

great deal of attention indeed for its adumbration of a possible resolution of a century-old analytical dilemma.

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Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions, part 1: '-L; part 2: M-T. By J. HOFTIJZER and K. JONGELING. With appendices by R. C. Steiner, A. Mosak Moshavi, and B. Porten. *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, pt. 1: Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten, vol. 21. Leiden: E. J. BRILL, 1995. Pp. lxxi + 585; [vii] + 681 ("586-1266"). Hfl 600, \$343.

Since its publication in 1965, the *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest*, by C.-F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer (henceforth: *DISO*), has been an indispensable reference tool for researchers in the Northwest Semitic languages. However, due to the continuing discovery of new inscriptions, *DISO* was out-of-date within a decade or so of its appearance. Accordingly, the need for a new dictionary has been felt for some time.

Semitists therefore will welcome the appearance of *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (henceforth: *DNWSI*) and will wish to congratulate J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling for presenting to the scholarly world this work of major importance.

Scholars familiar with *DISO* will find the same system at work in *DNWSI*. Epigraphic material from all the Northwest Semitic languages and dialects datable to 300 C.E. or earlier is included: Old Canaanite [i.e., Amarna glosses], Phoenician, Punic, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Hebrew, Deir 'Alla, Samalian, Old Aramaic, Official Aramaic, Nabatean, Palmyrene, Hatra, Jewish Aramaic. The exceptions are Ugaritic, Syriac, as well as the Hebrew and Aramaic *literary* material from Qumran and related sites. (I emphasize *literary* here because epistles from Murabba'at and Naḥal Ḥever are included.)

Each lexical entry begins with a list of occurrences, divided according to the above list of languages and dialects. Each new subdivision is clearly marked in bold type, thus, for example, **Ph, Pun, Hebr, OldAr, OffAr**, etc. The list of attestations appears to be exhaustive in most instances. In a few cases, e.g., under the preposition -נ, the authors wisely state "passim" (p. 137). In other instances, where a single corpus of texts attests to a particular word numerous times, e.g., שֹׁרֵר "witness" in the Elephantine texts (p. 1113), the authors list only a handful of such occurrences. However, *DNWSI* has no special siglum to inform the user when an entry is exhaustive or when additional attestations have been omitted.

Both the entry headwords and the actual attestations are given in transliteration. The headwords appear in bold type,

the actual attestations in italic type. Here I must register a strong complaint. Presenting the Northwest Semitic material in Hebrew script would have made the dictionary far easier to use. In scanning an entry, what stands out are the aforementioned boldface language markers (**Ph, Pun**, etc.). When one needs to focus on the actual forms, there is a strong chance of getting lost in the mass of data before determining what words are actually attested in a given language or dialect.

The largest section of each lexical entry is devoted to the relevant secondary literature. Hoftijzer and Jongeling have opted for a thorough bibliography, which explains why *DNWSI* is five times as large as *DISO*. Thus, while בַּמַּת "high place" occurs only once (Mesha Stele 3), and its headword, text citation, and definition take up but one line, sixteen lines of bibliographic sources are listed (pp. 167-68). Such attention can interfere with scholarly usage. Thus, when a word such as בֶּן "son," with בַּת "daughter," is treated, 127 lines are used to present the forms, text citations, and bibliography. Only on line 128 of the entry, after three entire pages of such material, does one arrive at the definition: "subst. m. son, f. daughter" (p. 171).

Do we need all this material? While I believe that if a scholar must err, it is always better to err on the side of inclusiveness than on the side of exclusiveness, the sheer mass of information is here presented in such a way that the basic purpose of a dictionary is compromised. A user of a dictionary wants to know first what a word means and where it is used. And while *DNWSI* utilizes a boldface ¶ siglum, easily found in each entry, to mark the definition(s), in the case of very common words often one must turn several pages to arrive at this information. True, typical users of *DNWSI* might know already the definition of the word that they are looking up; nevertheless they deserve to find early on confirmation that this indeed is the desired entry. For example, if one were to check ḥwy₁ on p. 353, one would have to turn the page to p. 354 to determine that this is the verb "to show, to make known, to report." Further down on p. 354 appears ḥwy₂, but the eye must scan across to p. 355 to determine that this is the verb "to live." My recommendations would be to place all the forms and text citations first, then to place all secondary literature afterwards; and to use lists instead of the prose paragraph format. My model would be R. S. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978), although this book suffers from using transliterations exclusively.

I am unable to determine why *DNWSI* lists multiple entries for certain words. חָלֵם is a good example. Under ḥlm₁ appears one or two possible instances of this root where the meaning "sleep" (as opposed to "dream") is in order. I have no qualms with this. The main entry חָלֵם "dream" appears under ḥlm₃. What I cannot understand is why there are also additional entries ḥlm₂, ḥlm₄, ḥlm₅, and ḥlm₆, all with the same note "v. ḥlm₃" (pp. 375-76). Within the main ḥlm₃ entry alternative interpretations are given, and this is what the four additional

entries refer to. But does that justify the inclusion of these four additional entries in the dictionary? And if the authors wish to follow this practice, why is one of the four entries (hlm_2) before the main entry (hlm_3), with the other three following? This type of entry occurs all too often in *DNWSI*. Furthermore, why should hlm_1 be the less common “sleep”? Again, my recommendation: make hlm_1 “dream,” make hlm_2 “sleep,” and get rid of all the other entries.

DNWSI does not include any proper names, whether they belong to places, persons, or deities. Etymologies are not given, but loanwords are noted as such at the very beginning of an entry (typically they are from Akkadian, Iranian, or Greek). In two appendices, Bezalel Porten contributes a “Glossary of New Readings from TADAE C” (pp. 1237–48), while Richard C. Steiner and Adina Mosak Moshavi contribute “A Selective Glossary of Northwest Semitic Texts in Egyptian Script” (pp. 1249–66). The former includes new readings or interpretations of the Ahiqar text from Elephantine, while the latter is based almost exclusively on P. Amherst 63 with the Aramaic text in Demotic script.

The sheer size of this dictionary raises another important question: is it not time to create two dictionaries, one for Canaanite and one for Aramaic? The dialects covered divide neatly into these two categories, with the exception of Deir ‘Alla where an editorial decision would be required to determine into which volume (or both volumes) to place the lexemes of this dialect. There are benefits to treating the corpus in one dictionary, but there also are drawbacks. For example, the root עבד has different meanings in the two main branches of Northwest Semitic. In Canaanite it means “serve, worship,” while in Aramaic it means “make, do.” But *DNWSI* lists both the Canaanite material (a few citations from Phoenician and Punic, requiring about five lines in the dictionary) and the Aramaic material (numerous citations, requiring more than four pages) together, and then presents the various meanings over the course of about six pages (pp. 806–16). There is no attempt to distinguish the Canaanite usage “serve, worship” from the Aramaic usage “make, do.” The innocent user of *DNWSI* would not learn this crucial piece of lexical information.

Of the diverse specific comments that one could make about this massive work, I limit myself to the following one. It is not clear to me why Naḥal Hever 12, a Hebrew letter, is not included in the dictionary. Unlike many of the Hebrew letters from this site, which are badly preserved, this text can be read in its entirety, with only a few minor lacunae. Furthermore, the letter includes several interesting lexical items: נכסי “goods” (construct state) (line 3), for which *DNWSI* lists only one other attestation in Hebrew (p. 731); דאגין “worries” (line 4), otherwise not attested in epigraphic Hebrew (and thus there is no entry in *DNWSI*); and שפינה “boat” (line x [Yigael Yadin, who originally published this text, did not provide a number for this line]), displaying an unusual orthography for what is otherwise an Aramaic word ספינה (p. 797).

To repeat: Hoftijzer and Jongeling deserve our praise for giving us this major research tool. *DNWSI* represents years of painstaking work, carried out with extreme care and expert diligence. It will serve scholars of Northwest Semitic well for years to come.

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Between Muslim and Jew: The Problem of Symbiosis under Early Islam. By STEVEN M. WASSERSTROM. Princeton: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1995. Pp. viii + 300. \$45.

Steven Wasserstrom’s book is a very important contribution to the large number of studies of Jewish-Muslim symbiosis in the Middle Ages. He offers many new insights and additional information about some aspects of this symbiosis and makes us look at it from different and new angles. This erudite book, however, makes for no easy reading even for those who know the subject well enough, and it must be extremely difficult for those readers (students!) who have no intimate knowledge of the historical scene and of the vast scholarly achievements in the field.

The first part of the book, entitled “Trajectories,” deals with the social setting. Who were the Jews of early Islam, what were their professions and their class structure, who constituted their leadership and their sectarian groups and what was their relationship to Muslim authorities? It is the author’s contention that too much has been made of the “bourgeois revolution” (S. D. Goitein’s term) in Islam which brought prosperity to Muslims and other communities, including some well-known Jews. According to Wasserstrom, the majority of Jews remained “silent and apparently degraded” well into the tenth century and after. He also supposes that with regard to its religious development Jewish society under early Islam was an as-yet-undefined pluralistic society, with rabbinic Judaism being only one trend among others. In this part of the book, the author also deals with Jewish Messianism at that time and gives a very rich account especially of the ‘Isawiyya sect, which he has already studied in detail. He then turns to Jewish sectarian influence on Muslim, especially Shi‘ite, ideas of the Mahdi. Here is one of the many instances in which the author expresses his aversion to the term “cultural borrowing” (he uses the expression “creative symbiosis” which actually denotes the same process, the latter term undoubtedly being a much nicer one to use!). Thus, for example, Wasserstrom says: “. . . early Muslims did not borrow their Messiah from Judaism, nor was Jewish Messianic imagery lent by a Jew to a Muslim in the sense that a lender lends to a debtor. Rather, Muslims consciously