

## SHORT NOTE

Two recent articles return to the question of how to translate the Hebrew *yam súp*. Bernard F. Batto, in "The Reed Sea: *Requiescat in pace*" (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 102.1 (1983), 27-35) points out that reeds cannot grow along its banks. He relates the term to *yam sóp*, "the distant sea", "the sea at the end of the land", so that Exodus 15.4 could be translated:

Pharaoh's chariot and his army he cast into the Waters of Chaos;  
his picked officers are sunk in the Depths of Extinction . . .

This translation would also bring out the mythological overtones of the phrase. More cautiously, we should perhaps retain "Red Sea" in translation, but add a footnote stating that the Hebrew means "Reed Sea", or, following Batto, "Some scholars believe the Hebrew name meant 'the Final Sea' or 'the Sea at the End,' because the known land ended at the southern sea."

The same author returns to the same subject in "*Red Sea or Reed Sea?*" (*Biblical Archaeology Review* 10.4 (1984), 57-63).

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## REVIEWS

E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw, A. H. Snyman, and J. v W. Cronje: **Style and Discourse**. Cape Town: The Bible Society 1983. 199 pp., paper, n.p.

This book is the product of a series of seminars at the University of Pretoria chaired by E. A. Nida and involving a total of twenty South African scholars. Nida wrote the basic text, and then edited it with the help of Louw. Snyman and Cronje contributed an appendix offering a new and elaborate classification of figures of speech in the Greek New Testament. The book makes the effort to synthesize creatively the contributions of biblical studies, linguistics, communication science, and rhetorical and literary studies, bringing them all to bear on the text of the Greek New Testament. The overarching framework is drawn from semiotics, the discipline which studies the nature and functioning of sign and symbol systems. Though the effort at synthesis is not in every respect successful, it advances our understanding of the structure of texts and their communicative roles far beyond what was available hitherto; it is a truly pioneering work, and therefore highly stimulating and insightful. Most importantly, it forces us beyond the reductionism which too often afflicts attempts to analyze texts within the boundaries of any one of the relevant disciplines.

The authors offer both an experimental theoretical framework and extensive exemplification of their analytic method. There are eleven chapters: (1) Rhetorical Signs; (2) Rhetorical Structures; (3) Types of Texts; (4) The Meaning of Lexical Units; (5) Symbolic Meaning; (6) The Meaning of Nuclear Structures; (7) The Meaning of Internuclear Structures; (8) Methods for the Analysis of Texts; (9) The Communication Process; (10) Literature and its Study; and (11) Rhetorical Features and Translation. Chapters 4 and 6 are the least original, repeating largely material from *Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969), *Componential Analysis of Meaning* (1975), and *Exploring Semantic Structures* (1975).