

closes with a list of the types of notes which are not admissible, the location for the placing of supplementary information, and the form of marginal notes.

This is a helpful book for those who are involved in the task of translating Scripture. It helps them to avoid the pitfalls of literalism on the one hand and transculturalism on the other. However, the book could have been organized more tightly, e.g., chaps. 2 and 3 could easily have been combined. In general, the book illustrates well the points it develops, but illustrations of how some translators have dealt with poetry would have been helpful for those who have to translate these difficult portions of Scripture. On the whole, translators will be most grateful for this guide.

Newbold College

Bracknell, Berkshire, England RG12 5AN

SAKAE KUBO

O'Connor, Michael. *Hebrew Verse Structure*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1980. xvi + 629 pp. \$15.00.

Hebrew Verse Structure is a remarkably erudite book. This fact poses somewhat of a problem for its use as a textbook, as I discovered when using it this way for a seminar on Hebrew poetry. In the class, which consisted of students with intermediate-to-advanced-level reading ability in biblical Hebrew, the more advanced the student, the more use was made of O'Connor's book.

Part of the difficulty in students' ability to use the work stems from the writing style of the book, which was originally submitted as a Ph.D. dissertation to the University of Michigan in 1978. In publication it has not undergone the amount of rewriting that would make it more popular in style for textbook use. Rather, it stands on the cutting edge of studies in OT poetry, pointing the direction in which such studies may lead us in the future. Given that purpose of the author, it is natural that the volume would be of more value to the specialist than to the non-specialist. Anyone interested in the analysis of Hebrew poetry, however, will have to reckon seriously with the analysis presented in this work.

In the first section of the book, O'Connor sets forth his thesis that the traditional poetic analyses of Hebrew verse, outlined by Lowth (1753) and Gray (1915) are inadequate both in concept and nomenclature for accurate understanding and description. In his discussion of this point he has brought to bear the results of a wide range of research into the poetry of different languages and cultures around the world. As a part of this survey he has included an examination of the question of orality (the techniques of spontaneous oral composition of poetry) by examining the products of cultures where orality is still a factor in poetic composition. The general

student may feel somewhat unaccustomed to the broadly based nature of this discussion, but the specialist can only appreciate the amount and variety of material that have been brought together and evaluated here.

From his presentation of the deficiencies of the previous analyses of Hebrew poetry, O'Connor then goes on to propose his own system. In this system a function identified by him as "constriction" delimits the extent of the different-length components found in Hebrew verse, in particular the poetic line as he defines it. The smaller poetic elements within the line occur mainly on three levels: (1) "units," which he defines as single verbs and nouns with the particles dependent upon them; (2) "constituents," which are made up of single verbs or a number of noun units which form a phrase; and (3) "clauses," basically a single thought with either a verbal or non-verbal predication. The constriction of a line of Hebrew poetry is then defined by the range of units (2-5), constituents (1-4), and clauses (0-3) that have been circumscribed by line constriction (p. 316).

"Constriction," in O'Connor's system, thus becomes his substitute for what was known as "meter" in the older analyses of Hebrew poetry. From this description it can be seen that neither the older Ley-Sievers system of counting stress accents nor the more recent suggestion of David Noel Freedman to count syllables serves the purpose of analyzing "meter" adequately in O'Connor's view. With regard to the matter of constriction, there probably always will remain a certain amount of subjectivity involved, as different observers might differ as to where O'Connor has located the constrictions in some of the 1225 lines of Hebrew poetry that he has analyzed from this point of view. As the author himself has noted (p. 179), the BH³ divides Exod 15 into 18 more poetic lines than he does, and the BFBS² has divided it into 13 fewer lines than he has. The question arises from time to time whether the poetic unit to be analyzed consists of a couplet of short bicola or one long bicolon.

As a personal reaction, I would suggest that we may not be faced with an either-or type of situation here. While the older systems of counting meter do contain some of the more obvious deficiencies that O'Connor has identified, they can still retain a qualified usefulness. They can, for instance, still be employed with some benefit alongside O'Connor's new system. As a classroom exercise I have had students give the stress accents and syllable counts for poetic lines and then had them identify the elements contained in those lines according to O'Connor's terminology.

Like the older systems of metrical analysis, O'Connor's system begins from a quantitative basis in that it enumerates the number of units, constituents, and clauses present in a line. His work goes beyond this mere quantitative aspect, however, by identifying qualitatively the morphological make-up of the elements present in the lines of poetry. Coming at the analysis of Hebrew poetry from this qualitative point of view naturally

presents a more complex picture of its composition. From the 1225 lines examined from a select corpus of poems from the Pentateuch, early and later prophets, and Psalms, some 35 different combinations of clause predicators and nomina have been found as line types. In this particular aspect of his work, O'Connor has succeeded admirably in precisely the kind of work the title of the book conveys, a survey of the poetic morphology of the contents of *Hebrew Verse Structure*. Till now, we have not had so complete a profile of the spectrum of this type of usage present in the poetry of the Bible.

Beyond the description of the contents of the line, one must deal with how those different elements present in immediately related lines of Hebrew poetry relate to each other. In older parlance, going back as far as Lowth's time in the eighteenth century, this has been known as parallelism. Lowth identified three main types of parallelism: (1) synonymous, in which the same idea was stated over again in similar terms; (2) antithetical, in which the opposite idea was stated as the second thought present; and (3) synthetic, in which a complementary idea extends the idea of the first thought presented. The main problem has involved the third category, which has largely been used as a "wastebasket-diagnosis" type of categorization. Into it everything has been dumped that does not fit the two other types of parallelism, regardless of form and content.

In dealing with this aspect of Hebrew poetry, O'Connor has abandoned the term "parallelism" for the term "troping," by which he means the relationship of units, constituents, and clauses between the different lines. His discussion of troping includes a useful survey of such phenomena as dyading (pairing), repetition, binomation, coordination, combination, harmonics, iconics, matching, and gapping. In examining the fine structure of Hebrew verse from this more detailed point of view, O'Connor attempts to show that his proposed grammatical system explains the vagaries of Hebrew poetry better than previous systems. Certainly, this closer attention to the details of parallelism or troping has provided many valuable insights which previous analyses have missed. Also as a result of this work, we now know much more about the make-up of "synthetic parallelism" and of other types of parallelism or troping than we did before.

In the third section of his book, O'Connor deals in relatively brief fashion with what he has called the "Gross Structure" of Hebrew verse. This is, as the author himself admits, the most debatable section of his presentation. In older terminology this involved dividing Hebrew poems up into what were known as strophes or stanzas, and there is much disagreement about how this should be done. O'Connor has picked out three main poems for this type of analysis. On the basis of the analysis, he suggests that the basic unit of Hebrew gross poetical structure is the

“stave,” which he defines as a unit of 26-28 lines. Within this larger unit he has isolated a smaller unit known as a “batch,” which may range from 1-12 lines but usually contains 5-8 lines.

The reader of this review will have noticed by now that the book under review introduces a number of unfamiliar terms into the analysis of Hebrew poetry. This very fact brings about a certain degree of confusion, especially in use of terminology that may have a range of meanings. To illustrate but one minor point here, there is the matter of how one labels the smallest linear unit of Hebrew poetry. Earlier this was called a “stich,” and later technical usage has preferred “colon.” When paired, the ideas contained in two such linear units have gone to make up a “bicolon.” O’Connor prefers the term “line” to designate what has previously been called a “colon.” This makes good sense, but it can also create some confusion, since a printed line in the text of the Hebrew Bible commonly does not correspond to a poetic line. I wonder if there might not have been some room for a blending of the old with the new in this matter of the terminology employed.

As far as writing style is concerned, this book is not the easiest to read, as has been mentioned above. For student use, it seems to me that a better understanding of poetic analysis can be achieved through illustrative examples. For that reason, I would consider that one way in which O’Connor’s volume could be used more effectively for students would be to start inductively, on p. 69, with his analysis of Ps 106 (this psalm is singled out for demonstration of the method); then, after having gone through that analysis and the related materials that follow, have the student peruse the preceding introductory sections of the volume.

To some extent this book review has been written from the viewpoint of an intermediate-level Hebrew student due to my recent practical experience in using it in the classroom. Regardless of certain shortcomings of this book from that particular point of view, however, the volume certainly represents a major new contribution to the analysis of Hebrew poetry. I would recommend it highly to all who are interested in viewing Hebrew poetic analysis from a new and fresh perspective.

Andrews University

WILLIAM H. SHEA

Russell, D. S. *Daniel*. The Daily Study Bible Series. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981. x + 234 pp. Paperback, \$5.95.

This new OT commentary series has been introduced as a companion to William Barclay’s *Daily Study Bible* for the NT. The purpose is to provide laypersons with an easily readable and nontechnical commentary