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Jaruzelska, Izabela.

Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel: The Socio-Economic Position of the Officials in the Light of the Biblical, the Epigraphic and Archaeological Evidence

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This book examines the functions and behaviors of the royal state officials to whom the book of Amos presumably alludes in 3:9-11, 12b-15; 4:1-3; 5:11; and 6:1-7. The author, a sociologist/biblicist at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poland, addresses this study to the ways and means by which state officials financially prosper during the gilded age of northern Israel under Jeroboam II. Relying heavily on materialistic sociological models (K. Marx, M. Weber, S. Kozyr-Kowalski), this study presupposes sharp distinctions between the phenomenon of ownership and the right of property, between direct and indirect means of production, and between upper and lower classes in the ancient world. Its goal is to explain the "putative enrichment" (p. 13) of Israel's state officials by determining first and foremost the social matrix out of which they operate: "Once position within the social division of labour ... and the socio-economic ownership of means of production and labour power has been determined, the identification of classes and social estates can proceed" (p. 21).

Thus, where T. N. D. Mettinger (*Solomonic State Officials: A Study of the Civil Government Officials of the Israelite Monarchy* [Lund: Gleerup, 1971]) overviews the work of civil servants in the united monarchy, and J. A. Dearman (*Property Rights in the Eighth Century B.C.* [Atlanta: Scholars, 1988]) asks pertinent questions about eighth-century officials generally, Jaruzelska brings to the text of Amos a remarkable amount of archaeological and epigraphic data to formulate more specific questions about more specialized functionaries. This study is dominated by the redactoral hypotheses of Hans Walter Wolff, the epigraphic and historical work of André Lemaire, and the sociological theories of Jaruzelska's *Doktorvater*, Stanislaw Kozyr-Kowalski (also of Adam Mickiewicz University).

Following a clear, brief introduction, chapter 1 offers an engaging sociohistorical analysis of eighth-century Israel. Highlighting state-economy relationships, Jaruzelska sidesteps religious questions entirely (without dismissing them as unimportant, p. 198). Chapter 2 attempts to list eighth-century Israel's "most important economic developments," addressing factors such as agricultural production (including viticulture and oil production) and international trade (particularly with Phoenicia, and, to a lesser extent, southern Arabia). A highlight of the chapter is its fascinating socioeconomic discussion of the Samaria ivories.

Chapter 3 presents the biblical, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence proper. Extrapolating from the Solomonic data, Jaruzelska supplements it with an enormous amount of epigraphical data gathered by A. Lemaire and other epigraphers in order to visualize more precisely the power-contours of Jeroboam II's "cabinet" (p. 101). It is an ambitious goal—one which the author admits can generate only a "tentative" portrait (p. 198). Yet even with the present lack of data, the picture painted here is nevertheless based on a painstaking synthesis of a large amount of hard-to-find information. Nothing quite like this is available anywhere else in contemporary Amos studies. One of its most important accomplishments is its successful move beyond the simplistic "charisma"-vs.-"office" dichotomies of a previous scholarly age, and for this alone Jaruzelska should be praised. In addition, those who have yet to enter the fascinating, rapidly-expanding world of ancient Syro-Palestinian epigraphy will appreciate greatly the user-friendly index of keywords and inscription-site-names offered on pp. 221-27.

Chapter 4 seeks to locate "the place of the officials in Samaria in the social division of labour." Here Jaruzelska combs Amos 3:9-11, 12b-15, 4:1-3, and 6:1-7 for sociological clues about official bureaucratic behavior. The method here consists of listing a number of Hebrew terms, then extrapolating from their semantic and syntactic positionings in Amos some measure of sociological content. For example, the terms **אֲרָמְנוֹת** and **אֲוֹצְרוֹת** are found in parallel in Amos 3:9-11. Since **אֲוֹצְרוֹת** refers to storehouses with agricultural products elsewhere (1 Chron 27:25; Neh 13:12), and since Israel is compared elsewhere to goods laid up in Yhwh's **אֲוֹצְרוֹת**, ("treasuries," Deut 32:34), Jaruzelska concludes from this that the **אֲוֹצְרוֹת** in Amos 3:10 must be managed by officials of a specific Samarian *class*. Then she stretches this insight into an argument: "the definition of their deeds as ... 'violence and robbery' may indicate, logically, that they drew extra gains dishonestly" (p. 145).

The only thing these terms imply, however, is the existence of *opportunities* to do evil, not *inevabilities*. One cannot defensibly argue from such scanty evidence that because some cops are bad, then all cops—as a *class*—are bad. The bridge from philological possibility to exegetical certainty is a rickety one, and many a well-meaning exegete has fallen from it (J. Barr, *Semantics of Biblical Language* [London: Oxford, 1961])—to say nothing of the fact that the sociological side of this "bridge" is often too poorly-anchored

to carry the weight often asked of it (F. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Ancient Near Eastern Environment* [JSOTSup 142; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994] 14-20).

In chapter 5 the book's ideological presuppositions become most visible. Presuming "the officials' ostentatious way of life" to be "an expression of different forms of ownership of the means of production and labour power," Jaruzelska cautiously, yet firmly, argues that the "robbery" and "violence" perpetrated by these officials *must* be institutional. It cannot be merely occasional or individual. "Thanks to their place within the social division of labour," Jaruzelska argues, "opportunities to increase their income ... were not available to other categories of officials." Anyone familiar with Marxist analysis will recognize immediately where this argument is going. Amos, according to this line of argument, cannot be a critic of selected corrupt officials, but a critic of "the whole state" (p. 167). Further, the source of these officials' rapid rise to power cannot be due to misappropriation of individual peasants' land, but only because of their easy access, *as a class*, to the royal storehouses. If some cops are bad, then all cops *must* be bad.

In short, this book is a fascinating, thorough, creative, and detailed resource on the book of Amos; anyone interested in doing serious sociological research on eighth-century Israel will find it an enormously helpful resource. Hopefully, though, its usefulness will not be limited to audiences for whom such outdated sociological presuppositions are still equivalent to doctrinal "truth."