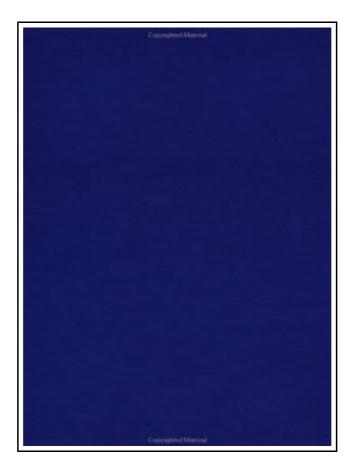
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Reviews

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(Dr. Kristin Dickens)

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University of California Press, United States, 1985. Hardback. Book Condition: New. First Edition, with Selected T ed.. 282 x 216 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In 1929, the first cuneiform tablet, inscribed with previously unknown signs, was found during archeological excavations at Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit) in northern Syria. Since then a special discipline, sometimes called Ugaritology, has arisen. The impact of the Ugaritic language and of the many texts written in it has been felt in the study of Semitic languages and literatures, in the history of the ancient Near East, and especially in research devoted to the Hebrew Bible. In fact, knowledge of Ugaritic has become a standard prerequisite for the scientific study of the Old Testament. The Ugaritic texts, written in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B. C., represent the oldest complex of connected texts in any West Semitic language now available (1984). Their language is of critical importance for comparative Semitic linguistics and is uniquely important to the critical study of Biblical Hebrew. Ugaritic, which was spoken in a northwestern corner of the larger Canaanite linguistic area, cannot be considered a direct ancestor of Biblical Hebrew, but its conservative character can help in the reconstruction of the older stages of Hebrew phonology, word formation, and inflection. These systems were later - that is, during the period in which the biblical texts were actually written - complicated by phonological and other changes. The Ugaritic texts are remarkable, however, for more than just their antiquity and their linguistic witness. They present a remarkably vigorous and mature literature, one containing both epic cycles and shorter poems. The poetic structure of Ugaritic is noteworthy, among other reasons, for its use of the parallelism of members that also characterizes such ancient and archaizing poems in the Hebrew Bible as...

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