reader to follow the line of argument presented in the accompanying volumes. Each component is also ascribed a colour which is used in the 'chromograms' that appear in Volume II (see below). The 15 components by which the texts are divided are: 1 – title or preamble (grey); 2 – prologue (orange); 3 – stipulations or laws (royal blue); 4a – deposit of document (lemon); 4b – periodic reading of document (lemon); 5 – witnesses (purple); 6b – blessings (green); 6c – curses (crimson);<sup>1</sup> 7 – oaths (golden yellow); 8 – solemn ceremony (golden yellow); 9 – epilogue (brown); 10 additional items (white); 11 – sanctions (white); and 12 – historical reports and/or archaeological flashback (white). Readers will need to familiarise themselves with these components in order to read the texts and understand the chromograms in the light intended by Kitchen and Lawrence.

Producing translations and transliterations is meticulous work and the editions presented here are high quality. The authors state that the efforts are not intended to replace the existing scholarly editions of the texts, but this reviewer found the texts have been edited well, although it must be admitted that he is far better read in Akkadian and Sumerian (his knowledge of Egyptian and Hittite is not what it once was). Having made this point, the transcription of the Hebrew passages is problematic and this matter will be dealt with in the discussion of the authors' historical approach (see below). The reviewer also has a minor quibble about the production of the volumes. Occasionally texts appear in a different style of print to others which takes away from the quality of the final product, for instance texts 8, 9a and 9b seem to use a different font, with a fuzzier print. While there is some justification for the use of different fonts (I xxi), modern word processing is at such a stage that it need not have been so. Given the expense of the volumes, the authors along with the publishing house could have done better.

Volume I concludes with two excurses of supplementary texts. The first excursus contains other material relevant to this study in translation: fragments of Hittite texts, some laws in Demotic, the law code of Gortyn from Crete and treaties from the Greco-Roman eras. The second contains material that is pertinent to the study but does not fall under the categories of law, treaty or covenant. As has been noted above, the reasons for the exclusion of edicts from the study is unclear to the reviewer. All that is said on the matter is that they do not belong within scope the study or they remain unpublished (I xix and 1082).

The second volume contains textual notes (II 1–110); topical indexes with notes covering matters appearing in laws and stipulations, statistical lists, deities, lists of blessing and curses and other forms of terminology (II 111–244);

four maps (II 245–250); and a series of chromograms (II 251–268). The authors stress in the introduction (I xx) that the textual notes are not intended to provide exhaustive commentaries, rather they are a series of concise notes to help readers understand some aspects of the translations and the backgrounds of the texts. The chromograms illustrate Kitchen's and Lawrence's form-critical divisions of each text by comparing the different components of the texts' content over time. As stated above, the idea to present these parts of the study separately was a good one and has made it much easier to work through the text editions and the ideas as they are presented.

The third volume is entitled *Overall Historical Survey* and is where Kitchen and Lawrence outline the changing historical and cultural contexts of the texts dealt with in the first two volumes. In the authors' own words it 'achieves the effect of a *long durée* and a true metanarrative, in providing a bird's eye view across the full width of the Ancient Near East, as well as down through time from the Sumerians to the Caesars, upon its particular theme' (III xiii). While the whole volume presents a synchronic development of treaties, legal texts and covenants over time, a summary of which is found in Chapter 7, chapters two to six examine the diachronic developments within particular historical eras. Volume III closes with a post-script/addendum citing recent discoveries and publications that are relevant to the work, but appeared too late to be included. To be added to this discussion are the recently discovered edition of Esarhaddon's succession treaty from the site of Tell Tayinat (Lauinger 2012) and Noel Week's (2004) comparative study of the treaty and covenant forms in the Ancient Near East.

This historical survey is the most provocative part of the book. To this reviewer's mind, the provocation arises from the handling of the biblical materials and the influence this has had on the historical conclusions drawn. Kitchen and Lawrence do not make any significant statement in the introduction to the volumes on their overall historical model or approach. However, the authors' approach to the biblical material can be found in their criticism of other scholarly approaches. The main target is the so-called *Documentary Hypothesis* most famously practised by the 19<sup>th</sup> century scholar, Julius Wellhausen, but still in vogue today. Kitchen and Lawrence argue that a major flaw in this search for original sources in the biblical text boils down to an absence of any physical evidence for a J, E, P or D manuscript at Qumran or any other biblical texts (III 259–261). For Kitchen and Lawrence, the Documentary Hypothesis is a case of 'the emperor has no clothes'. While the reviewer sympathises with this view, he is less convinced by the authors' position that their own work at this point is truly objective.

Kitchen and Lawrence state that their form-critical work is based on real texts that exist as artefacts or manuscripts and that they have taken into account all known examples of each genre in their analysis, rather than breaking a manuscript up or selecting a few extra-biblical sources.

Indeed, their form analysis is demonstrable in the texts themselves. It is therefore disconcerting that the biblical covenants referred to in this work, Texts 82–85, are themselves composites from a number of passages. Text 82, for instance, comprises Exodus 20:1–25:9; 34:8–28; 35: 1–9; Leviticus 11–15, 18–20, 24–27.

Had the authors demonstrated that the elements common in the Ancient Near Eastern treaties also appear in the Old Testament, it would have been very helpful, but reconfiguring the biblical passages themselves as texts alongside extant ancient documents is definitely ‘a bridge too far’. In their discussion of the extracting of these texts from their matrix (III 125–132), Kitchen and Lawrence state that they are looking for older documents and original sources within the Masoretic text. Similar questions could be raised about the extraction of details about a treaty from the Middle Assyrian literary text, The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic (Text 75). Is this not the very approach they criticise later in the same volume? After all, there is no manuscript or artefactual evidence for an independent attestation of covenants as presented in Texts 82–85.

There is also a problem with the transliterations of the Hebrew Scriptures. Kitchen and Lawrence have not offered readers transliterations that follow the agreed Masoretic texts or even Qumran documents, but rather they have converted those texts into an archaized Late Canaanite (14<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE) styled text that imitates non-biblical texts from Canaan and Ugarit (see the discussion in I xxv–xxvi). It is hard to see how any of this is *factually* based. The fact that the authors have reconfigured the biblical materials to make them look like texts matching the period to which Kitchen and Lawrence date the texts is misleading and not consistent with statements in the introduction to Volume I and throughout Volume III claiming that their methodology is impartial.

Kitchen’s and Lawrence’s belief that material in the books of the Pentateuch was originally composed in the mid- and late-second millennium is well known from their previous publications (Kitchen 2003; Lawrence 2011). With this in mind one fears that some scholars will dismiss this comprehensive work out of hand on the basis of a perceived bias.

The biblical texts aside, scholars will have to take seriously the important observation that the biblical covenantal material is more similar to the Hittite treaties of the late second millennium than the Assyrian treaties of the first millennium. This has been one of the more hotly contested points of previous studies of Ancient Near Eastern treaties and covenants. Here the chromograms in Volume II are important for they represent the comparison of texts most clearly. But, with only 106 texts in existence there is an uneven distribution of texts across the 2500 years treated in this volume. How exhaustive, then, could an historical survey be?

Other historical, social and political questions came to the reviewers mind while reading the third volume, for example, do societies consistently develop internal rela-

tionships in the same way as they do with foreign states? The omission of edicts, grants and decrees leaves such questions unanswered. What of the relationship between the form of texts and their spatial? How did the changing political contexts across societies influence the form of legal texts, treaties and covenants? For instance, did the important characteristic of an historical prologue at the beginning of law codes from the late-third and early-second millennia really come to be used by the scribes of the late-second millennium treaties and covenants by means of diffusion from the Middle Babylonian Kassites into Anatolia and Egypt (so III 101–102, 136)? Or does the use of historical prologues in their texts to secure loyalty reflect a similar political context for these societies at that time? To the reviewer’s mind, Kitchen’s and Lawrence’s form-critical approach has made a number of important observations, but it would have benefited from engaging with broader historical questions.

This is a significant work of history and textual study from which the fields of Ancient Near Eastern studies and Biblical studies will benefit greatly. Kitchen and Lawrence have managed to do what most have not, to provide a detailed and broad comparative assessment of material of the Bible, Egypt and the Near East that takes into account all available sources. Even for those who do not accept the historical conclusions held by Kitchen and Lawrence, having the reliable text editions, notes and extensive indices presented as they are here is of considerable use to not only Ancient Near Easterners, but also scholars of ancient history, law and international relations more broadly. For these reasons alone we should be glad that Kitchen and Lawrence have published this study.

Luis R. Siddall  
Macquarie University

## References

- Kitchen, K.A. 1989 The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty, *Tyndale Bulletin* 40/1, 118–135.
- Kitchen, K.A. 2003 *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.
- Lauinger, J. 2012 Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty at Tell Tayinat: Text and Commentary, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 64, 87–123.
- Lawrence, P.J.N. 2011 *The Books of Moses Revisited*, Eugene, Wipf and Stock.
- Weeks, N.K. 2004 *Admonition and Curse: The Ancient Near Eastern Treaty/Covenant Form as a Problem in Inter-Cultural Relationships*, JSOTS 407, London, T&T Clark.

## Endnote

- 1 Since there is no ‘6a’, one can only presume that the letters b and c for component 6 stand for ‘blessings’ and ‘curses’, respectively. This is not the case in component 4, where 4a and 4b indicate that the deposition of the document and its re-reading are related activities. I did not find an explanation for this oddity in their numbering system.