than coherent poems. It is more puzzling to know the source of the idea that behind Judg. v lie only "brief fragments". It would have been better to spare the general reader these questionable assertions. There is a statement on p. 104, in a paragraph dealing with Ecclesiasticus, that "the original Hebrew has been lost and copies survive only in fragments—some of which . . . have been found near Qumran". This scarcely does justice to the substantial nature of the "fragments" found a century ago in the Cairo Genizah (and one may wonder why Gillingham does not name Masada, which is familiar to many general readers).

There are inadequacies in the allusions to the Ugaritic texts. The reference on p. 38 to "the legend of Keret, an ancient king of Ugarit, who (like the biblical Job) loses his possessions and family, to be healed and restored by the most high god, El" fails to mention an important element in the story, namely, the way in which Krt acquires a wife and children. One may forgive what may be a minor error in proof reading on p. 40, where the "b", rather than the "t" in the second Ugaritic word is shown as a spirant. It is less easy to pardon the quotation of CTA 2.IV.32 on p. 119:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yam'ma la-míti} & \quad \text{Sea is indeed dead} \\
\text{ba'lı-mi yamlí(ku)} & \quad \text{Ba'al indeed rules!}
\end{align*}
\]

It is not clear why Gillingham has vocalized the text so as to put Ym, who is the subject of the first clause, in the accusative case, to make the verb of which he is the subject plural, and to represent the middle radical of Baal's name as a glottal stop rather than an 'ayin.

The most serious weakness is in the handling of the Hebrew. The general reader is unlikely to know Hebrew and is dependent on the information provided in this book. P. 26 assumes as facts the questionable existence of vocative lamedh (though it may not be clear what is intended) and emphatic waw (which is strangely represented as meaning "but"). It is easier to justify the reference to enclitic mem, since its existence is widely recognized, although it was doubted by so distinguished a Semitic scholar as the late Sir Godfrey Driver. But, even if it existed in Hebrew, it is questionable whether it was "used for emphasis". It is also disputed whether the imperfect and perfect of the verb may simply be described as the "incompleted" and "completed" tenses, respectively. Further, in the discussion of the importance of the accent in Hebrew, illustrations are given with transliterated Hebrew, but the accent in several of the examples on pp. 58-62 is placed over the wrong part of the Hebrew word.

The transliteration of many Hebrew words leaves much to be desired. The appearance of many words shows that Gillingham has a rational system, but frequently it is not followed. Experience shows that transliterations are particularly liable to be printed wrongly, and few if any authors can be confident of detecting and seeing them all. That may explain why, for example, mēšōlah (I use a different system here of transliterating haythep segol) from that used by Gillingham) appears without representations of sere and aleph on p. 59. It is less easy to excuse kaballā on p. 114 for qababalā, or qinā a number of times for what should be, according to Gillingham's normal system, qinā. There are other errors that occur more than once, such as the presence of the intrusive sheva in 'ašmānā on pp. 40 and 60, or qe'amān which is found seven times on pp. 46-7, 256, 310, instead of qe'amān. It would be tedious to list here the many examples of inconsistency in the representation of both consonants and vowels, If one cannot transliterate Hebrew words consistently and satisfactorily, it is surely better not to attempt the task at all. The general reader would not then be misled.

Genesis of Ethics: How the Tormented Family of Genesis Lead us to Moral Development [New York, 1996]), or the appropriation of ancient texts as a spring-board for modern poets, novelists and essayists (D. Rosenberg [ed.], Genesis as it is Written [San Francisco, 1996]). His interest is rather in identifying that voice in the narrative which speaks from the periphery and using it to address the marginalized readers of his own generation.

An obvious difficulty arising from the use of the Bible for personal or social improvement concerns objectivity. With his frequent appeals to the N.T. and emphasis on grace and a particular kind of revelation, Gossai must be addressing a primarily Christian readership. Yet those who are not in search of the “pentecost” mentioned by J. Gerald Janzen in his foreword should read on regardless. This is far from being glorified sermon material, and readers of any or no faith will appreciate Gossai’s sympathetic exegesis of the Genesis texts.

The six chapters deal with Gen. xvi and xxi, xviii, xix, xx, xxii and Judg. xix respectively. Gossai’s treatment of the Hagar narrative is particularly stimulating. As the triply marginalized female Egyptian servant in a household of resident aliens, Hagar represents precisely that peripheral voice which Gossai hopes to relocate at the centre of the text. His exploration of the oppression of Hagar and her concomitant speechlessness illuminates and unsettles. Gossai is hardly alone in criticizing Sarah for abusing her Egyptian maid-servant. A. Shinan and Y. Zakowitz imply a far harsher judgement in their discussion of Gen. xvi as an inner-biblical midrash on Gen. xv. Why will the Israelites have to endure oppression (wa’tinnu ‘otam) in Egypt until the iniquity of the Amorites is complete (Gen. xv 13-16)? Because Sarah oppressed (wa’tinnu ‘annehah) Hagar the Egyptian (Gen. xvi 6) (“Midrash on Scripture and Midrash Within Scripture”, in S. Japhet [ed.], Studies in the Bible [Jerusalem, 1986], pp. 257-77). Even if Sarah is to blame for four hundred years of slavery, the identification of Hagar as the textual underdog may be more complicated than Gossai allows. Given the choice, would a woman in a patriarchal society prefer to be the fertile mother of a man’s first-born son, or his barren first wife? Power is a tangled web, in texts and in life.

A particular focus of Gossai’s exegesis is hospitality to outsiders, and its treatment of this theme in Gen. xviii and xix is original and convincing. Abraham’s extravagant hospitality to the unknown strangers is more than a Near Eastern ideal; it “bridges the chasm between centrality and marginality” (p. 43). Although, in Gossai’s reading, Abraham is admirable for his generous welcome to the angels, he fails the test miserably when the roles are reversed: “Motivated by fear in his preemptive stance against both Pharaoh and Abimelech, Abraham seeks to ensure that the present state of being is maintained at all costs. Fear as a design, then and now can only spell death...” (p. 115). Yet the limitations of an externally imposed role model are not easily transcended. In an extreme example from another world, Binjamin Wilkomirski describes his arrival at a Swiss orphanage after liberation from a Polish death camp. Remembering next to nothing of his pre-war existence, the young boy cannot conceive of a life in which food need not be guarded and adults will not turn without warning from horseplay to acts of unspeakable brutality (Fragments: Memories of a Childhood, 1939-1948, tr. from the original German by C. Brown Janeway [London, 1996]). Is Abraham entirely responsible for being unable to accept hospitality in Egypt and Gerar?

The themes of hospitality and marginality are central to Gossai’s analysis of Judg. xix, in which he develops a comparison between the outrage at Gibeah and Gen. xix. The primary links between the two narratives are clear: innocent women sacrificed for the pleasure of marauding residents. Gossai follows P. Tribe (Texts of Terror [Philadelphia, 1978]) and others in reading these texts as a commentary on the condition of women, who, “regardless of their particular station in life or their marital status, are deemed disposable” (p. 185). Although it is hard to argue with this view, a biblical comparison not considered by Gossai suggests a different interpretative slant. J. Untermann finds parallels between Judg. xix and Gen. xxii (briefly, a journey, donkeys, servant boys,