

are settled in Goshen, a rich agricultural region in the north-eastern delta (Ex 47:6). In the exodus story there is no longer any hint of such a pastoral life. When they finally escape from Egypt they are completely helpless in the wilderness and they constantly recall their prior settled agricultural life in Egypt. Coote and Ord understand the oppression in Exodus as Israelite bedouin forced to do corvee labor and link this with the notion that historically Egypt conscripted foreign bedouin for such labor. They state that, "in Egypt in the New Kingdom period, it was possible for Palestinians to be drafted from as far away as Palestine" (p. 44), and as support for this statement they cite an article by D. B. Redford on taxation which has nothing to do with corvee labor. Redford's point is that Pharaonic taxation was not restricted to Egyptians but could be levied on all parts of the empire as well. There is no example of corvee labor being imposed on a foreign population, including bedouin who entered Egypt to pasture their flocks in the delta. In the New Kingdom, prisoners of war, mostly from urban regions, furnished slave labor for the whole of Egyptian society, public and private.

J's description of the type of enslavement of foreign labor in Ex 1 is not Egyptian in origin but Israelite, derived from the description of Solomonic building activity in 1 Kings 9:15–22. Here the same term for "store-cities," *are miskanot*, v. 19 (cf. Ex 1:11), is used, and Solomon specifically enslaved the non-Israelites (vv. 20–21) to do the building. The language and outlook is that of DtrH. An indication that J composed his understanding of the Egyptian oppression by using this late description is confirmed by the fact that Pithom, one of the two "store-cities" mentioned in Ex 1:11, was not built by the Egyptians until the time of Necho II, about 600 B.C.E. (See John S. Holladay, Jr., *Cities of the Delta: Tell El-Maskhuta* [Malibu: Undena, 1982].) The central thesis of this book is without any historical foundation.

Once having set forth their dubious historical hypothesis the authors proceed to interpret the text with this dogma as the hermeneutical clue. This may be illustrated by the example of the Cain and Abel story. We are told that the reason why Abel's offering was acceptable and Cain's was not is that the Cainites represent the Egyptians who work the ground while Abel represents the bedouin, which is Israel's identity, so that the story is about Yahweh's choice of Israel over the Egyptians. "When the 'descendants' of Abel (Israel) are rescued from the descendants of Cain (Egypt), they are led by one who kills a descendant of Cain (Moses). Yahweh then kills the firstborn of the pharaoh, a descendant of Cain. Through this parallel J is asserting that Egyptian corvee is tantamount to murder" (p. 71). This is typological exegesis in which theological categories have been replaced by political ones.

We are further told that "in J's history Yahweh has a distinct dislike for the firstborn sons because they are the result of humans usurping the divine prerogative of creating. . . . Ultimately we will hear Yahweh say, 'Israel my firstborn son,

whom I have created,' in the story of the deliverance of the corvee workers. Yahweh could not tolerate human creating" (p. 69, authors' italics). This certainly looks like they are quoting a text from Exodus, but their memory is defective, for Ex 4:22 says nothing about God's creating Israel. That theme is in Second Isaiah which they have confused with the Yahwist!

There is much more of this kind of exegesis throughout the book, but I think this is enough. This work is written for believers, not for scholarly dialogue. The faith consists of certainty in the great antiquity of the J document and its reflection of David's time, a particular sociological understanding of the emergence of ancient Israel and the monarchy, however sparse the evidence, and a rather naive approach to the issues of literary, form, and tradition criticism. The exegetical method is typology, the preferred style of dogmatic interpretation for millennia. Those who subscribe to the faith will enjoy reading it; those who do not will find it a waste of time.

JOHN VAN SETERS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

The Recent Study of Hebrew: A Survey of the Literature with Selected Bibliography. By NAHUM M. WALDMAN. *Bibliographica Judaica* 10. Cincinnati: HEBREW UNION COLLEGE PRESS; Winona Lake, Ind.: EISENBRAUNS, 1989. Pp. xxi + 464. \$35.

The latter half of the twentieth century has been characterized by what some scholars call the "knowledge explosion." Whereas previous generations of scholars had little or no trouble keeping abreast of developments in their own field (as well as in cognate fields), the current scene is quite different. With new journals, series, and an ever-growing array of *Festschriften* constantly appearing, it has become increasingly difficult, not necessarily to master a subject, but rather to master the bibliography of a particular subject. Accordingly, volumes such as the one under review are a welcome tool.

I cannot speak for all fields covered by the disparate readership of this journal, but I can personally attest to the fact that the situation just described is particularly acute in the field of Hebrew studies. The secondary literature continues to burgeon, seemingly without limit. We are, therefore, indebted to Nahum Waldman for culling and sifting this information and for presenting it to us in such a readable style.

The Recent Study of Hebrew is divided into six chapters (the numbers in parentheses indicate the number of pages covered by each chapter): Biblical Hebrew (78), The Second Commonwealth and Rabbinic Hebrew (57), The Masoretes

(17), Communal Traditions and Jewish Languages (39), Medieval Grammarians and Poets (22), and Modern Contemporary Hebrew (52). As one can readily see, there is a greater emphasis on the more ancient periods. This is no doubt due partly to Waldman's own proclivity as a scholar of the Bible and the ancient Near East, but more likely this imbalance results as well from the fact that there are more investigators of ancient Hebrew than of medieval or modern Hebrew. (I have no proof for this latter statement; it is solely a subjective impression.)

In each of these chapters, Waldman leads the reader through a variety of subjects pertinent to the period under discussion. Typically there are introductory surveys, treatments of phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicography, and discussions of foreign influence (e.g., Aramaic for the ancient period, Arabic for the medieval period, and standard European for the modern period). Specific topics covered include such issues as (I list here, as way of example, one from each chapter) the syntactic force of the *waw* consecutive, Greek calques, musical aspects of *maqef*, Hebrew words in Italian, dialectic factors in the adaptation of Arabic meter, and journalistic Hebrew.

For each issue treated, certainly for the broad ones and even for the narrow ones, Waldman surveys scholarly opinion by summarizing the specific points involved and by presenting all sides of an issue. As an illustration, I give a digest of Waldman's discussion of the *šaf^cel* in Biblical Hebrew (BH) (p. 82). He notes that C. Rabin posited an Amorite origin for this form, that E. Y. Kutscher argued instead for an Akkadian origin, and that a summary article on this form was published by A. Soggin. Obviously there are other (very minor) treatments of the *šaf^cel*, but these three citations provide the interested reader with all he needs to begin the study of this particular form.

As Waldman explains in the introduction, the word "recent" in the title of the book refers approximately to the past four decades. This time frame thus incorporates such developments as the increased use of Ugaritic for the study of BH, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the great influx of Jews to modern Israel and the resultant large increase in modern Hebrew speakers, the appearance of the Aleppo Codex, groundbreaking work by H. B. Rosén and N. Chomsky, and the birth of the *Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language* project by the Academy of the Hebrew Language. Occasionally, Waldman cites older works, especially when they still bear on contemporary scholarly discussions. Thus, for example, the classic works by W. Bacher, *Abraham ibn Ezra als Grammatiker* (1882) and *Die Anfänge der hebräischen Grammatik* (1895), are noted at appropriate places in the book.

Waldman has chosen to use the social-science method of references, a by-product of which is the comprehensive bibliography, which in this case covers 182 pages, with "about 1,350 authors and 3,700 items represented" (p. xiii). This compilation alone is of great value. While even this listing does not purport to be complete, it does provide the reader

with long lists of books and articles authored by individual scholars. In addition, there is an index of scholars cited.

It is clear that Waldman has left no stone unturned. All of the standard journals have been surveyed, dozens of unpublished masters theses and doctoral dissertations are cited, and an exceedingly large number of *Festschriften* are represented.

But Waldman goes beyond these "obvious" sources for information. Perhaps the most obscure source cited is an article by I. Moskona which appeared in the *Annual of the Public Cultural and Educational Organization of the Jews in the People's Republic of Bulgaria (Sofia)*. Similarly, Waldman found information on the Hebrew language in typically non-linguistic literature. For example, at first I was a bit surprised to see Z. Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium* (1957), cited by Waldman. Ankori's volume is a classical historical study, but I could not imagine that it was relevant to *The Recent Study of Hebrew*. Upon checking this source, I discovered that included therein is a rather lengthy and detailed discussion on the Karaite use of Hebrew alongside Arabic and Greek. In short, Waldman has done his homework in preparing this volume.

I include here some specific comments and suggested additions to the information presented by Waldman (I have kept in mind that his bibliography is "selected," but in a list of 3,700 entries I would have expected reference to the sources noted below):

Pp. 1–2: An additional bibliographic resource, of great value especially for the older periods, is *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Biblique de Jerusalem*, 12 vols. (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1983). The staff of the Ecole Biblique currently is updating the catalog and is processing it in computer format; upon completion it will be made available to the public.

P. 17: To the discussion on the phonemes /h/ and /h/, and /ʕ/ and /ǧ/, add Blau, *On Polyphony in Biblical Hebrew* (Blau 1982a in Waldman's bibliography).

P. 21: Waldman cites Dahood's work on the vocative *lamed*, but the contrary opinion of P. D. Miller, *UF* 11 (1979): 617–38, should also be cited. (Another brief mention of the vocative *lamed* appears on p. 63.)

Pp. 29–30: On parallels to the *waw* consecutive, see also G. D. Young, *JNES* 12 (1953): 248–52; and C. H. Gordon, *RSO* 32 (1957): 275–76. These two authors posit, correctly in my opinion, an Egyptian parallel to the Hebrew syntagma.

Pp. 36–37: It is not clear to me why here and in a few other places Waldman opts for placing the bibliographic information in an internal note within parentheses. Thus, for example, A. Goetze, *JAOS* 67 (1947), and H. L. Ginsberg, *Or* 5 (1936), are cited here but are not listed in the bibliography.

P. 37: The discussion on Ps 42:2 *k²yl t^crg* brings to mind that nowhere does Waldman treat the phenomenon of shared consonants. (I am not suggesting that this is the solution to the problem of Ps 42:2, rather that it is one option that needs to be considered.) Basic bibliography is I. O. Lehman, *JNES* 24 (1967): 93–101; W. G. E. Watson, *Bib* 50 (1969): 525–33;

Bib 52 (1971): 39–44. Presumably, this issue should have been raised within the context of the section entitled “The Writing System” on pp. 2–9.

P. 41: I recognize that M. Margolis, *Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 35 (1904): liii–liv, is not recent, but the simple view he presented concerning the plural of segholates is, in my opinion, the correct one. In the very least, it merits inclusion in this monograph. For a more recent formulation with the same basic conclusion, see J. H. Greenberg, “Internal *a*-Plurals in Afroasiatic (Hamito-Semitic),” in *Afrikanistische Studien*, ed. J. Lukas (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1955), 198–204.

P. 63: The treatment of the interchange of the prepositions *b*, *l*, and *m(n)* should also include the seminal study by N. M. Sarna, *JBL* 78 (1959): 310–16, and the more detailed work by G. Schuttermayr, *BZ* 15 (1971): 29–51.

P. 65: The most comprehensive work on the Deir ‘Alla inscriptions is J. A. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā* (Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1980).

P. 119: In Mishnaic Hebrew, the passage of III² verbs to III¹ verbs is not “due to the vanishing of the weak consonant.” Instead, this phenomenon is characteristic of spoken Semitic languages. Note that the same shift occurs in colloquial Arabic, even though consonantal ²*alif* generally is preserved. See now G. A. Rendsburg, *Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1990), 85–94.

P. 120: The Mishnaic Hebrew stem is *Nitpa^cal*, not *Nitpa^eel*. See H. Yalon, *Mavo² le-Niqqud ha-Mishna* (1964), 15–17.

Pp. 122–23: Waldman states that the word *gēt* “bill of divorce” is “derived ultimately from Akkadian.” Probably it goes back further than that, ultimately to Sumerian *kuš.gíd.da*. See S. A. Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (1974), 52.

P. 179: The discussion about Francisk Skorina (1485–1540) is fascinating. His transcription *Bressshif* (alongside the more common and more expected *Breshis*) need not necessarily “have [no] value in reconstructing phonology.” At issue here is what happens to /ʃ/ when this phoneme is attempted by speakers of languages who do not possess this sound. Usually /s/ will result, as is the case with the main Ashkenazic tradition (this also occurs when Persians, Turks, and other non-Arab Muslims pronounce Arabic /ʃ/). But it is noteworthy that the shift /ʃ/ > /f/ is more common than generally assumed in the world’s languages. The Semitist should be familiar with this shift in certain Arabic dialects, e.g., *tūm* ‘garlic’ > *fūm*. Accordingly, scholars more competent than I in the field of early Ashkenazic pronunciation of Hebrew may wish to reinvestigate Skorina’s *Bressshif* (and presumably other such items) in the light of the foregoing.

P. 211: The relative pronoun appears as *šē-*, as opposed to the regular form *še-*, not only in Qoh 3:18, but in Qoh 2:22 (according to some manuscripts) as well. See S. Morag, *JAOS* 94 (1974): 308–9.

P. 234: Obviously I. M. Diakanoff should be mentioned here in discussing work on comparative Semitics in the Soviet Union. He is referred to earlier in the book and two of his works are listed in the bibliography.

One general comment should be made at this point. In a book entitled *The Recent Study of Hebrew*, one might question the inclusion of significant sections of material on Jewish communal languages. True, a discussion of “Judeo-Arabic and Arabic Influence on Hebrew” (pp. 161–66) is a necessity. But one wonders what a Hebraist could gain from, let us say, P. Garvin’s article, “The Dialect Geography of Hungarian Yiddish” (Garvin 1965 in the bibliography). Lest there be misunderstanding here, let me state that I actually enjoyed reading this material (and in one special case my curiosity was piqued greatly [on p. 176 there is a reference to a “Jewish Basque bibliography”—is there really a Judeo-Basque?!]), but perhaps Waldman should have devoted a separate study to such issues and left this book for Hebrew *per se*.

In a book of such detail, there are remarkably few technical errors, but several should be noted:

P. 54, line 11: For *hpz*, read *hpz*.

P. 114, line 12 from bottom: For *heqēr*, read *hep̄qēr*.

P. 183, line 15 from bottom: For Hebrew, read Yiddish.

Pp. 222–23: There is no consistency in the spelling of Ben Yehudah or Ben Yehuda.

P. 234: I. Axelrod-Rubin (1984) is not listed in the bibliography.

P. 364: For O. I. Lehman, read I. O. Lehman.

P. 401: For Rendsburg, read Rendsburg.

The study of the Hebrew language continues to flourish. Even in the two or three years since this book was completed, many important studies have appeared (probably none of them as important as B. K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990]). My hope is that every ten years or so Waldman will reissue this work with continued updates. The basic work has now been done—and it has been done exceedingly well. Future editions, especially in the computer age, would not be difficult to produce.

GARY A. RENDSBURG

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

The Elders in Ancient Israel: A Study of a Biblical Institution.
By HANOCH REVIV. Translated by LUCY PLITMANN. Jerusalem:
MAGNES PRESS, 1989. Pp. 222. \$22.

This book is an historical inquiry in three parts, which aims to take seriously the social sciences as pertinent to the enterprise. After a substantial “Introduction” which underscores