

old Armenian which, in turn, left significant traces in the Georgian translation. Teasing out reliable traces of the earlier versions requires considerable skill and agility in textual criticism, and Cowe's work seems largely reliable. However, the formidable complexity of the task is such that even excellent work such as this must be used with some caution. Once the influence of the Syriac is understood, Cowe concludes that the primary vorlage for the Armenian version is a Lucianic text, with most Old Greek readings of the Armenian mediated through it. It is interesting that the Greek manuscript which bears the closest resemblance to the Armenian vorlage is itself an eccentric text sometimes placed as a Q satellite, MS 230. In fact, the affinities of the Armenian Daniel are closer to the B family than the Q family.

Chap. 6, on translation technique, is of special interest for Septuagint scholars interested in using the Armenian as a resource in LXX textual criticism. Cowe's comments on Ziegler's use of the Armenian (11-14) should be read in the context of this chapter.

Another excellent aspect of this work is that historical influences are often brought into the discussion. For instance, Cowe notes the political factors which supported the production of numerous manuscripts from the 13th-14th centuries, followed by a two-century dearth of manuscripts (60). Under translation technique Cowe notes the influence of anti-Zoroastrian vocabulary from eastern Armenia, which was under Persian domination at the time of translation (367). Other examples relating both to translation and transmission may be found throughout the book.

In conclusion, it can be stated that this volume by Cowe is the product of massive primary research. It is a thorough study and a solid contribution to the field of Armenian and Septuagint studies.

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Freedman, David N., ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992. 6,700 pp. \$360.

Of these six volumes, it could, facetiously, be claimed that, "the more we learn, the more problems we have!" Indeed, for better or for worse, the recent explosion of knowledge in the humanities, leading to new approaches to the study of the Judaic and Christian Scriptures, has made of *ABD* a child of expansive learning.

Therefore, in accordance with the editorial wishes, the international, interfaith team of contributors has, in general, presented their conclusions in a tentative fashion. The result is a large number of lengthy articles (e.g., "Egyptian Literature," 2:378-399), which present relevant biblical and/or Near Eastern evidence and offer several reasonable conclusions. Though this design offers real scholarly advantages, it does not always, because of its neutral tone, "answer the questions" of the more issue-oriented reader.

A case in point is the article on "golden calf" manufacture and worship (2:1065-1069) by John Spencer, who, after a careful and systematic presentation of the biblical and Near Eastern archaeological data, timidly places the identity of the object(s) only "in the realm of probabilities" (1069).

On the other hand, this hesitant, noncommittal nature of so many scholarly conclusions is often justified. For instance, given the accumulated archaeological knowledge of ancient Syria-Palestine, it has become much more difficult to describe the "religion of ancient Israel" (see "Canaan, Religion of," 1:831-837), or even the exact *constitution* of ancient Israel in Canaan, either during the pre-monarchic or monarchic periods ("Israel, History of," 3:526-567).

Furthermore, the lengthy, alphabetized bibliographies accompanying the articles are helpful in exposing the clearly trodden paths of scholarship and suggesting future possible areas of research.

Thus, as advertised, *ABD* does in fact lay out more suggestive "background" information for the Scriptures than ever before. But this accomplishment raises the question of what constitutes a legitimate 'biblical subject.' The editors' interest in information from cognate areas has resulted in articles as far afield as early church literature from the fourth century. Because of this, the editors have apparently chosen to settle for a less-than-exhaustive reference work. *ABD* has had to omit articles on minor terms and names which are actually found in the Bible. For instance, editorial decision has allowed for encyclopedic articles on subjects like "faith" (2:744-760), but has made no provision for more specific topics. For example, the entry under "heron" (*'anāpā*, in 3:181) directs the reader to the massive article on "Zoology (Fauna)" (6:1109-1167), where, against all hope, the heron is not mentioned. For terms of this kind one must still refer to *IDB* or *ISBE*.

Another weakness, due probably to the (overwhelming) size of *ABD*, has to do with a more basic editorial duty: harmonizing articles treating similar subjects. For instance, the useful essay on the camel (1:824-826) presents all biblical passages in historical order as well as a presentation of all pertinent archaeological findings concerning the dromedary's domestication in the Near East. Juris Zarins then concludes that domestication took place in the Levant in the latter half of the "2d millennium B.C." However, E. Firmage ("Zoology," 6:1140), basing his argument on "development of nomadism," dates their domestication to "the end of the 1st millennium B.C.E.!" In light of the above, the reader should consult the cross-references in order to consider all points of view and all possible bibliographic references before adopting a particular position on any given topic.

In *ABD*, we have, then, a reference tool which does not always make things easier, but challenges us to continue biblical scholarship with care. This gargantuan, interdisciplinary work certainly offers us some important resources for such a study.