



# The Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Colour Lexemes (Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series)

By J.E. Hartley

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Colours play a vital role in the daily lives of all peoples. Truly remarkable is the human ability to see such a vast array of colours. Just as intriguing is the way languages develop lexemes to reference the colours that the eye sees. In recent years there have been many investigations into the way that languages add colour lexemes. This research has shown that languages, as a rule, follow similar definable steps in the addition of basic colour lexemes. Anthropologists have discovered that in languages of primitive cultures lexemes for colour play different roles than they do in languages of industrialised societies. Consequently studies of colour lexemes of such languages need to employ different methods of inquiry into such a language's colour vocabulary. Additional insights have been gained through the study of colour lexemes in ancient languages. This study makes a contribution to the field of the semantics of colour by investigating ancient Hebrew colour lexemes as found in the Hebrew Scriptures, ancient inscriptions, Ben Sira and Qumran. In part 1 there is a consideration of the physical phenomenon of colour and a review of recent research on languages' acquisition of colour terms. Part 2 presents the detailed analysis of each Hebrew colour lexeme according to the format of the Semantics in Ancient Hebrew Database; included is the position of each lexeme with its semantic field and the scholarly literature. This volume is produced as part of the international project, the Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database.

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