

**The ‘Other’ as Brother: The Centrality of the
Fraternity Motif in Amos 1, 9-12**
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Abstract

The oracles against the foreign nations (Amos 1,3-2,3) have been the subject of many scholarly studies whose methodologies have ranged from the diachronic to the synchronic approach. A common tendency among exegetes who apply the historical approach is to consider some parts of the oracles as secondary material on the basis of structural, syntactical and semantic peculiarities. Majority of redaction critics consider the oracles against Tyre and Edom (Amos 1,9-12) as later additions. However, recent studies by scholars who analyze the text from a literary perspective have underlined that there is no compelling reason to hastily dismiss them as non-authentic. The oracles, while possessing internal stylistic variations, is a well-structured unit which possesses a high degree of literary coherence. This paper, while not denying the possible historical development of the oracles, argues that in its present literary form and structure, the oracles against Tyre and Edom (Amos 1,9-12) are the ‘central section’ of the oracles against the foreign nations and its ‘fraternity motif’ functions as the thematic climax of Amos 1,3-2,3. This paper’s central thesis will be supported by a critical analysis of the literary structure and features of Amos 1,9-12 in relation to its immediate literary context. This will be followed by an attempt to locate its historical origin in the customary laws of the ANE and discuss how Amos re-articulated a phenomenological norm of fundamental human fraternal relations by interpreting it from a comprehensive theological perspective grounded in YHWH’s vision of universal fraternity. The paper will conclude by highlighting the relevance of the theological message of Amos 1,9-12 in the present context.