VOCABULARY INTERCHANGE BETWEEN NABATAEAN
AND PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIC INSCRIPTIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis deals with the analysis of vocabulary common to Nabataean and Arabic. Preliminary studies of the Nabataean vocabulary have shown that Nabataean is a variety of Aramaic. However, there are many vocabulary interchanges between Nabataean, pre-Islamic Arabic (including both Old North Arabic and Old South Arabic), Classical Arabic.

The second chapter of the thesis discusses aspects of the lexical relationship between Nabataean and Arabic, especially the vocabulary which is common to both. It identifies the words that occur only in Nabataean and pre-Islamic Arabic (including ONA and OSA) and also identifies words common to classical (Islamic) Arabic and Nabatean. The third chapter investigates the words that occur in Nabataean, Aramaic and Arabic to make certain whether they could be borrowed from Aramaic or, on the contrary, Arabic loanwords. In the fourth chapter the words that also occur in Nabataean, Arabic, and West Semitic languages (which must therefore be Common West Semitic) are identified. Next, the words that are found in Nabataean and Arabic and also occur in all other Semitic languages (CS) are identified. The last chapter identifies the words that could be Greek or Latin loanwords into Nabataean and Arabic.

In conclusion, Nabataean may be influenced by Arabic, or a dialect akin to Classical Arabic.